“I HAVE GROWN UP”
THE RISE AND FALL OF THE YMCA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, 1889-1948

by

KERR C. RAMSAY III

(Under the Direction of James C. Hearn)

ABSTRACT

For a century, the YMCA was instrumental in the lives of American college students. From the overseeing of campus religious activity to the development of student services the Y played a critical role on campus. From its beginnings at the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia in 1858 the YMCA spread to the majority of American institutions by the turn of the twentieth century. It provided much needed and long neglected services for many students. For a generation, students depended on the Y for housing, academic tutoring, employment services, and recreation. This growth stemmed from a history of religious indifference for American students and the leaders of the campuses on which these students found themselves as well as the changing demographics of college students in the country. Between the first and second World Wars, the growth of two other institutions – student affairs and denominational campus ministries – fundamentally changed the role of the YMCA on American college campuses. When the YMCA departed from most university campuses in the mid twentieth century, the schools absorbed many of its essential activities and services. The story of this rise and fall at the University of Georgia offers a case study by which to

understand the place of the YMCA in context, to investigate the reasons this particular campus took a dramatic departure from larger story of the demise of the YMCA in the 1940s, and observe the development of the student affairs culture at UGA.

INDEX WORDS: YMCA, YWCA, VRA, SCA, Student Services, Student Activities, Twentieth Century Student Religion

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DEDICATION

For Palmer, Ford, and Whit, who make every day a joy and an adventure.

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CHAPTER 1

WHY THE Y?

I do not believe that he has been very frank or loyal in his dealings with me. Unfortunately, I was his student treasurer as an undergraduate and also his student president and he has never realized that I have grown up.

- William Tate, March 23, 1946

Every year colleges and universities spend millions of dollars and thousands of hours to keep their students busy. Whether serving as a Marxian opiate, reflecting genuine interest in student well being, or out of some other motivation, intramural sports, campus publications, students clubs and organizations, and numerous other activities and services require the careful coordination of large administrative staffs. From where did these activities come, and why do schools find them a necessary part of collegiate life?

Institutionally organized activities are not new to American colleges and universities, but their focus and the way in which they manifest themselves have changed dramatically. Religion once played a central role on college and university campuses (Marsden, 1994). While organized religious activity was formerly mandated on most college campuses, today it has been largely relegated to scores of campus ministers representing a variety of religions and Christian denominations. However, the transition from institutional to external religious organizations found one particular association at

the center of college life and instrumental in shaping a new generation of college traditions and expectations.

Nineteenth century college life was about "college life" more than academics. The student mentality was one of action and participation; voluntary and often spontaneous organizations created by and for students dominated institutional life. Class organizations, fraternities, glee clubs, newspapers, yearbook, sports teams, the YMCA, and many more groups and activities dominated the time and commitments of most students (Moffatt, 1991; Reynolds & Haas, 2000). At the turn of the twentieth century one of those organizations, the YMCA, had a branch located at nearly every "prominent" college or university campus in the nation (Setran, 2007, p. 77). Within fifty years of its first campus association, the Y was central to American collegiate life.

Within another fifty years, the campus YMCA was little more than a memory on most campuses. However, many of the activities it pioneered and others it helped facilitate have remained an important part of student's lives long after the Y's departure. The diminished presence of the YMCA corresponded with growing interest in and proliferation of student personnel offices. My research investigates the role of the YMCA in the formation of student personnel culture and attempts to answer the following question. How did the responsibility for student services transfer from the YMCA to the Office of Student Services at the University of Georgia? The project focuses on three areas: the religious connections to early American higher education, the history of YMCA campus associations, and the unique situation of these two at the University of Georgia. Finnegan and Alleman (2009; 2013) have shown the importance of the YMCA in the development of student orientation and the publication of student

handbooks; however, the role of the Y in developing student services as a larger field is less clear. We know a little about these influences, but no one has investigated it in great detail, on the ground, on an individual campus. This project will explore intensively the strength and nature of the connection at the campus level and how those connections unraveled.

Background

By 1850, Christian denominations and state governments founded colleges and universities throughout the United States. Significant areas of the country remained underserved by higher education, but 136 colleges existed among the 31 states, and nearly 10,000 students were enrolled in these schools: representing a relatively broad variety of socio-economic background. Farmers, professionals, and elites all sent their children to the same schools (Geiger, 2000). Although students came from a variety of backgrounds, college attendance was a mark of social status. Some schools were central to the status of the elite (Sugrue, 2000).

For the first two hundred year of American higher education faculty held nearly exclusive responsibility for campus governance and discipline (Thelin, 2011). However, students did not sit idly by. Students founded literary societies prior to the American Revolution, and for the next 250 years adapted systems of self-governance to meet the needs of the age (May, 2010). While the specifics varied from campus to campus, official rules and regulations on behavior were strict; however, students were often left to their own means. If they attended chapel and received good marks in the classroom, faculty left them alone. At times, students were required to independently make their living and dining arrangements off campus. Of course, if students chose to act in a less acceptable manner, the tales of faculty discipline are numerous (Geiger & Bubolz, 2000).

The nineteenth century was a time of growth in American higher education. Some schools grew in enrollment, but much of the growth came through the addition of new schools to the landscape rather than a significant increase in school size. From 1840 to 1880 the average enrollment of American colleges only grew ten students (Geiger, 2000). These students still managed to find the time and energy to gather together. The early nineteenth century saw the origination of fraternities and other social clubs (Geiger & Bubolz, 2000). Regardless of fraternity affiliation, or lack thereof, students of this era were exceedingly busy with prescribed course loads and mandatory chapel; however, they still had plenty of free time to fill. As young men can often do, early American college students found plenty of trouble. Antics abounded across the country through rowdiness, sabotage, theft, and general rule breaking (Jackson, 2000). Many cultural activities grew in popularity, and the long established literary societies increased in membership and importance. Students took trips into town to visit the theatre, watch political gatherings, or serenade young women (Reynolds & Haas, 2000). For the students of this era, many of the most important lessons were learned outside of the classroom (Geiger, 2000). However, the classroom experience remained a critical piece of college in the century to come.

The turn of the twentieth century was a time of transition for educational goals and methods. Through the earliest part of the nineteenth century, the curriculum was dominated by the classical A.B. system. All students took the same courses in the same schedule with the same recitations. Towards the end of this century the numbers of students enrolling in college began to grow significantly, and the curriculum began to change. Electives were added and student choice entered the classroom. Rudolph (1962)

suggested that the strict classical curriculum impeded college growth. But the number of students in American colleges and universities grew significantly in the late 1800s.

The Campus Y

The spread of campus YMCAs was one critical change to college life during the late nineteenth century. Founded in London, England in 1844, a group of men from Boston established the first American association in 1851 as an organization devoted to helping single men in urban environments. It quickly spread across the country and groups of men in most major cities banded together to form local associations. With its mission to serve young, single men, it was natural for the YMCA to expand into higher education. Within a decade of its first association in the United States students at two American universities established associations on their respective campuses (Long, 1998). Later in its history the YMCA founded its own colleges and universities (Finnegan & Cullaty, 2001). The Y became broadly involved in campus life just as quickly as it had formed branches on those campuses. Students, faculty, and community members came together for Christian fellowship and education. By the 1930s the YMCA became an indispensible part of American collegiate life (Setran, 2007).

The growth and influence of the YMCA around the turn of the twentieth century was profound and remarkable. Between 1877 and 1900 the number of campus chapters blossomed from 40 to 599, the latter of which claimed a membership of 31,901 students. Only twenty years later that membership more than doubled and accounted for 25 to 30 percent of all male college students. This represented a "near monopoly" on the religious life of students in America (Setran, 2007, p. 4). While the associations at large

residential colleges and universities were the most well-known, associations were formed on campuses of all sizes (Brinkley, 1994).

The growth of the YMCA was aided by several key factors. First was the creation of a campus organization that students wanted to join. This work was robust and intentional – touching nearly all aspects of campus life (Setran, 2007). Second was the fostering of a national communication network (Shinn, 1952). Third was the ability of a men's organization to incorporate women in its activities (Sims, 1936). Fourth was its ability to overcome racial stereotypes and stigmas, at least in certain parts of the country, and expand its work to students of color (Mjagkij, 1997). At the turn of the twentieth century, through the establishment of Black Student Associations, YWCA Student Associations, co-educational associations, and the continued expansion of the traditional white male Associations the YMCA was an organization to which every American Christian Protestant student could conceivably be a member.

The growth always centered on offering a compelling product; however, student interests and the higher education landscape changed over time. The Y faced an important turning point in the early twentieth century. It was a popular campus organization, but it faced significant competition from a number of student organizations and activities; it was in danger of losing its essential place in campus life. It needed to become something once again worth joining, something more than just an alternative. To fight for its place on campuses across the country, the Y put itself at the center of the institutions it served. The strategy was simple but far from easy. First, the Y needed to recruit more popular students: particularly fraternity members. If it was not representative of the student body, and something new students aspired to join, it was

destined for death. Around the country associations handled relationships with Greek organizations differently, but the goal was always to encourage membership in the YMCA. At the University of Vermont, the members of the Y negotiated a truce with Greek organizations and secret societies that gave students one month to discover fraternities on their own ("Notes from the Field," 1890). On the national level the YMCA admitted borrowing some ideas from Greek organizations and began to speak of itself as a Christian fraternity (Gilmore, 1880).

Second, it needed a space that the rest of the campus desired to use. The YMCA recognized the importance of a permanent space for campus associations from the beginning ("College Bulletin," 1879), but at the turn of the twentieth century, the Y made a conscious effort to expand its footprint in cities around the country, constructing 290 buildings between 1900 and 1916. Under the leadership of John R. Mott, the YMCA constructed thirty-six campus centers over the same period as an avenue of outreach to the unconverted who would judge campus organizations by the way they looked and how they fit the expectations of the day (Setran, 2007).

The YMCA buildings "became the hub of the general social life of the campus," and by the 1940s the Y was the "de facto center for student services and activities on campuses nationwide" (Setran, 2007, p. 98). The buildings contained rooms for Bible study and missionary meetings as well as rooms for general campus organization activities, large lecture halls, gyms, and game rooms. Some even contained barber shops, pools, and restaurants. As such, the Y developed the first student center.

The student associations of the YMCA were also critical in the social life of the colleges and universities of which they were a part. Campus associations regularly

hosted academic lectures on a wide variety of topics (Morgan, 1935). Associations also sponsored receptions, dances, rallies, and parties with the goal of bringing the entire campus together at a single event. Events like square dances and other social activities were regular occurrences on campus thanks to the Y. For these services, many schools supplied the YMCA with financial compensation (Shedd, 1941). Apparently the school support was not enough, so to help pay for these events and the upkeep of the association building, the Y initiated student activity fees. As an example, in the early 1920s the Georgia Institute of Technology added a fee to each student's bill to support the upkeep of the YMCA building (Secrest, 1924).

Renting rooms to residents was another method of raising support for their buildings, so the Y entered the dormitory business. In a pattern repeated in campus ministries to this day, they added large sections of housing to help develop the community environment, but more importantly to help pay the bills. Sometimes, these dorms would precede the completion of the rest of the building itself. The association also helped students find housing elsewhere if they were unable to secure it on campus or in the Y (Johnson, 1958; Comer, 1914).

In addition to creating the student center, the YMCA made important contributions to campus publications through their campus handbooks (Finnegan & Alleman, 2006). These handbooks served an important role in another campus Y creation: Student Orientation (Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999). Academic placement exams preceded academic terms prior to this new experience, but there had never been an official event to help ease the transition to college. As early as 1878, the YMCA was

there to help new students find their place on campus through new student orientation (Finnegan & Alleman, 2013). Of course, it was also there to recruit members.

The YMCA strategies mentioned above, and many others that contributed to the popularity of the YMCA in American higher education benefited greatly from the development of a national communication system by the YMCA. Less than twenty years after the first campus association, the Y began to publish the *College Bulletin*: a national newsletter for the YMCA Campus Associations. The Y created the *College Bulletin* to offer a forum to ask "questions concerning the organization and prosecution of such Christian work as is peculiar to a college," and encourage individual associations to share "any special method of work… any practical idea… any religious interest" brought about by the work of a campus association" (YMCA, November 1878, p.1). As an example of the potential to spread ideas, the second issue of the *Bulletin* featured a story from the University of Tennessee about a welcome meeting intended to help recruit new members. New student orientation was born, and campuses around the nation learned of it immediately (YMCA, December 1878). The name of the official newsletter changed no fewer than ten times between 1878 and the end of the twentieth century, but the intention of wide spread sharing of the good works accomplished by campus associations around the nation remained.

Even with a robust communication network, the YMCA recognized that it could not exist on co-educational campuses as an exclusive organization for men. Although women were still not allowed to join city associations, association literature makes it clear that women were active participants in campus associations as early as the 1860s. The first campus organizations specifically for women were formed in the 1880s (Sims,

1936). Many women who joined these new campus YWCAs had previously affiliated themselves with a campus YMCA but felt they could "accomplish more by separate organization" (YMCA, March 1883, p. 4).

Likewise, the campus associations of the YMCA were also trailblazers in race relations (Smith, 1953). Campus associations opened for students of color as early as the turn of the twentieth century and were organized at 103 schools around the United States by 1912 (YMCA Colored Works Department, 1912). The YMCA integrated the associations at the national level by 1927 (Weatherford, 1949), although there were integrated associations on individual campuses well before then (YMCA, 1926). The YMCA had a broad and inclusive reach on campus.

Campus YMCAs held a position of prominence until the end of World War II. The YMCA even expanded its educational footprint into a robust network of evening law schools during this time (Finnegan, 2005). However, the demise of campus dominance and all educational operations occurred in the decades to follow. By the 1970s the national YMCA dismantled its entire student department. At campuses including the University of North Carolina, University of Illinois, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University campus associations continue to survive under strong local leadership, but most did not. Some morphed into other campus ministries, some became local branches of the Y, and a few became even more closely associated with the universities, but most just withered away. The withering of the Y corresponded with a growth in denominational campus ministries and the development of the professional field of student personnel services. By the 1970s an average of 12 sectarian campus

ministries had established branches at each university campus in America (Burkhardt, 1995; Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999).

Campus ministries continue to play an important role in the development of college students. Their impact is not as deep or as wide as that of the YMCA in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but students are transformed through campus ministries and they continue to be involved on campus beyond their numbers. The importance of including these organizations in the full life of the university is beginning to be recognized again (Craft, Weber, & Menke, 2009).

Student Affairs

As long as colleges have existed, they have recognized a responsibility to their students. For the first several centuries of American higher education faculty members held responsibility for both the academic and the moral development of students (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Rudolph, 1962). Small faculties served in both the roles of tutor and of parent for equally small student bodies. College was a community and campus life was critical to the educative role (Hoekema, 1996).

Late nineteenth-century colleges were busy places, but it was not because of the actions of the faculty. Students coordinated their own lives and created a variety of organizations to fill their time: college class organizations, fraternities, glee clubs, campus newspapers, yearbooks, intramural and intercollegiate sports teams, and other student collectivities. As colleges began to grow and curricula changed, faculty members became more invested in their research and scholarly work and less interested in investing in their student's development. This was accompanied by a continued institutional desire to develop "well-rounded individuals" (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976).

Together these factors helped transfer responsibilities over students to specialists in a new field known as student services. These specialists were called deans, and they were tasked with overseeing what had been understood as "college life" and transformed it into their own professional specialty – student life (Doyle, 2004; Moffatt, 1991).

The first known dean joined the field in 1890 when Charles Eliot, President of Harvard, streamlined his administration so that he could manage his increasing work load. To do so, he announced the appointment of two members of the Harvard faculty as deans; one for faculty concerns, the other as dean for students. The title dean of men did not formally appear until 1909 when Thomas Arkle Clark, a professor of rhetoric and English at the University of Illinois, rose to that rank. These men were soon joined by others across the nation, and by the 1920s most of the larger schools in the country had a similar position. However, the positions were poorly defined, and the men appointed to them often found that writing their own job description was their first task (Schwartz, 1997; 2003).

Female administrators followed their male colleagues within a few years. However, their positions came with clarity of focus and responsibility different from the men. They also came with more consistent titles. Beginning at the University of Chicago in 1892 with Alice Palmer, the former president of Wellesley College, deans of women were appointed to deal with the "troubling population" of women (Schwartz, 2003, p. 220). Most college and university presidents had no experience educating women, and quickly realized they needed administrative assistance to "advise, assist, and counsel" this new student population (Schwartz, 1997, p. 419). In addition to providing counsel, these deans also had responsibility for housing, etiquette, governance,

leadership, and athletic opportunities for women. By 1903 deans of women organized into regional organizations and developed clear understandings of the position. These regional and national associations offered the deans of women the opportunity to share best practices and offer support to each other. Unlike contemporary deans, nearly seventy five percent held academic rank, forty percent the rank of full professor. These women were highly educated and active in both social and political causes (Schwartz 1997; Gerda, 2004). They were more than "wise and pious matrons" for the female students. They were advocates, professionals, and educators. The first deans of women were a force unlike any seen in American higher education to that time (Nidiffer, 2000).

The growth of administrative positions and associations to support them led William Rainey Harper to call for a systematic study of students and the field focused on student issues in 1905 (Doyle, 2004). Since this call for study, the name of the work and the type of work changed across the country, but with one notable exception (Mueller, 1966) the work of student affairs has always been understood as face-to-face work with individual students.

Using the lessons learned during World War I, advocates for student personnel offices began to publish their ideas in 1919. H.D. Kitson originated the term student personnel in 1917 but advocated for something much different than today's student affairs offices provide (Bradshaw, 1936)(Bradshaw, 1936). These offices were intended to obtain accurate data on each student, record the requirements of different professions, provide means for each student to become familiar with their abilities and the requirements of professions in which they had interest, and to supervise the use of tests to assist in this work (Yoakum, 1984). They were not job placement or vocational guidance

offices, but rather, they focused exclusively on information that would assist students and employers in identifying each other. By 1925 half of all colleges in America had an office of this type (Fenske, 1980). The surge of students flocking to campus following World War II gave some urgency to organizing and systematizing the profession beyond merely employment matching and skills assessment (Fitzgerald, Johnson, & Norris, 1970).

It would be another decade before student personnel meant more than this. As the field grew, so did the understanding of the work of its professionals. By 1931, student personnel work grew to mean:

> the systematic bringing to bear on the individual student all those influences, of whatever nature, which will stimulate him and assist him, through his own effort, to develop in body, mind and character to the limit of his individual capacity for growth, and helping him to apply his powers so developed most effectively to the work of the world. (Clothier, 1931, p. 10)

The ultimate goal was still to find work, but the field was moving towards developing the whole person. New lists of practices and functions of personnel offices accompanied this new definition. In additional to vocational planning, administrators and faculty expected student personnel officers to be involved in the admissions efforts of the college, assist students with financial difficulties, provide adequate housing, assist in the selection of instructors for the institution who would support student personnel work, and oversee extra-curricular activities (Clothier, 1931). Faculty remained critical to the success of student personnel work, but the process became primarily coordinated by a professional staff of administrators (Lloyd-Jones, 1934). The publication of *The Student Personnel*

Point of View in 1937 helped to further codify the role of student personnel administrators and was the first widespread assertion of the importance of student affairs. It listed twenty-three services that campuses should offer and noted that the work was a shared responsibility of the whole campus. The full campus community remained part of this work, but expectations remained that student personnel primarily served the faculty through supporting the academic mission of the school (Doyle, 2004).

The specialized work of student personnel offices continued to grow over the next several decades. As it did so, it also grew and matured in its understanding of itself. When The American College Personnel Association released a revised edition of *Student Personnel Point of View* in 1949 it recognized more diverse and larger student bodies. As a result it called for more specialized services and offices and finally signaled an end to the roles of faculty and students in this work. Along with the changing nature of the work came a changing name for it. Student personnel shifted to student affairs in the 1960s and shifted again by the 1980s to student development. Throughout the literature, there is a clear attempt to keep the understanding of student personnel, student affairs, and student development work separate from student personnel, student affairs, and student development administration but little effort to keep separate the three descriptors. They are often used interchangeably within single works (Chandler, 1973; Crookston, 1972; Doyle, 2004).

Along with the names of the work, the administrative titles changed as well. By the 1950s, deans of students, vice presidents for student affairs, or other similarly titled positions that oversaw the entirety of the student body replaced both deans of men and

women (Schwartz, 1997). During the 1960s campuses around the country established student affairs offices.

The development of student affairs as a professional field resulted in a period of significant overlap between the responsibilities of the administrative staff of many colleges and those of the affiliated student association of the YMCA. One of the first came as institutional religion waned at the beginning of the twentieth century. No longer taking responsibility for religious formation themselves, schools looked for other outlets to continue the moral development of their students (Braswell, 1986). The YMCA filled this role on many campuses from the turn of the 20th century through the end of World War II. Some schools created the title of University Chaplain for members of the community at this same time. Often these University Chaplains were YMCA/YWCA directors already on campus. This new affiliation and the salary paid by university that accompanied the new title, helped to solidify the place of the YMCA in the religious heart of the institutions (Setran, 2007).

In 1965 Robert Michaelson published a study of the official religion curriculum amongst American colleges and universities for the Society for Religion in Higher Education. He identified the decades on either side of the turn of the twentieth century as a critical period for the restoration of American scholarship in religion. This was a marked recovery from the lack or religious study in American colleges and universities at the end of the nineteenth century; however, this increase in religious scholarship did not last for long – although there were a few notable exceptions. During the 1950's and 1960's the study of religion returned to a normalized place in the curriculum of institutions of higher education. Each of the changes corresponded with a cultural shift,

and the last of these resurgences went along side a new interest in non-Western traditions (Michaelson, 1965). One consistency throughout was the coordination of campus YMCAs and collegiate institutions in religious instruction.

Student housing was often another point of overlap between the YMCA and the institutions that hosted associations. Both the campus association and the schools with which they were affiliated had as their goal a complete student experience, and each wanted to make sure the opportunities they offered to students were beneficial. The Y was also interested in serving its own benefit through increased membership and activity, while the colleges through the influence of their student personnel offices were working to institute a policy of addressing the needs of the whole students to make the school a better place. Students could live in either individual accommodations or in group situation. Students living in group housing, including the YMCA, reported better living conditions and typically got the most for their money (Butts, 1937).

When the YMCA departed from most university campuses in the mid twentieth century, the schools absorbed many of its essential activities and services (Burkhardt, 1995). During the 1970s the Y Student Associations experienced significant decline and dropped to fewer than thirty – from a high of 800. Surprisingly, the 1980s was a decade of resurgence for the Campus Y on campuses across the country under new leadership and a new student interest in service – following two decades of protests and free spirits. However, another change in national leadership during the 1990s did not place the same importance on the campus YMCA; this position quickly wiped out the gains of the 80s. Some student associations remain on US campuses, but the majority of associations struggled to find their role in the complicated field of campus ministries and university

provided student services (Burkhardt, 1995). The story of this struggle will focus primarily on the student association at the University of Georgia. However, before investigating Georgia's place in the history of the Student Movement of the YMCA this dissertation will investigate the larger context of campus controlled religion as well as the history of the student YMCA.

Literature and Sources

At the turn of the twentieth century, the YMCA was an important provider of organized activities on the campuses of American colleges and universities. The YMCA did not invent the idea of campus activities, but it did provide a force for institutionalization and proliferation unseen until its arrival on campus. The quick and thorough departure of the YMCA from most American campuses in the middle of the twentieth century precipitated by forces both on and off campus left numerous activities orphaned. Many of the activities the YMCA pioneered and others it helped facilitate remained a part of campus life after the demise of the campus associations. There was a time when the YMCA was the leader in campus religion and activities; this project investigates that rise to prominence and the particular instance of its rapid decline at the University of Georgia. An investigation of the role of the YMCA in the formation of student personnel culture and student personnel administrator's fight for respectability sits alongside an attempt to offer suggestions for moving this conversation forward. It is situated in three areas: the history of YMCA campus associations, the origins and history of student affairs, and the specific story of the changing role of the Voluntary Religious Association (combined YMCA and YWCA) at the University of Georgia between 1940 and 1948. This thesis investigates the extent to which the nature of institutions' early

student services efforts were directly influenced by YMCA leadership, history, and precedents through the use of existing secondary sources as well as institutional and university archives.

Historiographical Considerations

All history lives within context, and the history of the Voluntary Religious Association at the University of Georgia is squarely placed within the context of nineteenth and twentieth century American higher education, the global history of the YMCA and YWCA, and the history of student development/affairs. Any study of higher education is indebted to the work of Rudolph(1962) (1962) and Geiger (2000). Specific research into the history of the University of Georgia began with the work of Coulter (1951) and the seminal work of Dyer (1985).

While no comprehensive study exists examining the role of the YMCA in the creation and expansion of student services, several important secondary sources offer insight into this process. David Setran's (2005; 2007) work on the College Y is the most thorough work on the campus associations, but Finnegan (2005; 2006) and Finnegan and Alleman (2009; 2013) have more recently given depth to the role of the YMCA in some areas of student services – particularly handbooks and orientation. Additional works on the YMCA offered information on the role of the YMCA in student activities. Mott's (1903) *Students of North America United* provided a look from inside the Association on the importance of engaging students where they were and to its understanding of future possibilities at the turn of the twentieth century. Bouman (2004) offered clarity into the importance of the YMCA in the daily lives and the religious instruction of students in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Ober's (1918) work on the role of

Association Secretaries offered valuable insight into the importance of the men who held these leadership roles and the relational networks they formed among themselves. Other Association publications giving specific attention to the work with youth and college students during this period were particularly valuable in developing an internal understanding of the scope and importance of the collegiate Associations. Eddy's (1944) centennial history focuses on the power of the movement. Similarly, Morgan's *Student Religion During Fifty Years* (1935)(1935) gives the same treatment to the Intercollegiate Associations over their first fifty years. *Fifty Years' Work Amongst Men in All Lands* gave insight into the earliest years of the global movement (YMCA, 1894).

Significant works on the history of student affairs provided background into the earliest years of that field. Cowley (1934) offers a critical eye and a demonstration of an early understanding of the importance of residential housing for student development. Others give broad historical basis for the field as a whole (Loy & Painter, 1997; Mueller, 1961). Handbooks for the profession also offered historical perspective. Parker (1978) helped guide an understanding of the term student development and its earliest implementation. Komives and Woodward (2003) offered broad historical information as well as practical guidance on how historical information and contemporary ideas apply to the work of student services. Schwartz's (1997; 2003; 2010) work on the origins and evolution of the role of Deans of Men and Deans of Women as well as the work of Nidiffer (2000) and Gerda (2004) documenting the proliferation and professionalism of Deans of Women offered a framework on the changes in these roles and the field of which they were a part. Evans, Forney, and Guido-DiBrito (1998) provided a deeper look into student development theory and the earliest developments in that field.

Hamrick, Evans, and Schuh (2002) guided an understanding of how student affairs theory is put into practice and offered insight into the work of the YMCA in these areas. Rhatigan (2000) offered a deeper look into the history of the field.

It is fortunate that some colleges and universities have been as consistent in their efforts to document and maintain their histories as they have been at educating their students. Apart from these field specific works, the study of institutional religion (Marsden, 1994), religious instruction (Michaelson, 1965) and the histories of numerous American colleges and universities provided important insight and direction. University histories offered access to a large number of schools in a relatively short period of time and offer the ability to research institutions across the country. They certainly also have their limitations (Goodchild & Huk, 1990).

Ultimately, this project is about transition rather than historical documentation. Three key ideas have shaped the ways in which I have thought about the transition of activities and responsibility from the YMCA to campus student services offices. March, et. al. (1991) offer insight into how organizations appropriate ideas when only offered limited opportunities. Having a monolithic organization dominating campus activities presents such a case for the sponsoring institution. Toma (2003) shows how the control and appropriation of college sports served as a means for institution building for colleges and universities in America; it is fully possible that this same motivation fueled the transition of activities from the YMCA to universities. Fenske (1980) provides a hypothesis of a less calculated effort by these institutions and suggests that this transition and the growth of student services happened "by default." These three ideas – copy, build, default – inform the final analysis of this work.

Sources

This dissertation is built upon a combination of primary and secondary sources. Critical resources were located in the institutional archives of the YMCA at the University of Minnesota. These archives offer a fuller picture of the YMCA and the history of its role in the development student affairs. The Kautz Archives are the official archive of the YMCA and have expansive information dedicated to the student associations and the particular histories of campus associations at schools across the country.

The second large source for data collection was the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at The University of Georgia. The motivation behind this project came from a prior encounter with the YMCA collection at the University of Georgia and a return to the collection allowed for deeper insight into the Dean of Students Office in the first half of the twentieth century and its relationship with the Voluntary Religious Association at that time. It also allowed for a renewed analysis of earlier research in the YMCA collection.

The greater story of the YMCA as well as the story of student affairs development was considered through the combination of published primary sources from the 19th and early 20th centuries and secondary sources. The most helpful of these were handbooks, magazines, and training guides published by the YMCA, college and university histories, and early student affairs publications. These were accessed online, at the Pitts Theology Library at Emory University, the library at the University of North Carolina Greensboro, Smith Library at High Point University and at the library at the University of Georgia.

Chapter Outline

Chapter two examines the early history of American higher education, paying specific attention to the role of religion in American higher education, the importance of religious revivals, and religious instruction as a part of undergraduate curriculums. Chapter three highlights the growth of the YMCA as a voluntary, student-centered, and largely student-driven religious force on campus and its metamorphosis into campus activity coordinator and driver of social change. It also points to the importance of a few individuals in creating a national movement and the reach of the YMCA into unexpected student populations. Chapter four shares the story of the unique and particular rise and demise of the campus association at the University of Georgia as one that paralleled the national growth of student associations and then broke from the that story and from the pattern of involvement in the mid twentieth century. It also closely examines the importance of two men in both the rise and fall of the University of Georgia association. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of individuals in organizational decisions. Chapter five offers observations on the lasting legacy of the YMCA in American higher education and the importance of sustained campus relationships; although higher education is a large industry, most decisions are still made at the individual campus level.

CHAPTER 2

SETTING THE STAGE

Early American college life for most students was rigidly structured. Most of their time was spent in lectures, recitations, and mandatory readings. When students were not forced to attend to their academics, a significant portion of their time was devoted to religious activity. Some of this religious experience relied on the traditions of compulsory religion through chapel, the official college curriculum, and other mandatory religious activity. However, much was driven by student interest and self motivation. Regardless, religion played a role on early campuses. The traditional story of American higher education reflects a process of secularization from religious and thoroughly Protestant beginnings to a situation where religion remains as no more than a "vestigial voice" (Marsden & Longfield, 1992, p. 29). This story is not entirely accurate as it misrepresents institutional willingness to outsource religious activity as an institutional abandonment of moral and religious responsibility (Ramsay, 2011); however, it does fairly portray the shifting role of the institutions in the religious activities of their students.

Religious Beginnings of American College Life

There is no doubt that religion played an important role in early American colleges and universities. During the first half of the eighteenth century, half the graduates of Harvard and Yale took up careers in the ministry (Holifield, 2007). Likewise, early Americans saw religion as impossible to separate from the greater field of

human understanding and as an aid to the development of a free society. For these reasons, it also appeared inseparable from the practice of higher learning (Braswell, 1986). The Reformed traditions developed the first colleges, and the Presbyterians and Congregationalists outstripped every other denomination in founding colleges for nearly a century (Tewksbury, 1932). At the time of the Great Awakening churches needed additional ministers, so the Congregationalist and Presbyterians began to train more of them. Ministers teaching in colleges toward the end of the eighteenth century saw their role as helping to reform youth and offering moral education they felt was lacking in families (Vine, 1976). By 1800, Presbyterians had established nine lasting institutions in the country and Congregationalists had five. Although they were founded by different denominations, these colleges were also establishing a new type of Protestant non-sectarianism that could appeal to a broader range of potential constituents (Marsden, 1994).

Only a few decades later, at the start of the Civil War, the Reformed traditions controlled sixty institutions – twenty-six more than the fast-growing Methodists. The Presbyterians showed they were committed to establishing colleges and supporting them financially. In 1851 the Presbyterian Church controlled or had founded two thirds of the colleges in the United States. But they were not alone in their desire to found educational institutions. By the middle of the nineteenth century most denominations made significant investment in education for their children and for their preachers (Tewksbury, 1932). However, denominations were not alone in establishing colleges and controlling students' experiences.

Many states also recognized the importance of the education of their citizens and founded public institutions. The two oldest of these are both in the south; the University of Georgia was chartered in 1785, and the University of North Carolina opened its doors in 1786. However, both state and denominational schools showed a great deal of similarity prior to the Civil War. All, although with varying degrees, had as their goals, Christian and virtuous education, the encouragement of useful learning, an education in government, and creating educated citizens. These colleges were not generally explicitly religious but regardless of affiliation the presidents agreed that genuine education included morality and religion (Schmidt, 1930). College was not only about a religious education, it was also about education for citizens.

Students were expected to be leaders in society at the time of their graduation and colleges focused significant resources on creating strong citizens (Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 2002). The commitment to creating an education citizenry was affected by the educational requirements of most vocations of the day. Most professions of the time did not require a college education. Those looking to learn a trade or a skill – including law and medicine – apprenticed themselves to a master and learned on the job (Rudolph, 1962). It was only natural that there would be more ministers graduating from college than other professions.

Many of the teachers as well as most of the presidents of these colleges were ministers (Holifield, 2007). In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it was nearly impossible to find men from outside the ministry who were willing to teach. Thomas Jefferson had to hire all but one faculty member from overseas to avoid hiring ministers when he founded the University of Virginia. Elsewhere, religious leaders were

trusted to teach and conveyed a zeal that translated itself into the classroom (Bratt, 1999). That zeal also made for an environment pregnant for religious revivals on college campuses.

Revivals

These revivals mark some of the earliest examples of students organizing themselves for extracurricular activity. They are also powerful examples of the importance of religion in helping students make sense of transition and challenging times. It was rare that the institutions played any role in organizing or supporting the revivals; at times they actively worked to stop them. Through revival experiences students learned a set of skills that would influence centuries of student activities.

One of the first recorded examples of a college revival occurred at Hampden-Sydney College in 1787. At that time, the faculty noticed that there did not appear to be a single student "who gave the least evidence of soundness of respect for religion" (Thomas, 1983). Only one year earlier, Thomas Hill, a student whose mother expressed hopes for him to become a minister, had a religious conversion alone in the woods but was unable to find a Bible anywhere on campus with which to practice his newfound piety. Later that year, two other students joined Hill in a regular prayer meeting. When they were discovered by their classmates singing a hymn in a dorm room, nothing short of a riot ensued. An investigation was held by some of the faculty the following evening at chapel, but they found no grounds on which to charge the students. Eventually, the president of the college invited the boys to continue their meetings in his parlor and within a few weeks nearly the entire student body was involved in the awakening (Brinkley, 1994). This newfound religion was not entirely welcomed, as expressed by George Wythe, signer of the Declaration of Independence and college trustee, in a letter

to a friend when he noted that the college was, "going to nothing, owing to the religious phrensy [sic]" (Brinkley, 1994, p. 30). However, this frenzy doesn't appear to have gone much beyond reading scripture, singing hymns, and saying prayer. It did not present a significant security threat, and students demonstrated an ability to organize a new type of group activity.

Elsewhere, revivals were fostered by institutions. In 1802, a revival swept the campus of Yale University under the watchful eye of its president, Timothy Dwight. Prior to Dwight's arrival, Yale underwent a significant dip in expressed religion (Candler, 1904). The turn of the nineteenth century and the arrival of Dwight brought greater interest in the subject of religion amongst the students at Yale. Princeton experienced several revivals around the same time (Maclean, 1969). Likewise, all the existing institutions of the land had similar experiences – except Harvard (Candler, 1904). Once again, these revivals were marked by a calm nature, and the increase and piety was usually exhibited through increased prayerfulness and a moral rightness. At Denison College annual revivals, marked by prayer meetings, regularly accompanied college life through the 1830's (Chessman, 1957). Typically these revivals were initiated by a particularly pious leader or as with Hampden-Sydney College, a student with a heightened level of religious interest. However, sometimes college revivals were the products of more direct crisis.

At Dickinson College, the winter of 1822 was marked by the death of President John Mitchell Mason's son. Mason was a vocal skeptic of revivals and particularly revivalists. He was careful to warn the entire Dickinson community to beware of revivalists at the funeral of his son because revivalists were known to take advantage of

funerals to advance their cause. Surprisingly, Mason became the revivalist himself when, overcome with emotion at the gravesite, he expressed a public outburst of prayer. A campus wide revival ensued, and it left its mark on Dickinson's history. The revival featured an increase in prayer services and more meaningful worship at chapel. However, it was not all positive. One night several students celebrated the revival with gunfire and accidentally caught the main college building on fire (Sellers, 1973). This type of enthusiasm was the exception rather than the rule.

Some revivals stretched beyond the gates of the college campus, and like those contained to campus, students and faculty played varied roles. In 1837 a great revival hit New Brunswick, New Jersey when students from Rutgers College began to hold services in the local Baptist church. The student preachers gained the attention of the town, and soon other churches asked students from the college to fill their pulpits. Students not called to preach were also caught up in the "spirit of the times" and attend services at the variety of churches in town. The students and the town experienced "the heart-searching message of those days" (Demarest, 1924, p. 317).

Elsewhere, the faculty of the college played a more central role in fostering a revival experience. In 1839, a student arrived to Emory and Henry College a day late for the start of a new year and found the campus deserted; everyone was on a spiritual field trip. The faculty had taken students away from campus to a revival. For at least a decade, the beginning of the school year was marked with a trip to a nearby Methodist Camp Meeting. Only once the meeting concluded and the students returned to campus did the school year begin (Kincheloe, 1991). Church related institutions proved themselves experts in encouraging student religious participation.

Study of Religion

Religion on campus extended beyond revivals. One of the expressed goals of institutions of higher education in early American was the moral formation of students; much of this took place through traditional educational models of recitation, and memorization (Holifield, 2003). Religious instruction came to be an important part of daily life at the universities, particularly those across the South. However, this religious instruction was not limited to the doctrine of any particular religious sect as it would have been at a denominational college.

At one public university in the south, student's lives were highly programmatic and included two separate periods of recitations a day and a set time for evening prayer each day (Dyer, 1985). These courses were meant to be practical for the students and respond to a desire of the students for relevant courses in an area of interest to them ("Remember Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth", n.d.). At times, universities would arrange for a local minister to teach these courses, so they also signified a continued understanding that religious instruction was still the responsibility of religious personnel, and that the study of religion was primarily a study of Christianity. Nationally, education held a central place in the life of the American church and according to at least one European observer church education was one of the strongest foundations of the United States (Trumbull, 1888).

A practical form of theology dominated early American college curriculums. By the eighteenth century, practicality in religion aligned closely with the meaning of a virtuous life. The Calvinists had always thought theology to be practical, but began to merge the meaning of practical with ethical: effectively narrowing the usage. They

placed new and greater emphasis on ethical motivations, particularly self-love, divine law, Christian scheme, doctrines of Christ, moral duties required by Christ (Holifield, 2003). By the time denominational colleges underwent a resurgence towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, moral philosophy was included in theology textbooks and theological practicality and theological rationality came to be viewed almost as identical subjects. From the founding of the American capitalist ideal (Weber, 1930) to a reflection of the broader contextual culture (Lichterman & Potts, 2009), American religion has maintained a public and civic responsibility from its earliest days.

A curricular reform movement appeared in the 1820s advocating for the extension of the practical to other aspects of the educational experience. The *Amherst Report* praised the value of scientific reasoning and advanced studies. Amherst and Harvard Colleges were two of the leading proponents of this new movement. They were also two of the most significant competitors to Yale University. Yale was the largest college in the nation at that time but it was under pressure from Harvard, Amherst, and Union for valuable tuition dollars. In 1828 the faculty of Yale College issued a report celebrating the strength of the classical curriculum and advocating for its continued dominance in higher education (Potts, 2010). This curriculum focused on learning classical languages and the liberal arts primarily through the practice of memorization and recitation. In advocating for the classical curriculum the *Yale Report* placed emphasis on the development of student's mental ability over an expertise in any particular subject area. In addition to fighting against the critics of formal education in the classics, the reports also pushed back against new teaching methods. It did not happen all at once, but recitations began to give way to professional lectures, laboratory time became a part of

physical science education, and more demonstrations were brought into the classroom. At some schools that had been successful, but the undergraduate faculty at Yale was less sure of their place in the classroom. The forceful defense of the classical curriculum and the liberal arts did however, open the door for the study of new areas – assuming those areas were seen to increase the mental ability of the students (Herbst, 2004). These changes affected the study of religion.

While the Bible was an excellent tool for the study of Greek, the Yale report and its position on the role of individual disciplines also assisted in moving religion from the core of the curriculum to a more focused and dedicated area of study. By 1850, the study of religion had largely been relegated to a portion of a Moral Philosophy course that had gained in popularity around the nation (Bouman, 2004). Robert Michaelson (1965) found that the decades on either side of the turn of the twentieth century showed a marked recovery from the lack or religious study in American colleges and universities through the middle of the nineteenth century; however, this increase in religious scholarship did not last for long – although there were a few notable exceptions. It was not until the 1950's and 1960's that the study of religion returned to the curriculum in a majority of institutions of higher education (Michaelson, 1965).

But Not All That Religious

As mentioned above, an education in morality was seen as an important outcome of early American higher education, and faculty were willingly "producing moral students using the 'artillery' of camp meetings and emotional revivals" in addition to the moral formation taking place in the classroom (Kincheloe, 1991, p. 103). At Middlebury, Mount Union, Oberlin, and countless other schools around the country, religious events

were held to address a variety of student disciplinary issues. Men's, women's, and co-educational institutions all regularly experienced and instituted a cycle of religious events on campus (Stameshkin, 1985; Osborne, 1967; Gallien, 2005). This reflected a faculty interested in using religion to control students, but also students who were generally not all that religious. In many cases students were clear about their lack of religious affiliation.

Although most early American colleges and universities had foundational ties to churches or denominations and regularly engaged in religious instruction, there was no guarantee of significant levels of student piety. While some early colleges were more thoroughly religious than others, student misconduct and mischief were more common than students' free expression of religion. As mentioned above, students were subject to regular religious services and classes. However, forced religious practice did not guarantee any high level of student religious belief.

There is documentation of significant student indifference to religion as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, and by 1786 it could be said of the students of at least one Presbyterian college that, not one student "gave the least evidence of soundness of respect for religion" (Thomas, 1983, p. 322). Just over a century later, at one of the nation's leading universities, the situation remained much the same. Yale University was reported to only have two students who professed to be Christian (Candler, 1904). None of these examples could be blamed on a lack of effort on behalf of the administrations or the faculties.

The story of deeply religious institutions and students is not entirely incorrect, but it does exaggerate the importance of the training of ministers in early American higher

education and the role of religion in the founding of those same institutions. The training of ministers was never the only function, and possibly not even the main function of American colleges. Ministry was not the end goal of most students (Schmidt, 1930). Nor was it the goal of the sponsoring denominations. They often founded colleges because of their ultimate concern for society's well being (Shockley, 1989). Students also found time to organize protests against the restrictive control of their social lives from faculty. These protests eventually led to the creation of fraternities, literary societies, and other organized extracurricular activities (Rudolph, 1962).

This disregard for campus religion and proper behavior was repeated around the nation. Students at both public and church affiliated institutions exhibited "widespread indifference to Christianity" as early as the eighteenth century (Thomas, 1983, p. 317). During the early nineteenth century "there was constant transgression of the rules" and nearly every college experienced at least "one great riot." At both Princeton and the University of Virginia students tied calves in the chapel and threw firecrackers into professors' rooms (Schmidt, 1930, p. 41). Students at Middlebury College experienced extended periods of "irregular conduct" (Stameshkin, 1985, p. 45). In 1840 University of Georgia students stoned a professor; in 1850 University of North Carolina students assaulted two professors with the intent to kill them (Bratt, 1999). In 1851, at Randolph-Macon College, a Methodist school, students were anything but pious; insurrection was at an all time high. They broke bottles of champagne, told crude jokes, barred the doors of recitation rooms, filled the well with logs, joined in a "slight calathump," and even attempted to stone a professor (Scanlon, 1983, p. 85). In 1856 University of South Carolina students and police fought over the perceived mistreatment of a fellow student

(Bratt, 1999). Student violence continued to plague colleges and universities long after evangelicals took over. Students also organized their transgression. At the University of North Carolina they formed a "Lawless Club" in 1857. This group was dedicated to "stand by one another in their breaches of University rules." Their ability to create disorder was impressive, and when faculty attempted to rein them in the members of the club, like their counterparts at Randolph-Macon, threw stones at those professors (Battle, 1974). "The personal piety, and pious teachings, of school leaders proved inadequate for the suppression of violent outbursts" (Bratt, 1999, p. 149).

At institutions around the nation, the accounts of student religious belief told much the same story. Even when students attended chapel, they were not always models of Christian piety. For one example, Henry Tappan, the president of the University of Michigan found chapel to be the most troublesome thing about the university. Students regularly exhibited appalling behavior; one sophomore even threw nuts at the freshmen in the middle of the sermon towards the end of the nineteenth century. As a state university it should not have been expected to deal directly with religious teaching and indoctrination; it was after all the state's university. But in its role as the state's university it was expected to respond to the needs of all its residents and the realities of the local economy, and to represent each of the major denominations. At the founding, of the University of Michigan four professors were chosen – one from each denomination (Skerpan, 1998). In his role as President, Tappan worked to lessen the control of the denominations and look to academic rigor as the standard by which the University should hire faculty (Bouman, 2004).

Even the denominational colleges responded to a variety of external forces (Marsden, 1994). These forces included the changing religious connections of the students themselves. In 1883, the YMCA estimated that less than half of all American college students were Christian (YMCA, 1883). With fewer professing believers, the denominational colleges had a smaller pool of students from which to draw their entering classes.

Some students were religious, and others were not. Even many schools that were formed out of religious motivations had a majority of students who would never become ministers and more than a few who would not have religion as a central part of their lives. Colleges were not seminaries; nor were they the only organizations that could have religious influence on students.

Other Religious Forces

The compulsory religious practices of antebellum colleges and universities did not always function to form religious students. However, not all of the changes that took place in the religious ethos of antebellum American higher education were dictated by the institutions themselves. The availability of interested and qualified individuals to work at these institutions, outside pressure from denominations, developing legal codes, and an increased interest in voluntary religious practice by students all played a role in helping fully form the story of religion in higher education.

As noted earlier, many of the teachers at early colleges and universities were ministers, and this likely had some influence on students, though it did not affect them all. These teachers were often waiting on a call to a pulpit and biding their time through teaching. They were also teaching because no one else could be found. It was nearly

impossible to find men of any profession beyond the clergy qualified to teach. There were other established professions in America, but their practitioners were taught through an apprentice system. Lawyers, doctors, and even many ministers learned their craft in this manner. The first American profession to emphasize academic education was the ministry, but not all branches of the American religious tree were confident in the power of education. Prior to the early nineteenth century, Baptists, Methodists, and other populist groups were overtly critical of higher education for ministers, and were only slightly less skeptical of its necessity for the rest of the population (Holifield, 2007). Yet, they wanted all students to know the joys and discipline of religion. When state universities opened in North and South Carolina, in 1795 and 1801 respectively, their predominately ordained faculty dominated the higher education marketplace in the South. Southern denominational colleges first appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century; however the denominations were active players in higher education from the beginning (Godbold, 1944).

By the 1840s four denominational colleges existed in the state of Georgia. Methodists established Emory, for men, and Wesleyan, for women; Baptists founded Mercer College; and Presbyterians founded Oglethorpe. Denominations were making the statement that instead of trying to control the state universities around them they intended to compete head-to-head. This competition was not without some limits. Regardless of founding motivations, religious or otherwise, all institutions of higher education were dependent on the state governments for the granting of a charter. Many states – including Georgia – refused charters to any colleges that seemed "too sectarian" or had explicitly religious names (Braswell, 1986; Dyer, 1985). Baptists and Methodists proved to be

more effective competitors in some states than others. The attacks, the competition, and a lack of funding from the state, led to a steep decline in enrollment and a deterioration of many public campuses. By 1850 the University of Georgia had fewer than one hundred students; in comparison, the University of North Carolina had 460 and the University of Virginia had almost a thousand (Geiger, 2000).

In the 1890s Methodist Bishop Warren Candler made a personal attack on the University of Georgia. He was unhappy with its approach to moral and religious education, so he took his fight to the state legislature to attempt to get UGA's funding reduced even more. He preferred that individuals support the institutions they preferred, rather than the state providing the funding. He noted that the University of Virginia was surviving with this fundraising method (Candler, 1893). Candler's criticisms may have been influenced by his role in creating and sustaining Emory University, a Methodist institution, but others took aim on their local public universities with the same vigor displayed by Candler. In light of these types of attacks public universities often relinquished any attempt to compete for religious authority with the church schools (Bratt, 1999).

State universities continued to provide religious outlet and instruction to the best of their abilities; however, it must be stressed, they were not, nor were they ever, intentionally religious establishments. So when another institution appeared ready to take the reins of religious leadership, universities around the nation were more than willing to recognize its shortcomings and offer full support. These institutions also recognized the importance and power of voluntary student religious practice. Compulsory religion had

less than perfect results, and the institutions and their faculty looked to other possibilities to help shape their students into moral men.

The American landscape changed significantly after the Civil War; the once thriving state schools of the South were transformed into institutions struggling to keep their doors open (Bratt, 1999). Elsewhere, modern universities sprung up around the nation and the similarities between denominational colleges and state institutions faded over the next fifty years. On campuses students and institutions maintained some religious devotion, but direct university participation in organized religion faded. The institutional relationship that remained was shaped by a variety of forces, but the academic study of religion, legal decisions, and growing voluntary student religious practice were the primary actors. The institutions that emerged appeared less religious but the opportunities for voluntary student study and devotion grew significantly (Robb, 2003).

The Growth of Organized Secular Activities

While much of college life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries related to the religious life of students, religion did not hold exclusive rights to extracurricular activities. By the middle of the eighteenth century a variety of other activities began to compete for students' attention with support from the faculty due to their continued desire to develop the whole student (Geiger & Bubolz, 2000).

Literary Societies

An interest in additional opportunity for campus organization and a romantic view of classical Greece led to the formation of Greek-letter organizations on American campuses. A group of students and faculty founded Phi Beta Kappa at the College of

William & Mary in 1776 as a literary and debate society (Jackson, 2000). At first, Phi Beta Kappa was a student organization, not unlike today's social fraternities, but as early as 1778 its membership was opened to alumni and honorary members. Regardless, its members held many secrets of membership – ritual, oaths, handshake, motto – as well as external marks of belonging. They also held to a code of conduct and character that encouraged "friendship, morality, and literature" (Voorhees, 1945, p. 12). Word of this new type of organization spread to campuses across the country. Some, like Yale and Harvard, chose to form local chapters of Phi Beta Kappa; others caught in the spirit created their own local literary societies.

The societies offered members additional training in composition and oratory. They held regular debates; readings; and orations, and the almost always enjoyed support from the faculty. Most colleges had two such societies and the students were typically split equally among them (Robson, 1977). At Hampden-Sydney College the two rival societies formed prior to the turn of the nineteenth century. The Union Society and the Philanthropic society – although not Greek letter organizations – quickly rose to a place of prominence on the campus. In addition to giving students options for an activity other than classroom recitation or private study in their room, they provided access to books and other resources that students could not always afford on their own. These societies also opened the university gates to lecturers beyond the faculty of their own institution. The societies regularly scheduled lectures held debates (Brinkley, 1994). Around the country societies played a central role in the life of universities. They held weekly lectures, maintained the primary libraries on campus, and sponsored guest speakers for special lectures on campus. Membership was selective, but their influence was broad. At

times they were called on to support the community through the use of their halls, but the suspension of their meetings was not taken lightly (Coulter, 1951).

Social Fraternities

A different type of Greek-letter organization appeared a half century later at Union College in Schenectady, New York when a group of students transformed a group known as the Philosophers into the Kappa Alpha Society in 1825. Described as a uniquely American institution, these new social fraternities function as a "miniature of the larger American democracy" (Robson, 1977, p. 1). It maintained some of the rituals and characteristics of the earlier literary societies, but Kappa Alpha was distinct in that its membership was limited to students and that it celebrated more elaborate rituals than other organizations (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976). It only took two years for fellow students to found two competitor organizations on campus, creating the Union Triad and marking the beginnings of American social fraternities (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). By 1840 campuses across the northeast had social fraternities on their campuses, and no more than ten years later fraternities were providing housing options for their members in dedicated houses (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976). Fraternities offered highly structured college students an opportunity for friendship and leadership unavailable to them up to this point (Hodge, 1927). They proved to be very popular. The University of Virginia was home to no fewer than twelve national fraternities in 1868 (Hart, 1967).

It took twenty years after the founding of Kappa Alpha before a sustainable social fraternity arrived in the South. A group called the Mystical Seven, founded at Wesleyan University in Connecticut in 1837, spread to the South with the establishment of a chapter at Emory University in 1841. Three years later students founded a Mystical

Seven chapter at the University of Georgia. This began a long tradition of fraternity involvement at both schools and the uniquely Southern tradition of referring to these social groups as “Mystic Associations" (Judson, 2002). The Civil War took a toll on most fraternities and sororities in the South, but they rose again with great strength following the war. The first Greek letter organization in the South, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, was founded at the University of Alabama in 1856(Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

Greek letter organizations were not the exclusive privilege of white men. By the middle of the nineteenth century women began to enter American higher education. While there are several examples of women elected into all-male fraternities, the majority of the growth of women in Greek letter organizations was through groups limited in membership to women. The first of these, a sisterhood society named the Adelpheans, was founded in 1851. Other groups like this popped up around the nation until the first Greek-letter society for women was founded on January 27, 1870. At this time women accounted for nearly 11,000 of the 65,000 students enrolled in American colleges and universities and bonded around the idea that “collective rather than individual action” would improve the quality of their collegiate lives and educations (Turk, 2004, p. 3). They could develop skills in public speaking, composition, and “social qualities which become a woman” (Turk, 2004, p. 22).

Women were barred from all but eight state universities at that time and were limited in their options for co-education even at private colleges and universities. At Asbury University, which later merged into DePauw University, admission was only made available for women three years earlier, so understandably women made up a minority of the co-educational student body. The establishment of a Kappa Alpha Theta

afforded them the same opportunities for friendship and leadership that had led to the creation of fraternities over a half century earlier. The organization spread around the state of Indiana until crossing state lines in 1875 to Illinois Wesleyan – on its way to becoming a national organization (Robson, 1977). The other early sororities also had a significant focus on academic preparation and challenging societal norms for women as they sought careers other than "home-making and teaching." The need for women's Greek letter organizations only grew over the next decades as the proportion and number of women on college campuses grew and their opportunities for participation did not. By the 1880s women were one quarter of the American college population but could only participate in eleven percent of campus organizations (Turk, 2004).

Students of color also found solidarity and particular value in Greek letter organizations. In 1906 a group of students inspired by the Niagra Movement of WEB DuBois founded Alpha Phi Alpha (ΑΦΑ) at Cornell University on December 4, 1906. Cornell was one of the few Ivy League institutions to admit students of color at that time, and it only had 16 black students in 1906. One specific goal of ΑΦΑ was to help "fight the isolation" of black students at Cornell and allowed for an opportunity to study together in private. While this did not require the founding of a Greek letter organization, several founding members of ΑΦΑ worked in white fraternities as waiters and tutors and decided that the model worked for the white students that it ought to work for them as well (Parks, 2008). ΑΦΑ expanded quickly to both HBCUs and the elite integrated institutions of the day.

Black women found benefit in Greek letter organizations as well – particularly at Howard University. Students at Howard University in Washington, DC founded Alpha

Kappa Alpha (AKA) on January 16, 1908 as an organization to encourage academic growth, set ethical standards, develop friendship, grow the social status of its members, and improve college life (Robson, 1977). Only a few years later a new group of students at Howard University established Delta Sigma Theta (ΔΣT) and began a strong tradition of undergraduate and alumnae connections that last to this day (Turk, 2004). Although these first two sororities were at a particular HBCUs, they both quickly jumped to elite majority serving institutions – Alpha Kappa Alpha to the University of Chicago in 1913 and Delta Sigma Theta to the University of Pennsylvania in 1918 (Robson, 1977). The proliferation of Greek letter organizations for students of all genders and races speaks to the desire of students of all backgrounds and at all times in history to be connected to something other than their classroom education. Athletics has offered another significant point of connection for American college students through the years.

Athletics

In addition to literary and social organizations students also found ways to organize themselves around competition. Since the earliest days, American college students entertained themselves with hobbies and games. At times the larger society encouraged them as ammunition against idleness. At others activity was viewed as "frivolous" and a slippery slope to gambling (Daniels, 1995, p. 1). The earliest entertainment centered on music and theatre; however, ball games began to gain popularity by the fourteenth century in England. Primarily associated with women and children these games swept through Europe, and by the end of the sixteenth century Paris contained over 250 tennis courts. Games were class specific – tennis for the upper class football for the poor – but by the time of the colonization of America they were

widespread for all social classes (Daniels, 1995). Early Puritans in America approved of fishing and horse racing, but generally had little time for leisure (Bucher, 1965). They also had a well documented hatred for ball sports, but over time even these pastimes returned to the American landscape. The nineteenth century marked an explosion of organized and formalized athletics around the world, and the middle of the century saw the beginning of the codification of rules for most of America's favorite sports as sports became a substitute for previous measures of manhood – physical labor, warfare, and exploration (Baker, 2007).

Like the Puritans themselves, one of the most popular sports in America emigrated from England. Written in England in 1828 by William Clarke, and published in Boston, MA the following year, The *Boy's Own Book*, contains the first published mention of a bat and ball game played on a diamond; although the history of baseball goes back as far as the 14th century (Block, 2006). By 1840 the game had spread across the United States, and the first match game was played in October of 1845 between the New York and Brooklyn Base Ball Clubs (Nucciarone, 2009). American football would not come until a few decades later, but rugby had already proven itself a popular sport in England around the middle of the nineteenth century. It was formalized at that time by the head of an English boarding school to help young men form character (Collins, 2009). Basketball was an even later addition to the sporting arena, but it has shown itself to have particularly strong appeal around the world. Created by James Naismith in a YMCA in Springfield, MA in 1891, it was a successful effort of the YMCA to provide an outlet for the young men of America that came out of a long history of dedication to this demographic (Naismith, 1941).

Although basketball was a later product of a city Association of the YMCA, on campus, students were in the midst of developing myriad organized activities. Sport was to be one of these (Rudolph, 1962). Before organized sport, American colleges and universities borrowed from their German counterparts an emphasis on clean living and physical activity. Usually described as gymnastics, these activities usually consisted of stretching and some light running. The rise in physical activities led to the establishment of facilities for this purpose, and the gymnasium began to appear on campuses across the country in the first part of the nineteenth century (Leonard, 1956). Soon college students began to institute athletic clubs on their campuses – often in opposition of faculty who worried that students would be distracted from their studies (Smith, 2011). Students at Yale established a boat club in 1843; students at Harvard followed suit a year later. For nearly a decade these two groups were satisfied with enjoying their chosen pastime and competing within their individual schools.

Beginning as intramural competition, athletics were intended to offer students recreation and a level of enjoyment they could not find in other organized activities. This changed in 1852 when boats from the two clubs faced each other in New Hampshire. News of the race led to a proliferation of boating clubs across the northeast (Lewis, 1970). Off the water, the earliest games typically required only a field, a ball, and sometimes a bat. The rules varied from day to day and campus to campus, but more and more men were finding their way onto an athletic field (Clotfelter, 2011). These games too soon spilled off campus and Rutgers and Princeton faced each other in the first intercollegiate field sporting event in 1869 when their soccer teams faced each other on the pitch (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976). Track began its run as an intercollegiate sport in

1872 (Lewis, 1970). Responding to the popularity of student organized sports, colleges and universities responded by instituting departments of physical education towards the end of the nineteenth century. By 1888 it was estimated that 80% of Harvard students exercised 1-3 hours a day (Suggs, 2006).

Organized athletics are one example of how American college students have chosen to engagement themselves outside of the classroom over the centuries. With 18,641 teams as members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association by 2011 [NCAA] (Jozsa Jr., 2013) students and institutions have shown an interest in organized athletics. The growth of campus sports, greek letter organizations, and literaray societies through the nineteenth century gave students a number of options for their free time. However, many students continued to long for meaning beyond athletic or social participation.

Looking Forward

Religion was important to early American college life, but the place of religion in college changed over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Students always played a role in how religious their college experience was, but as the Civil War approached the intuitional role diminished and that of the students grew. Simultaneously, the responsibility of students in organizing other activities on campus also grew. Students had many opportunities to express and entertain themselves beyond their religious activity. From trips to town and card games in dormitory rooms to the nineteenth century expansion of literary societies, fraternities, sororities, and organized sports students were finding ways to thoroughly enjoy their college experiences. Into this mix of semi-organized student religion and student activities entered a motivated religious force that

would transform higher education and particularly American college student's experiences of life on campus. This force was the Young Men's Christian Association.

CHAPTER 3

A NEW CAMPUS POWER – THE INTERCOLLEGIATE YMCA

The second half of the nineteenth century saw a marked increase in total college enrollment in the United States. Prior to the Civil War the college population in the United States was comprised entirely of a small number of white men and women During the war, male students rushed to battle leaving classrooms around the nation empty. This was particularly true in the South where many colleges closed during the years of the war (Cohen, 2012). In the decades following the Civil War, both men and women flocked to campus in numbers previously unseen (Cohen, 1998). Whether attending new institutions (Geiger, 2011) or growing existing institutions (Leonard, 1956), these new, ambitious students put pressure on the facilities and the faculties of the same schools that eagerly welcomed them through the gates. At some colleges, class sizes grew, teaching loads increased, faculty time for students decreased, and even housing accommodations became difficult to secure – on and off campus (Leonard, 1956). The Morrill Act in 1862 added a number of new institutions to the nation and added programs to other colleges already in existence, but demand to attend college did not swell accordingly. Some existing colleges went on hiatus and many of the new schools employed dramatic measures to attract students for the first few years. Eventually the new institutions attracted a new class of student to American higher education, but the process was lengthy and the price was high (Johnson, 1981). The pressure from rising enrollment on some campuses and a growing numbers of women attending college across the country

resulted in the establishment of new opportunities and administrative roles for collegiate leaders (Niddifer, 2000). A new wave of religious pietism swept the nation at this same time. College campuses experienced a renewal of the revival spirit that was present through the 1830s.

Campuses on Fire

In the sleepy town of Oxford, Georgia the spring of 1858 offered an unexpected level of excitement. Emory College was a distinctly Methodist institution in a "town set apart" (Little, 1908, p. 264). Oxford was "indescribably charming in its almost virgin growth of oaks, springing from a soil but little marred by the touches of civilization" (Little, 1908, p. 264). The Emory campus was also charming, and the college was a private institution where faculty "missed no opportunity to remind the students of their religious heritage" (Bullock, 1936, p. 57). Through the spring of 1858 a group of student met regularly for prayers in the room of a student named Young John Allen. George Lovick Pierce Wren, a junior from Louisiana recorded the events in his diary. Wren's diary shows a pattern of prayer meetings going back to the beginning of March. These meetings typically met on Thursday evenings, and he attended with varying enthusiasm. Uncharacteristically, the group met mid-week on Wednesday April 14, 1858 and Pierce reported, "we are trying to get up a revival, and I hope we may succeed, there seemed to be some interest manifold among the members and I think there is a good prospect." Two nights later, Pierce, Allen, and a large group of other students, "went down into the grove where many of [them met] for the purpose of prayer." That evening many students were "blessed" in the woods, and others later went into the campus church where they "felt the blessing of God come down" (Wren, 1858).

This religious outpouring was taken seriously by the campus leadership; the society meetings – central to college life – were suspended on account of the revival, and nightly meetings continued in the grove. Allen remained the leading figure of the renewal, and standing on a log, surrounded by his fellow students, he led the meetings for several weeks (Bullock, 1936). Wren's diary relates his neglect of his studies in favor of the continued meetings in both in the grove and the church. When the weather did not permit meeting in the woods the students used the Phi Gamma Hall, and the success of conversion was as strong there as gathered around the log.

Despite the long history of revivals on college campuses, no other year between the American Revolution and the Civil War, saw as many revivals as did the "Annum Mirabilis" (Bushko, 1974, p. 32). The impact in the South was particularly strong. At least twenty other southern institutions of higher education experienced revivals during this year (Bushko, 1974; Long, 1998; Rudolph, 1962).[1] An impressive feat considering the limited number of colleges in the region – a reflection of the southern lack of interest in education at best and disdain for education at worst (Hill Jr., 1967). But this was not a revival limited to the South. The Revival of 1857-58 reflected a national expression of revivalism committed to evangelism and devotional piety (Long, 1998). The work was "noiseless and [silenced] all cavil" ("The revival in colleges," 1858, p 50). Across the nation men, women, and college students gathered together for prayer and thanksgiving,

[1] Northern Revivals: Amherst (MA), Brown (RI), Colgate (NY), Cornell (NY), DePauw (IN), Hamilton (NY), Irving Female College (PA), Northwestern (IL), Ohio Wesleyan, Princeton (NJ), Williams (MA), Yale (CT) Southern Revivals: Duke (NC), Emory (GA), Ogelthorpe (GA), Randolph-Macon (VA), Union University (TN), University of Virginia; Long also notes that revivals affected many colleges including Dartmouth (NH) which was not recorded by Bushko. Rudolph notes revivals also occurred at Wabash College (IN), Wofford College (SC), and Wake Forest (NC).

and in droves those same people joined a multitude of churches ("Religious intelligence," 1858).

The revivals were widespread, but they each had their own local characteristics. Some, like those at Trinity College, which would become Duke University in 1892, followed in a tradition of religious training and moral education (Chaffin, 1950). At the University of North Carolina student flocked to local churches as the campus was overwhelmed with a renewal of religion – a welcomed event in view of the unruly state of the student body (Battle, 1974). Similarly, Wofford College experienced revival from 1857 to 1859. Each year, without special effort on the part of local ministers nightly services would be held in the local Methodist Church accompanying student-led daily noon prayer meetings (Wallace, 1951). Although, it would be the last great year for college revivals it had a lasting impression (Rudolph, 1962).

Within this national frenzy, one campus revival was particularly important to the future of higher education. In the early 1850's religious practice was becoming consistently more entrenched at the University of Virginia. Significant pressure was put upon the Board of Visitors to create a school of theology in light of the recent religious growth (Bell, 1969). However, in the spring of 1858 an outbreak of typhoid fever at the University made the news as far away as Athens, Georgia. The outbreak took many lives and caused "great alarm" among those not infected ("Serious epidemic at the University of Virginia," 1858). But, one of the students noted the advanced religious condition at the University at the time, and recognized there was no way to view the typhoid attack as a "token of Divine displeasure" (Bell, 1969, p. 389). Nevertheless, while the trustees of the university chose to suspend classes, the students and John A. Broadus, a local Baptist

pastor, held a series of revival meetings. These meetings led to a more serious state of religious interest and the establishment of an organization known as the Young Men's Christian Association. This was the first YMCA established on a college campus, and Broadus and the students founded it with the expressed goal of improving the spiritual condition of the students (Long, 1998). Many more campus Associations would follow.

The Birth of the Student Associations

The international organization known as the Young Men's Christian Association was still in its infancy at the time of this great religious outpouring across the nation; however, it played a significant role in both the urban and campus revivals. Founded on June 6, 1844 at St. Paul's Church in London, the Association was part of a larger trend of religious societies. Along with the YMCA, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Religious Tract Society, and numerous Sunday School Societies all began their ministries in the middle of the nineteenth century (YMCA, 1894). Middle class men and women founded most of these groups, including the YMCA, to bring Christianity to the displaced men flocking from the countryside to work in London's factories (Morgan, 1935). The Y recognized the practical needs of these men, so to accomplish its mission, the YMCA quickly began to offer useful outreach programs of public lectures, bible classes, free libraries, and additional educational and social activities (YMCA, 1894).

It did not take long for the YMCA to spread across the Atlantic. Entering into a fertile ground of many established religious groups for young men, a group, influenced by the London Association, met for the first time in Boston on December 29, 1851 (Morgan, 1935). At the heart of its incorporation was an article written by an American college student who had studied in London in the summer of 1850. His letter sparked

interest in this new organization, but the accounts of the miraculous work of the YMCA from the many Americans visiting the London World's Fair in 1851 hastened the spread of the Y to the United States (Bryson, 2010). By the end of 1852 Associations had spread north to Buffalo and south to Baltimore, and within that year efforts were underway to unite the individual Associations into a national organization. The expansion continued for the next several years into urban centers across the nation, and annual conferences encouraged expansion and coordinated the work of the individual groups. On August 20, 1855 the movement had grown large enough for its first world conference in Paris (YMCA, 1894).

Students organized voluntary religious groups as early as 1706 at Harvard (YMCA, 1894), but it was the well organized and international organization of the YMCA that provided a foundation for the formation of two student associations in 1858. The first, at the University of Virginia, was born out of a revival. The other, at the University of Michigan started as one of many student religious organizations on campus. With the leadership of A.K. Spence, a senior from Scotland, a group of students at Michigan set out to start an organization that offered a different religious and social experience than the other groups which already existed on campus. Spence went on to become a professor at Michigan and led the Association for 11 years. Under his lead, the University of Michigan YMCA attempted to mirror the organization and activities of the growing city Associations, but they often fell flat. And, unlike the city Associations it did not grow for some time. The earliest meetings involved theological debates and were described as "lifeless" by Robert Weidensall (1911, p. 21), first secretary of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association. His comments and

others like them prompted the students to realize that to attract new members the Association needed a new format; before long the campus paper heralded the Y as "full of life and good purpose" making it "the best testimony to a healthy Christian influence among us" (Weidensall, 1911, p. 18).

Weidensall took it upon himself to ensure the success of student associations. He officially served as an employee of the YMCA Railroad Division, but in his travels he regularly went out of this way to visit with college students. Weidensall canvassed the state of Michigan during the 1870s establishing Associations at nearly all of the colleges and universities in the state, but he also took trips to West Virginia in 1871, establishing an association at the University of West Virginia, and to Virginia in 1872 where he examined the work underway already at Washington and Lee, the Virginia Military Institution, and Emory & Henry College. He had a passion to increase the number of associations but also maintained caution about the fit of any particular school for such an undertaking. He maintained a steady understanding of what constituted active membership; only evangelical piety and a mission oriented focus would do (Weidensall, 1911). But above all this, Weidensall also pioneered perhaps the most critical piece to the success of the campus Associations, the role of state Association Secretary. By helping to develop a person to coordinate the activities of Associations on campuses across each state, he laid the path for the development network that would sustain the organization for a generation (Graham, n.d.).

In 1875 a young man by the name of Luther Wishard entered Princeton University as a transfer student. Previously enrolled at Hanover College in Indiana, Wishard had enjoyed his membership in the YMCA on that campus and the spiritual

seriousness it inspired. When he arrived at Princeton he was "dismayed" to find the lack of a YMCA, and he set out to rectify the situation. He joined a campus group called the Philadelphian society and quickly rebranded it as a YMCA. Wishard's work quickly expanded beyond the Princeton campus. Wishard organized the first Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association Conference in the summer of 1877 – less than twenty years after the first collegiate Association was formed. On June 6 of that year twenty-five delegates from twenty-one schools met to mark the official start of a national movement. Wishard was installed as Foreign Secretary of the Intl. Committee for the promotion of an Intercollegiate Movement, making him the first full time employee of the Intercollegiate Movement, and he was its champion for the next decade (Wishard, 1917). Until his departure for Asia in 1888, Wishard oversaw the most rapid period of expansion in the student association's history.

The campus YMCA had three distinct phases during its history. It began as a conservative evangelical group but quickly shifted to a more liberal evangelicalism around 1888 with the transition from Wishard to John Mott's leadership. After the first several decades of the twentieth century it embraced a more pluralistic liberal Protestantism. These changes largely corresponded to changing understandings of which area of student life was most accessible. The first stage targeted the soul, the second the behavior, the last focused more on the student mind (Setran, 2007). The second stage overlapped with a period of unprecedented growth for the campus YMCA.

By 1900 the Y had a branch at a majority of colleges and universities in the nation. Internally the student movement was celebrating its organization and its "omnipresence, and I had almost said omnipotence" at the national scale (Letter to L.D.

Wishard, 1885). While the associations at large residential colleges and universities were the most well known, associations were formed on campuses of all sizes. Hampden-Sydney College, a small school in southern Virginia, had an active chapter by 1880 (Brinkley, 1994). A "strong delegation" from Randolph-Macon College, another small college, attended the First Student Conference in Mount Hermon, MA during the summer of 1886 (YMCA, 1886, p. 2). The University of Illinois had a large and active association by the 1870s and the University of Michigan proudly reported that 150 of the 1,500 students in the University were active members of the YMCA in 1874 (Weidensall, 1911). Across the country the same was true at colleges large and small. But the student works department was not showing any signs of complacency. During an 1899 meeting of the International and State Student Secretaries in Long Beach, NY a commitment was made to increased resources and focus on professional workers in these associations:

> In view of the need of winning more students for Christ; in view of the fact that this has been regarded from the beginning as the first and crowning purpose of the student movement; in view of the fact that the history of the student movement teaches that organized or associated personal work has been the most effective and fruitful means of meeting this need; we will this year place special stress on the introduction and promotion of organized or associated personal work. ("Statement Regarding Organized or Associated Personnel Work Among Students," 1899, p. 1)

The model proved effective – at least for traditional four year colleges. At the end of the nineteenth century the Y experimented with expanding into professional and normal schools with limited success. In 1905 an estimated thirty-one percent of male college and

university students were members at a college Y; however, only seventeen percent of students at the specialized institutions ever joined. There was more success with seminarians; by 1913 branches existed at eighty seminaries and seventy percent of their students were members (Setran, 2007).

The early part of the twentieth century proved to be a particularly fruitful time for the student movement of the YMCA. The Y recognized the importance of faculty connections from its first movement onto campus. A letter from Luther Wishard to the headquarters of the YMCA in 1879 celebrated the professional work of the Princeton Association because it would cause students to take an "open stand for Christ at the beginning of their College Course, and very many proffessors [sic] will be impressed" (September 16, 1879). Fifty years later, reflections on a conference at Princeton University celebrated work with faculty as the "most important single development in our program," and noted the new ambivalence of campus administrators to their responsibility in the moral education of students. The result was a more significant role of the campus-wide policy making with regards to religion (HPVD, 1928). It appears to have been effective. It's difficult to substantiate, but by 1926 the student movement claimed to have led 30,000 college students to "accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord" and fueled a rise in the percentage of Christian students in America's colleges from thirty percent in 1858 to over fifty percent in 1926 (The Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association of America, 1926).

In addition to activities at individual campuses, the YMCA allowed students to connect with their peers at annual summer conferences. These conferences also offered students from around the country the opportunity to learn best practices from national

Association staff and from representatives from other campus associations. The first conference occurred in Louisville, KY in 1879 and helped set goals for the growth of campus Associations around the country (College Bulletin, 1878). The first conference exclusively for students was held eight years later at Blue Ridge. People in and outside of the YMCA were well aware of the annual conference at Blue Ridge, North Carolina during its half century run. The 1877 conference was more or less a one month Bible study, and the students loved it. As the nature of the YMCA changed the conferences did as well: at first from Bible studies to training conferences for student leaders of the campus associations and then to places for students to digest the pressing issues of their day (Weatherford, 1949). Originally, the national YMCA segregated these conferences by race and gender, but well before it was socially acceptable the Association made advances in the integration and coordination of conference for student members of the YMCA regardless of their gender or ethnicity.

The Campus Hub

From its earliest days, the YMCA benefited from generous support on many of its campuses. In 1871 the President of the University of Michigan gave the Y a room in the main university building to use for prayer and exhortation (Weidensall, 1911). This pattern would continue for decades to come. For the first fifty years of the YMCA's presence on campuses, it relied on rooms such as these in campus buildings for meetings and to hold the association library (Setran, 2007).

Over the years, rooms became buildings, and the YMCA buildings "became the hub of the general social life of the campus" (Setran, 2007, p. 93). But the centrality of the YMCA went far beyond its physical presence. By the 1940s the Y was the "de facto

center for student services and activities on campuses nationwide" (Setran, 2007, p. 98). In addition, its buildings were meant to be "sources of unified student life and school spirit" (Setran, 2007, p. 88). YMCA and campus leaders alike praised the unifying power of the Association building. The buildings contained rooms for Bible study and missionary meetings as well as rooms for general campus organization activities, large lecture halls, gyms, and game rooms. Some even contained barber shops, pools, and restaurants (Comer, 1914). The Y had developed the first student center.

In addition to sponsoring the student center, on many campuses the YMCA was also responsible for creating and publishing the student handbook. These handbooks typically opened with a greeting from the president or chancellor praising the Y and encouraging students to join. In addition to praise for the Y, the book contained a wealth of information to help new students orient themselves in their new community (Finnegan & Alleman, 2006). The YMCA also showed itself to be particularly savvy in regards to the concepts of student development. For a nearly fifty years around the turn of the twentieth century, the YMCA consistently articulated the goals and methods of a psychological based student development theory in these student handbooks around the nation (Alleman & Finnegan, 2009). For students the handbooks were more practical.

The list of innovations from the YMCA during this time is lengthy. During the early twentieth century the YMCA at the University of South Carolina directed the full religious life of the students, created the first new students orientation, assisted students in finding housing, helped students find employment, and coordinated a plethora of other activities (Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999). The Y was indispensible. In addition to

helping individual students, associations sponsored receptions, dances, rallies, and parties with the goal of bringing the entire campus together at a single event.

At the turn of the twentieth century the Y shifted the focus of its religious work. The words of preachers like Billy Sunday, a former professional baseball player who became a leading evangelist at this same time, and the particular appeal for men to a new masculine theology aptly referred to as muscular Christianity helped the expansion of the YMCA – an organization for men. Muscular Christianity professed the values of clean living, but did so in a combative form. Sunday was known for sliding into imaginary bases on stage during his revivals and looked to American heroes such as Teddy Roosevelt for inspiration on the way men should live (Martin, 2002). Also taking inspiration from Harry Emerson Fosdick, noted progressive minister of the famed Riverside Church in New York City, the Y shifted from a focus of educating students in theology to motivating students into action. Service to campus and to community soon became central to the mission of the campus associations (Setran, 2005). Where Bible studies and prayer meetings were the focus of the earliest campus associations, the Y became an organization that gave students a place to "jettison their belief-oriented religious perspectives" (Setran, 2007, p. 65). Large programming calendars and the expansion of Y services accompanied this jettisoning. The organizations and the buildings transformed into something new. Trained ministers and ordained clergy worked hard to draw members to the Y, and their methods helped service to school and community become the new religion of the era.

Although the YMCA held a place of prominence on American campuses it continued to face the challenges present at its founding. Greek letter organizations,

literary societies, and athletic teams thrived parallel to the YMCA. Those competitors also regularly attracted the most popular students on campus. The Y had grown to be the largest organization for students in the country, but it was at risk of being relegated to an organization for the outcast if it could not continue to evolve to meet the needs of a new generation of students. It also needed a space that the rest of the campus desired to use.

At this same time, architecture was central to the expansion of the national YMCA. A flurry of building was a physical manifestation of the shifting focus of the Y from piety to activity. Prison and factory architecture influenced the earliest designs as they allowed for minimal staff to supervise a maximum number of people. The goal of these new urban Y's and those on campuses was to keep members safe and occupied. As urban centers grew, the mission of the Y did as well. This growth prompted a centralized team of association architects to design and implement a series of renovation and expansion efforts across the country. As the Y increasingly transitioned to an activity center, buildings were central to the organizations identity and mission. They provided space for leisure appropriate for moral Protestants (Lupkin, 1997). This leisure took many forms and proved to be effective in getting members to join the campus YMCAs. Because of this leisure space, the Y was also responsible for the rise in organized athletic activity on college campuses. By the 1860s the YMCA incorporated gyms in all of their buildings – campus or otherwise (Baker, 2007) .

Therefore, it should be no surprise that the YMCA focused great attention to expanding from the campus rooms the associations used for their first fifty years to the construction of stand-alone buildings. Around the country the Y constructed 290 buildings between 1900 and 1916; under the leadership of John R. Mott thirty-six

campus Ys were constructed over the same period as an avenue of outreach to the unconverted who would judge campus organizations by "material criteria and physical attractiveness."[2] In addition, they were meant to be "sources of unified student life and school spirit" (Setran, 2007, p. 88). YMCA and campus leaders alike praised the unifying power of the Y building. The buildings contained rooms for Bible study and missionary meetings as well as rooms for general campus organization activities, large lecture halls, gyms, and game rooms. Some even contained barber shops, pools, and restaurants. The Y had developed the first student center. But these buildings were expensive to run.

At many schools the YMCA charged membership fees to help cover the cost of the building. At more accommodating campuses, all students were charged a mandatory activity fee for the expressed purpose of maintaining the YMCA facility (Secrest, 1924). Charging rent to residents was a tried-and-true method of financial support for buildings, so many new association buildings were constructed with residential spaces. The Y entered the dormitory business. In a pattern repeated in campus ministries to this day, they added large sections of housing to help develop the community environment, but more importantly to help pay the bills. Sometimes, these dorms would precede the completion of the rest of the building itself. In addition to housing student in their own building one of the many tasks taken on by the association was helping students find housing elsewhere if there were unable to secure it on campus (Johnson, 1958).

[2] Twenty-three of these were built at schools with more than 1,000 students – very large by the standards of the day. Among the most well known of the group were buildings at Princeton, Columbia, University of Virginia, Cornell, Union College, University of North Carolina, Georgia Tech, The University of Michigan, Johns Hopkins University, Dartmouth, and Virginia Tech (VPI)

The Y was also critical in the social life of the colleges and universities of which they were a part. Campus associations regularly hosted academic lectures on a wide variety of topics (Morgan, 1935). Chapters also sponsored receptions, dances, rallies, and parties with the goal of bringing the entire campus together at a single event. Events like square dances were regular occurrences on campus thanks to the Y ("Y.M.C.A. to offer student dance," 1930). More practical offerings included job lists for students looking for local jobs, housing lists for students in need of housing, and bull sessions for students in need of getting something off their chests (Louden, 1957).

Another venture for the YMCA at many colleges and universities across the country was the student handbook. These handbooks typically opened with a greeting from the president or chancellor praising the Y and encouraging students to join. In addition to praise for the Y, the book contained a wealth of information to help incoming students orient themselves in their new community. They contained general information sections about laundry, rooms, board, where to trade, freshmen caps, lists of local churches and all other campus organizations, general regulations of the University, and perhaps most importantly football and baseball schedules (*G Book*, 1915). It also offered other suggestions to freshmen encouraging them to get involved and maintain clean living. It offered information that new students should know "but dislike to inquire about too frequently" and proved to be popular with students both in and out of the YMCA (*G Book*, 1915, p. 15).

Typically these handbooks were distributed in conjunction with the association welcome receptions, and they drew the majority of new students to these events (*College Bulletin*, 1889). *The College Bulletin*, the official magazine of the Intercollegiate

YMCA, played a central role in spreading these handbooks across the country by sharing stories of their success and even outlines for their publication. The instructions were clear that the book should be "handy, attractive, helpful and educational," but that is should also be distinctive from institutional publications like the course catalogue. Associations were notified that "flexible cloth binding" was the best option and that the name Young Men's Christian Association was not to be abbreviated. Perhaps most importantly, the instructions were clear that "alone the hand-book [sic] will accomplish little." It was critical that the "reception, boarding-house and trains committee" must be equally as prepared as the handbook and accompany its work ("The students hand-book," 1890, p. 120). These handbooks created a new form of organizing student life on campus and ushered in a new era of directing students to use resources available to them on campus. Prior to the creation of these handbooks there was not a consolidated source of information for new students about the communities they were joining.

In addition to creating and distributing the handbooks, the YMCA regularly coordinated transportation for new students to campus from the train station, wrote and distributed the campus handbook, and helped students arrange housing, it moved into a new level of campus responsibility. The Y had created new student orientation (Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999; Finnegan & Alleman, 2013).

Academic placement exams had preceded academic terms prior to this new creation, but there had never been an official social orientation to college. As early at 1878 the association at the University of Tennessee boasted of their annual reception to new students: most importantly that most of the students joined the association (Weidensall, 1911). Through the work of *The College Bulletin*, these receptions became

a prime recruiting took for Associations across the country. The goal was to "lay before new students the precise object and character of the College Association," and it proved to "results favorably in every instance" ("Reception to New Students," 1880, p. 3). These receptions quickly grew from an informational meeting to a social and transformational event. At the University of Georgia, information sent to students prior to their arrival on campus encouraged them:

> When you reach campus come to the YMCA building where you can get full information in regard to your room, board, etc. Students can also write ahead informing the YMCA which train they will be on so they can be met at the station by a YMCA man. (*G Book*, 1946, p. 5)

The YMCA was there to help by responding to what a student needed at a particular time. At Duke University the YMCA maintained responsibility for Orientation through the 1940s (Cooper, 1943). Elsewhere the Y took to creating a Freshman Camp as a completely social and community building week of programming for new students. This activity still remains at the University of North Carolina to this day ("What is freshman camp?," 2013). Of course, they were also there to recruit members, and they recognized the first year as a particularly important time for this recruitment. One training guide from 1926 noted that orientation "renders itself of service to new students, at the critical period in the student lives and at a time when this service is most appreciated" (The Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association of America, 1926).

New students had arrived on American campuses without a formal, organized social orientation for centuries, but as campuses grew the YMCA capitalized on an opportunity to fill a perceived void. It is entirely possible that college and universities

could have matriculated new students without orientation decades to come, but the Y saw a chance and took it. This repeated the YMCA's pattern of making the most of opportunities that presented themselves on campus that could simultaneously fill a need for all students and benefit the Y. Campuses were seeing students become more immediately part of the community, and the YMCA was recruiting members. In this recruitment the Y proved itself to be a progressive force.

Progressive Measures, Progressive Theology

As the YMCA proved itself an innovative provider of religious instruction, other religious organizations also thrived on college campuses around the nation. Compulsory religion remained at many private colleges and universities and student religious organizations existed on nearly every campus in the nation. But no other organization had as broad a reach geographically and culturally as the campus associations of the YMCA. A powerful national communication network connected associations and facilitated the transmission of best practices and ideas with speed of which other organizations could only dream. Additionally, the YMCA did not allow itself to be limited by cultural norms in the recruitment of its members. Much of the best known early history of student associations of the YMCA is a story of middle class white men at relatively elite institutions; however, there is considerably more to the story than that. From its earliest days campus associations worked to find ways to include women in their work and activities: first within the same organization, and later in parallel groups known as campus associations of the YWCA. It also assisted international students acclimate to their new surrounding and created some of the first English classes for these students (Shedd, 1941). The student associations were not as fast to incorporate racial diversity,

but they did prove to be more progressive than the national association and the nation as a whole.

Communication

For the campus associations of the YMCA, a critical factor in its exponential growth was the fostering and development of sophisticated communication networks. Association magazines for students and secretaries shared important themes and ideas for campus development. The YMCA first published *The College Bulletin* in 1878 to answer "brief practical questions concerning the organization and prosecution of such Christian work as is peculiar to a college" as well as "items of religious news from colleges and students' conferences" (*College Bulletin*, November 1878, p. 1). The publishers of *The College Bulletin* encouraged campus Associations to share the most effective programs and activities they organized for the benefit of others across the country. A similar publication existed almost continuously through the 1960s. Annual summer conferences served to support the publications and offer students from around the country an opportunity to learn best practices from national Association staff and from representatives from campuses across the country. The first conference occurred in Louisville, KY in 1878 and helped set goals for the growth of campus Associations around the country (*College Bulletin*, December 1878). People in and outside of the YMCA were well aware of the annual conference at Blue Ridge, North Carolina during its half century run.

Campus associations also used these communication networks to learn the best practices at other schools around the nation. As shown above, *The College Bulletin* frequently shared best practices on establishing a campus room or building, publishing a

campus handbook, or organizing a welcome reception/orientation; however, it also regularly provided information on Bible study curricula and messages of hope to those associations who were not finding their work as prosperous as others. During times of growth, *The College Bulletin* was also a source of information on the best practices in starting a new association. A simple six point checklist for a new association appeared in the fourth issue (*The College Bulletin*, February 1879). These newsletters and magazines also helped local associations recruit members. Secretary's would order "in quantity lots" to share "insights with the many new students coming to their campuses" (*The Intercollegian*, 1954, n.p.). But the support and communication was not limited only to newsletters.

Regularly throughout the history of the campus associations, the YMCA published handbooks for student leaders and association secretaries. Different than the student handbooks, these handbooks for campus association leaders contained information on how to create a new association or better organize an association already in existence, the history and purpose of the YMCA, objectives of the student movement, and ideas for programs and other activities. One of these guides was explicit in the importance of the YMCA being an active organization, stating "DO SOMETHING NOW!!! ADVERTISE IT!!!" The guide gave over twenty pages of potential ideas, including expected items such as film screenings, coffee time discussions, and Religious Emphasis Week. It also advocated for an inter-faith progressive dinner and a program focused on "Courtship and Marriage in a Changing World" (Shinn, 1952, p. III-3). Other handbooks offered advice on the best sources of income for a campus association. While student dues and contributions were important, these guides made it clear to association

secretaries that their biggest sources of income were likely to come from local churches and their state executive committees. It varied from school to school, but money from the college administration was a welcome part of the annual income; however, it was not a significant one (*Handbook for the Campus Christian Association*, 1954).

These handbooks continued the tradition of YMCA publications and gave a platform for standardization of practices of associations on campuses across the country. As *The College Bulletin* had done generations earlier, these publications continued to offer professionalism and organization to hundreds of localized campus based associations. The YMCA hosted conferences for student leaders, generated handbooks for association secretaries, and published a magazine for the benefit of both. In the period following World War II, the national student association was organized, intentional, and poised for continued growth.

Coeducation

It did not take long for college women to desire the same organizational and religious opportunities men enjoyed through the YMCA. Religious groups for women were not new to America. Women had been active for centuries maintaining the religious life of the home and had stayed in conversation with their peers about the pursuits. As with the campus associations of the YMCA, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) traces its roots back to the revival of 1858. From this religious outpouring the Ladies Christian Union (LCU) charted a new course in organized religion for women in New York City. Like the YMCA, the LCU recognized the need for places for its members to gather. Boston was home to the first structure that would become a YWCA in 1866. It was intended as a place for women without family ties in the city to

congregate and sleep. By 1870 the young women of the organization were frustrated with the perceived inaction of the older members and broke off to form the New York YWCA. Other similar groups formed around the country, and like their male counterparts they primarily consisted of wealthy whites providing assistance to the working poor. It only took a year for the loose federation of similar organizations around the country to come together as the International Board of Women's and Young Women's Christian Associations (Sims, 1936).

The YWCA also understood the importance of entertaining its members. In cities across the nation women were drawn to association buildings by "attractive entertainment" so that members could offer a further invitation. Entertainment as "the door by which a woman enters upon the enjoyment of all other benefits of the Association, chief among which we rank the Bible class and the religious training which is given there" (Sims, 1936, p. 12). And while on this front and many others, the YWCA would look and act much like the YMCA, they were very different organizations in their involvement with social and political issues. While the men of the YMCA were content to focus on their individual physical and spiritual health, the women of the YWCA maintained an active political agenda fighting for suffrage, integration, and the well being of the poor (Mains & Elliott, 1974). The YWCA also proved itself to be broadly ecumenical well before this was the norm for American mainline denominations (Boyd, 1986).

However, the YWCA was slow to recognize the importance of work with college women. Robert Weidensall attempted to form a collegiate YWCA in 1870 at the University of Wisconsin (Weidensall, 1911), but it took a group of students in 1873 to

found the first permanent campus YWCA association at Illinois State Normal University (Robertson, 2007). The late nineteenth century was a time of dramatic enrollment growth for women in American colleges and universities. Over the course of the 1870s women would rise from one-fifth to one-third of all post secondary students in the country (Woloch, 2000). Some women founded YWCAs on their campuses, but even more the women's Association movement benefited from the work of Luther Wishard, YMCA Secretary for the Intercollegiate Movement, and the YMCA.

During Wishard's first trip to the West in 1882 he recognized the unique opportunity that the prevalence of coeducational schools offered to the YMCA, and that "no associated Christian work could be organized which did not take account of the college young women whom I found in most Western institutions." At first he encouraged their participation in "mixed associations" and worked to have the students change the word "man" to "student" throughout their charters; although the name YMCA remained (Wishard, 1917, n.p.).

This caused two significant problems. First, upon Wishard's return to New York he learned that the national leadership of the YMCA did not approve of female members. Second, it was apparent that although the organizations were coed, women were not finding the same opportunity for leadership and full participation as their male classmates. Wishard returned to the road and actively encouraged the same organizations he had organized years before as mixed associations to split into separate men's and women's organizations. This close origin and continued interest in the advancement of religion on campus led to a much closer association between campus associations of the YMCA and YWCA than the two national organizations ever enjoyed (Wishard, 1917).

Largely under the leadership and guidance of YMCA secretaries and state association leadership, the new women's associations blossomed (Sims, 1936). In 1886 the YWCA campus associations formed their own national organization and began a more independent path forward. Over the next twenty years, their numbers would swell to nearly 500 student associations and dwarf the 147 city associations at the time of the merger of the two groups to form the YWCA in 1906. The women's student associations peaked at 767 in 1922 (Robertson, 2007).

At the University of Georgia, coeducation was achieved through the use of the coordinate college. While technically allowing for the university to serve both men and women, the experiences, and the locations, of the two sexes were markedly different. This was a pattern repeated around the nation at many of the leading universities of the day. Harvard's Radcliff College, Brown's Pembroke College and Columbia's Barnard, just to name a few, began in similar situations but grew to be institutions within an institution (Thelin, 2011). The coordinate college at the University of Georgia never grew to the notoriety that these institutions held, and much of this was due to the influence of the YMCA in holding the two campuses together.

This also followed national trends, where the best model of early coeducation was the University of Chicago. Due to the strong leadership of Dean Marion Talbot, women had a place in the core of the university; however, they also had activities that were unique to them (Thelin, 2011). These parallel organizations continued for decades, but ultimately the benefits of a combined organization and the desires of students to have coeducational religious activities led to the merger of the separate student associations for men and women. Nationally, the YMCA and YWCA student associations started official

coordination of activities for men and women in 1937 with the first National Student Assembly (Mains & Elliott, 1974). After 79 years, a student religious organization founded by and for men was officialy coeducational. The YMCA moved into a new era for student life.

Students of Color

The Y also proved itself to be active in the recruitment of students of color. By 1899, the YMCA founded chapters at forty-five of the 100 African American colleges in the country (Setran, 2007). On the issue of race, the national YMCA found itself in a cautiously progressive place. A white, middle class movement for its first fifty years, the Y hired two black directors in the 1890s and began an expansion into a new community. In mission, the Y reached out to the countless young, poor black men flowing into American cities during the mass migration from the countryside at the turn of the twentieth century; however, in reality mainly middle class men comprised both the black and white associations. Although the YMCA integrated in 1946, eight years ahead of *Brown v. Board of Education,* the Supreme Court ruling that separate public schools for black and white students were not constitutional, the original Y programs involved segregated and separate facilities for white and black members (Mjagkij, 1997). Later the Y would become known as a safe place to go for food and shelter for students of color traveling the South. The YMCA was also instrumental in helping international students acclimate to their new surrounding and created some of the first English classes for these students (Shedd, 1941).

True to its original mission to reach those displaced from their homes after moving to the city, they YMCA began to reach out to black workers in the tumult of race

relations in America in the 1850s. By 1853, the YMCA founded its first association for African Americans in Washington, DC (YMCA, 1988). Through the 1850s the Central Committee of the YMCA worked hard to avoid discussing slavery at its annual meetings and in 1854 issued a statement acknowledging the autonomy of local associations, signifying that it had no grounds to either support or condemn slavery or any other issues. While the YMCA was ahead of the times in race relations, it appeared that support for black associations and African Americans was not a clear-cut issue within the Y. In New York the Association banned Uncle Tom's Cabin from the reading room in 1853 and in Washington, DC the association also carefully removed all abolitionist material from its reading room (Mjagkij, 1994). The Civil War nearly decimated the YMCA in the American South, and although the association had attempted to avoid discussions of slavery, it did offer relief services for soldiers in the Union Army marking itself on the side of abolition. Through the Christian Commission, a branch of the YMCA responsible for directing all religious work of the Union Army in the Civil War the YMCA was in active ministry with white and black soldiers alike (Hopkins, 1951). Following the war, some associations began to make plans for African American members. Other black YMCAs emerged in the years following, but few lasted long. Associations were self supporting, so the central organization did not provide funding to any local group. There were not many African Americans with the means to support their own associations (Mjagkij, 1994).

A group of students at Howard University founded the first black student association in 1869, only two years after the school first opened (YMCA, 1988). Across the country, student associations opened at other HBCU institutions. By 1890 there were

enough college associations to warrant a national conference, so one was held in January 1890 in Nashville, TN. Central Tennessee College, Fisk College, and Roger Williams University co-sponsored and co-hosted the event which did not stray much from the model set by the white associations. Sessions were held on the work of the YMCA in local colleges, the claims of the YMCA upon young men, individual work, personal responsibility, and college neighborhood work. Without seeing the participants, the schedule could have easily have been for any collegiate YMCA gathering (YMCA, 1890).

That conference appeared to have been forgotten by 1912 when "The First Colored Student Conference" was held at Lincoln Academy in Kings Mountain, NC. At that conference it was reported that 103 associations existed at 103 different schools around the nation "affecting the spiritual moral and social life of 20,000 negro students." Students were instructed to bring a Bible, a good notebook, and a pair of old shoes for mountain climbing (YMCA, 1912, p. 1). Conferences like this and the growing number of associations for students of color led one national leader to comment that the Y Student Movement "knows no racial barriers" (Micou, 1915, p. 1). Knowing that only seventy five miles away, white students held a separate annual assembly in Black Mountain, NC at the Blue Ridge Assembly center, this statement may have been a bit premature; but the YMCA was showing progressiveness that few other organizations could claim.

Years later, white student associations and the YWCA supported the integration of the international YMCA (Robertson, 2007). When black delegates were forced to stay away from the host hotel for the 1922 international convention in Atlantic City, white

students from a southern university refused to stay in that hotel. Instead, they joined their black colleagues in a hotel in the "black belt" of the city (Mjagkij , 1994, p. 107). On campus, students of color continued to join the YMCA in droves, making the YMCA the largest organization of black college students in the nation (Mjagkij, 1994). And where the national Colored Works Department resisted merger with the white association, black students sought to merge their work with that of white students.

This played out in 1924, when for the first time students from the segregated assemblies made the trek across the mountains of North Carolina to join each other. Students from the Kings Mountain Conference greeted the Blue Ridge Conference and noted, "We stand with you in every effort for Christian fellowship and for the love and service of the Master." Days later when delegates from the Blue Ridge Conference made the opposite journey they began by expressing the pleasure they experienced in welcoming the delegation from the Kings Mountain Conference and went on to explain that, "we feel that you are working on the same great principles [as are we] and our prayer is that more and more each may understand Jesus' Way, and in all these relationship make His principles effective" (YMCA, 1924, n.p.).

Around the country, some schools were making progress at a faster rate than others. In 1926, the student association at Colby College in Waterville, Maine elected, Herbert Jenkins, a black member from Maine as its president ("Colby College elects colored student Y president," 1926). A year later a group of colored students attended the North Carolina State Convention in February, and 200 students, black and white, attended meeting at Vanderbilt University in March to discuss the present political situation in China. It was noted of both events that "One could not sit and look on those

students in Nashville without feeling that they were all 'just students.' That is, the atmosphere was free from the consciousness of the presence of 'white and colored students' " ("High points throughout the student field," 1927, n.p.).

It would still be some time before the two student groups formally merged, but they largely functioned on the same model, although on different scales. Where white associations were able to raise tens of thousands of dollars to construct Y buildings, black associations shared stories about funding a Y room on a tight budget ("How an association furnished its new quarters for $6.85," 1928). However, they were still active in programming and making their rooms into the most attractive gathering places on campus. Also like their white colleagues, black associations were active in creating and planning the orientation programs on their respective campuses ("Paine College – Pre-opening conference," 1929; Alabama State Normal, 1928). It would take another twenty years until the YMCA was fully integrated; however, individual associations made great strides in the interim (Mjagkij, 1994). There was another key group that helped fuel the expansion of the YMCA towards its campus prominence.

Soldiers

At the turn of the twentieth century, America began to establish itself as a world power, and the European dynasties had all but run their course. By the time Europe fell into war in the summer of 1914, American higher education had come into its own. Over the previous twenty years true universities came into being, entrance requirements were standardized, women were assimilated into coeducational institutions. The American collegiate ideal had come to be (Geiger, 2011). The policy of expansive government funding of university led scientific research also rapidly expanded, leading to a

significant growth of revenue to some campuses across the country (Gumport, 2011), although the American South largely missed out on this expansion and wealth (Dyer, 2005).

During World War I, college presidents, fearing an exodus of their male students, worked with the federal government on a plan that resulted in the creation of the Student Army Training Corp (SATC). In the fall of 1918 colleges with more than 100 students welcomed branches of the SATC to help train soldiers for the European front. Campuses that contracted with the SATC quickly appeared under siege. The US government took over campus publications, new military courses were added to the catalogue, and even local businesses were forced to give priority to government orders. The training only lasted two months, so individual soldiers were not on campus long, but academic freedom was trampled and many institutions were hesitant to work with government programs for years to come (Gruber, 1976). While the corps brought disruption, federal money accompanied them, and campus Young Men's Christian Associations quickly jumped in to fill the void in the lives of these soldiers in training.

The SATC training program accounted for nearly every aspect of the soldiers lives; however, leisure and religion were largely missing from the program. New YMCA "huts" appeared on hundreds of campuses, and programs including motion pictures, social events and an intensified program of mass activities filled these facilities. These events were designed "to bring students together, to create and control fellowship, to build morale, and to encourage men and women to live in conformity with tested Christian principles" (Schmoker, 1944, p. 3). Like before, these activities were designed to bring students together in community so that they might live a life that exemplified

Christian principles. Into this new environment of organized leisure, soldiers returning from war flocked to campus alongside with a national fascination in collegiate life and the beginning of institutional efforts at brand development. Across the country schools picked colors and mascots for their athletic teams, and wrote songs around which their students could associate themselves as part of a special group (Thelin, 2011). These were new activities but clearly fit within the mission of campus associations and contributed to a significant expansion of these associations.

Just as the period following World War I saw growth of campus culture and collegiate life, it was also a time of continued growth for the YMCA. Through its work with soldiers of the SATC, the Y demonstrated it had trained leadership for extracurricular activities. Although the number of people on campus returned traditional levels students and administrators alike were hesitant to see those new activities leave campus. As it had done on many previous occasions, the Y took an active role in continuing and expanding extracurricular activities as an effective recruiting tool for its associations.

The end of World War I also brought about the beginnings of professional Student Personnel work. The SATC's origins were varied, but one purpose centered on the need for soldiers with particular skills that did not present themselves in the soldiers selected through the draft (Price & Howley, 2016). To be better prepared for any future conflicts or national emergencies, the federal government and colleges worked together to document student skills and training (Bradshaw, 1936). These new student personnel offices on campuses around the country presented the YMCA with a new type of competition. The Y secretary had been one of the few administrators on campus beyond

the college or university president. To compliment this new personnel work and to maintain its privileged place on campus, the student associations turned to a tested response: organization.

Although the period during World War I allowed for growth of responsibility and programming, it was accompanied by a standardization of efforts across the country. Just as the military was requiring particular accommodations and control from the campuses that hosted the SATC, the national offices of the YMCA had required a more standardized program on campus. This new situation frustrated student association secretaries and as early as 1916 these secretaries were already demanding more responsibility for planning their day to day work with students. That year during the General Convention of the YMCA in Cleveland, Ohio a Committee of Counsel was established to give counsel to the Student Department. This national counsel was so successful that at the national conference three years later state level student councils were established to allow for regional differences in the student association work. As control over programming worked its way from the national organization and became increasingly more localized the student associations experienced a rebirth ("Evolution of the student council system," n.d).

However, there was disagreement on the level to which student work should follow the same organization as the national association. In June of 1927, the entire interim Student Department Committee submitted their resignations simultaneously. These resignations were in direct opposition to the organizational changes of the national YMCA movement formalized in 1924 that worked to eliminate as many national level positions as possible. Noting that student work was becoming increasingly complex due

to the proliferation of institutions and that students shared interest with students at similar type schools, not necessarily those geographically close to them, the committee expressed that decentralization would destroy the student movement. The council system was working, but they implored that the student movement continued to be restricted by national hierarchy. The YWCA gave autonomy to its student associations "some years ago" and it had served them well. They advocated for "abdication" of the Student Movement from the General Association, so that student associations could continue to have a national organization and system of communication, while students organized through local and regional councils ("Report to the leaders of the Student Young Men's Christian Associations for the nation from the Ad Interim Committee of the National Council of Student Associations," 1927, p. 8). The same affiliation with the General YMCA that had served the student associations well for decades was now at risk of tearing it apart.

The relationship with the General YMCA continued, but its complexity only grew, as did the complexity of the work on campus. In 1934, Thomas Wesley Graham, former secretary of the YMCA at the University of Minnesota and Dean of the Graduate School of Theology at Oberlin College, addressed the National Council of the YMCA and shared his observations on the present situation in student work. The biggest change was competition. While the Y always faced competition from other student organizations, he noted that a whole group of organizations [denominational campus ministries] were each doing the majority of the work of the student association on the campus of Oberlin. Beyond the new organizations, the administration of the college had grown to include a director of admission, a dean of men, a bureau of employment and

two secretaries who had taken on many of the tasks previously fulfilled by the Y (Wesley, 1934). The expectations of student work also changed. In addition to providing religious and extracurricular leadership, association secretaries were forced to give special attention to personal counseling during the 1930s (Babcock, 1943).

In spite of the many challenges, the 1930s were a period of relative success for student associations around the country. On campus after campus, experienced association secretaries helped student leaders navigate the sea of complexity in which they found themselves. Across the country associations found ways to partner with churches, newly appointed professors of religion, a growing number of campus chaplains, and even at times denominational campus ministries to promote Christianity and provide for students ("The Student Christian Movement in the mid Atlantic region," 1936). The start of World War II in 1939 presented another challenge for the Y but also an opportunity to reach a new wave of young men on campus.

While the YMCA followed a particular shared history and a similar path, it was ultimately a campus organization. It was a tightly connected and nationally sponsored organization, but to be successful each campus Association was forced to respond independently to the issues and opportunities at their particular college or university. The following chapter will investigate the particularities of the rise and fall of the Young Men's Christian Association at the University of Georgia.

CHAPTER 4

RISE AND FALL – THE YMCA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Around the nation the YMCA had reached a state of maturity. Its reach and influence on most campuses in the country was significant. At many schools, especially those with a YMCA building, the Y was the primary organizer and host to nearly all student activities. Athletics, student publications, student activities, dances, lectures, housing, and even student religious life were all located within the YMCA (Comer, 1914). However, it was a voluntary organization and depended on the good will of its host institutions and the maintained interest of the students. By the 1920s the YMCA had been a national force in higher education for nearly half a century and was riding a wave of success following World War I; however, this national success did not always translate to the campus level. What follows is the story of this end at the University of Georgia. But to fully understand the decline, it is important to first understand the history.

Early Religious Life at the University of Georgia

The University of Georgia was the first public intuition to be chartered in the nation, and for more than the first century of its history it was the only stable institution of higher learning in the Deep South. It was also an innovative institution – particularly when compared to the private colleges in the north. Instituted "to set a precedent for a new kind of education, established by the state for the good of its citizenry," the University of Georgia reflected something unique in the American educational environment. Previously, churches had founded most of the best known schools in

America; in 1794 the state of Georgia created an alternative to schools run by and for religious groups (Bratt, 1999, p. 2). But the University of Georgia did not turn its back on religion. Religious figures were intimately involved with the founding of the University.

In its original charter the University's stated purpose was to "encourage and support the principles of religion and morality" (Dyer, 1985, p. 10). The halls of Franklin College, the main university building, were full of religious people. The first president, Josiah Meigs, and faculty of UGA were all professing Christians, and the school had "religious trimmings" (Bratt, 1999; Coulter, 1951). The original board of trustees contained a healthy number of ministers, and one of its most influential members was the Rev. Hope Hull. A Methodist minister, Hull traveled extensively itinerating from Maryland to Georgia and at times served as the right hand of Bishop Francis Asbury. Known by fellow ministers as "Broadaxe" for his attacks on sinful behavior, Hull was one of the most active trustees in the early nineteenth century. Although a self educated man, Hull strongly believed in creating access to higher education for the citizens of Georgia and worked tirelessly for the University (Reed, 1949). When Meigs stepped down as president, it was Hull who assumed the position during the search and helped install a Presbyterian minister as president in 1811: the first in a long line of Presbyterian presidents lasting nearly a century (Coulter, 1951). Students felt these religious motivations in their daily lives as they played out in several venues on campus.

Compulsory Religious Life

Like its peers around the country, compulsory chapel was a part of life at the University of Georgia (Rudolph, 1962). Although a religious facility was not in the

original vision of Abraham Baldwin or the plans of Josiah Meigs, the University of Georgia constructed its first chapel in 1807, six years after classes formally began. The Board of Trustees appointed a Methodist minister as its Chair, and he made it his personal task to provide for compulsory religious activity. For the next century students were required to attend chapel services twice a day – a strictly enforced policy – and also to attend weekly Sunday church services (Dyer, 1985). There were even fines levied against students who chose not to attend. Held at 6:30am, chapel services often exuded an "unmistakable religious aura, usually from prayers and reading the Christian scriptures" (Skerpan, 1998, p. 73). This pattern continued until 1894 when the Board of Regents officially ended mandatory chapel for the university system; however, on campus at UGA chapel remained listed as required in the course catalogue for another twelve years. Following a period of voluntary participation, Chancellor Barrow reinstated mandatory chapel services, segregated by year in school, in 1919 (Skerpan, 1998). Religious instruction also took place in the classroom, but it took some time for this to occur.

Religious instruction eventually came to be an important part of daily life at the University of Georgia. However, this was not the case in the University's earliest years. Under the leadership of Josiah Meigs, a meteorologist by training, the first curriculum focused on the sciences. Students were also exposed to Greek and philosophy, but there was no mistaking students studied something different at UGA than at other institutions (Dyer, 1985). This curricular independence from religion would not last long. Beginning in 1811, under the leadership of newly appointed president John Brown, and the succession of Presbyterian ministers following his term, students grew familiar with the

study of religion and its importance to their success as students. However, this religious instruction was not limited to the doctrine of any particular denomination.

Students' lives were highly programmed and included two separate periods of recitations a day and a set time for evening prayer each day. But the mission of the University was not professional religious training. In the antebellum period only twelve percent of graduates went on to become clergy (Dyer, 1985). The administrative interest in religious instruction extended until the end of the nineteenth century when president William E. Boggs failed to install a faculty chair in Biblical studies. External evangelical pressure and concerns over the power that a chair in Biblical studies at the University of Georgia would hold in the state killed the plan (Dyer, 1985). However, as late as the beginning of the twentieth century the University still claimed "a universally Christian faculty" (Skerpan, 1998, p. 290).

It was not until 1946 that the University of Georgia created a formal religion department, and by that time it had not offered any courses in religion in over fifty years. Students who chose to study religion did so through the YMCA or local churches (G Book, 1946). By the 1960s, William Ayers, the chaplain of the University and advisor to the University Religious Association offered:

Introduction to the Bible	Old Testament Literature
History of Religion	NT Literature
Hebrew-Christian ethics	Prophetic Movement
Philosophy	Teachings of Jesus

These courses were meant to offer practical education for the students and responded to a desire of the students for relevant courses in an area of interest to them ("Remember Thy

Creator in the Days of Thy Youth", n.d.). It also signified a continued understanding that religious instruction was still the responsibility of religious personnel, and that the study of religion was primarily a study of Christianity. Nonetheless, it marked a significant response of the University to its students. The University of Georgia also required instruction in religion through courses in Greek that focused on study of the New Testament. In this it did not differ much from the overtly religious, denominational college around it (Godbold, 1944). But religious activity did not always have to be required or offered by the University; students had significant input into the religious environment on campus. Between 1850 and 1920 students played an active role in directing their own religious experiences and in shifting religion from an intellectual exercise to a faith most identifiable by action on campuses across the country (Bouman, 2004).

Voluntary Religious Life

The religious atmosphere in 1858 at the University of Georgia left a great deal to be desired; students were anything but willing participants in the religious life of the school, and many of the students arrived on campus with little or no religious background (Coulter, 1951). Only the year before, a student had shown his disgust with mandatory chapel attendance by dancing in the aisles during one morning service (Rudolph, 1962). However, this was an improvement over the years immediately preceding it, and as student conduct had improved so had their attention to study (Reed, 1949). The town of Athens was also coming into its own. Although the streets remained largely unimproved, the town had recently installed sidewalks and the first gas lamps at beginning of 1858 (Hull, 1906).

Into this tranquil but somewhat irreverent town a wave of piety crashed down. Beginning in New York City, the Revival of 1857-58 reflected an expression of revivalism committed to evangelism and devotional piety (Long, 1998). Sometimes referred to as the businessman's revival, the work was "noiseless and [silenced] all cavil" ("The Revival in Colleges," 1858). Across the nation men, women, and college students gathered together for prayer and thanksgiving, and in droves those same people joined a multitude of churches ("Religious Intelligence," 1858).

On April 1, one of the Athens newspapers began reporting news of a revival in New York alongside reports of a revival occurring at a local Methodist Church. The Methodists established a prayer meeting in the law office of T.W. Walker Esq. ("Religious Revival," 1858). Soon the meeting grew too large to continue in Walker's office and the Citizens of Athens approached the Demosthenian Society at the University of Georgia in hope of using their hall for the meetings ("Thank You Note from the Town of Athens," 1858). The Societies were central to campus life and had recently experienced unusual levels of interest in religion themselves. In the only two accounts of speeches by junior orators during 1858, the minutes of March 6 refer to the "goodliness of individuals" and the following week the "junior orator was called on and interested the members with an incomprehensible and metaphysical speech on the subject of Devotion" (Demonsthenian Society, 1858). Once the revival began, the professors and the president assisted with the preaching duties; the university played a central role (Coulter, 1951).

Another local paper reported the events of the revival the following week, emphasizing "a spirit of deep earnest interest in spiritual matters is daily increasing in our community" as well as the large size of the noon prayer meetings and the addition of a

meeting at the Methodist Church ("The Religious Revival in Athens," 1858). By the third week of the revival in Athens, "there [had] been no abatement of the Holy influence" and the Phi Kappa Society, the other Society at the University, formed an additional prayer meeting at five o'clock. This meeting was intended especially for the young men of the university, and was "attended with a great deal of interest." ("Revival," 1858) All of the accounts of the revival refer to the number of admissions into the local churches and note the cooperation of the ministers among the various denominations. One month later, on May 6, "the ministers and people [were] worn out with fatigue," and the revival largely ended. In discussing the character of the revival, the columnist wrote, "We have witnessed many revivals before, but never seen one so quiet, so calm, so orderly – so perfectly free from every thing [sic] like mere 'animal excitement.' " The same article also listed the final count of people who joined the Athens churches: Methodist 90, Presbyterians 50, Baptists 41, Episcopalians 11, Methodist (African-American) 76 ("Revival," 1858). While these numbers are certainly not only students from the university, the students played an active role in the way the revival played out and in its ultimate success. By June, life had returned to normal and the town was focused on the excitement surrounding commencement (Head, 1858). The revival came and went quickly, but during its peak the students were critical to its ultimate success; they also showed that when they had the opportunity to voluntarily practice religion it could have powerful consequences far beyond the compulsory religion they often despised.

But Not All That Religious

The story of deeply religious institutions and students is not false, but it does exaggerate the importance of the training of ministers in early American higher education and the role of religion in the founding of those same institutions, particularly the University of Georgia. The training of ministers was never the only function, and possibly not even the main function of American colleges (Schmidt, 1930). Although it had some religious aspects, the institutional perspective on religion at the University of Georgia was less than wholly religious from the beginning. UGA was the first public institution to be chartered in the nation and it was intended to be "something distinct from the clerically dominated New England learning" (Dyer, 1985, p. 14). Its first president became the first of his profession to hold the position of president and signaled a different intention for the University. Although the Rev. Hope Hull was a powerful member of the board of Trustees at UGA, he was also overwhelmingly outnumbered by public servants. In 1811, the Board counted as its members men who had either already served or would soon serve the state and the nation in a variety of ways. Among its rolls were one signer of the Declaration of Independence, two signers of the United States Constitution, six delegates to the Continental Congress, six US Senators, nine Congressmen, and nine governors. There were also many individuals without such public interest, but they were largely physicians, lawyers, businessmen, and farmers (Reed, 1949).

Even the value the university put on institutional religion is not clear. After all, the first chapel was an afterthought. And while UGA chose its location in Athens "to protect students from the temptations and vices of towns," (Coulter, 1951, p. 47) the founders were in no hurry to construct a place of worship in a location far removed from

any church; it was constructed only because a Methodist preacher put up nearly $700 of his own money for the cause (Dyer, 1985). The journal of James Pleasants Waddel, a professor of ancient languages at the University from 1836 to 1856 and son of former university president Moses Waddel, made it clear that the only reason for attending morning prayers was to hear student recitations. He noted that "chapel was not so much as place as an event – a daily gathering of students for religious devotions and other activities." Chapel exercises themselves were not always entirely religious; instead, "they provided the opportunity for general announcements, for 'appeals to the reason and conscience' by the college president of chancellor, and for students to deliver occasional orations." They were as much a symbol of tradition as they were of religion. The chapel services on the mornings without recitations were poorly attended by students and faculty a like (Waddel, February 28, 1847).

Even when students did attend chapel, they were not always models of Christian piety. In 1817 when a new president arrived at the institution to begin the school year he found that the students "did not believe in the Bible," and that most of them "had never read a chapter." To address these shortcomings the University entered into a larger American tradition of addressing practical religion for the sake of the students. They had "neither education nor religion" before beginning their time at UGA, and it was acknowledged that between these they had less religion (Coulter, 1951, p. 30). In 1857, a student at the University of Georgia showed his disgust with mandatory chapel attendance by dancing in the aisles during one morning service (Rudolph, 1962). This was an improvement over the years immediately preceding it (Reed, 1949). Behavior outside of chapel also left something to be desired. Faculty minutes from the middle of

the nineteenth century contain information on disciplinary hearings for students playing billiards in a saloon, drinking wine in town, and causing a "riotous disturbance" around campus (Skerpan, 1998, p. 183). By the turn of the 20th century, *The Pandora*, the university yearbook, dedicated a page to the "Wearers of the Total Abstinence Badge." It was accompanied a note from the editor stating "Although it may seem strange, after a careful search among the student body, it was found that on account of various and sundry reasons, there were no men who could qualify for membership" (Pandora, 1906). This appeared directly opposite the page of officers of the YMCA.

While student behavior was far from pious, some outside observers worried that the University was too religious. The same charter that called the University of Georgia to encourage religion also, "forbade the exclusion of any person of any religious denomination from the free and equal liberty and advantages of education" (Dyer, 1985, p. 8). As a state university it should not have been expected to deal directly with religious teaching and indoctrination; it was called to serve a larger number of people than a denominational school. It was the state's university and part of a larger national disregard for religion on campus (Thomas, 1983). The University of Georgia also participated in the early nineteenth century trend of regular campus-wide "transgression of the rules" (Schmidt, 1930, p. 41). The transgressions varied in voracity, but in 1840 it reached a pinnacle when a group of UGA students stoned a professor (Bratt, 1999).

Some students were religious, and others were not. Before the Civil War, only twelve percent of the graduates of the University of Georgia went on to become clergy (Dyer, 1985). This is higher than one might find today, but the production of clergy is not the sole marker of student religious interest, neither then nor now.

Factors in Religious Appearances

From the outset, evangelical denominations in the state of Georgia opposed nearly all of the University of Georgia's actions. At times the university was too religious, at others it was seen as a religious wasteland. By the time of the institution's first graduation, it felt increased pressure from the "denominationalists." Even though students attended chapel services twice a day and Sunday church services weekly, local Baptists denounced the University for having "godless" students and faculty. In an attempt to win over the populist groups, the University appointed Hope Hull, a Methodist, as chairman of the Prudential Committee in 1807. While this appeased the Methodists for a while, the Baptists remained suspicious (Dyer, 1985, p. 33).

In the opinion of some, the school soon took on such "a strong religious flavor that it soon resembled many of the nineteenth century's denominational colleges," (Dyer, 1985, p. 26) but the Baptists and Methodists none-the-less complained that UGA "could not provide the Christian education they believed appropriate for Georgia's young men." Furthermore, Baptists charged that the University was "an institution expressly calculated for the dissemination of sectional, sectarian, and party doctrines." Both Baptists and Methodists wanted more control than the University Board would give them; in response they disparaged the religiosity of the institution (Dyer, 1985, p. 32).

In the 1830s the first Baptists joined the Board of Trustees; however, it was too late to stem a rising time of denominational education. By 1840 four new colleges were chartered in the state of Georgia. The Methodists established Emory, for men, and Wesleyan, for women; the Baptists founded Mercer College; and the Presbyterians founded Oglethorpe. The Baptists and the Methodists made it clear that instead of trying

to control the University of Georgia they planned to compete with the state university head-to-head. This competition was not without some limits. Regardless of founding motivations, religious or otherwise, all institutions of higher education were dependent on the state governments for the granting of a charter. Many states – including Georgia – refused charters to any colleges that seemed "too sectarian" or had explicitly religious names (Braswell, 1986; Dyer, 1985). The Baptists and the Methodists proved to be effective competitors. The attacks, the competition, and a lack of funding from the state, led to a steep decline in enrolment and a deterioration of the campus. By 1850 UGA had fewer than one hundred students; in comparison, the University of North Carolina had 460 and the University of Virginia had almost a thousand. But these public schools were not all the different from their denominational counterparts, a significant factor in the competition with each other (Bratt, 1999).

The University of Georgia responded to the denominational challenge. As early as 1840, Alonzo Church, the University president, gave a speech distinguishing between the two types of colleges. Public and private institutions had different missions and different intentions (Dyer, 1985). In 1855 Church argued that "with the strong & constantly increasing religious influence which will be used to induce young men to enter [denominational colleges], the Board of Trustees cannot expect the State College to have a large number of Students unless the advantages which it can hold out be greatly superior to those offered by other" (Bratt, 1999, p. 199-200). With this, it did not abandon religion, but it gave up any attempt to compete for religious authority with the church schools.

While state universities were no longer the only providers of such services they maintained them to the best of their abilities. Although they had historical relationships to organized religion, they were not, nor were they ever, intentionally religious establishments. This ambiguity with its religious responsibilities opened the door for an outside organization to provide the religious instruction of college students. The University of Georgia, along with other colleges and universities around the nation also recognized the importance and power of voluntary student religious practice. Compulsory religion had less than perfect results, and the institutions and their faculty looked to other possibilities to help shape their students into moral men. This was particularly important at the University of Georgia as its students belonged to numerous religious and non-religious backgrounds. No matter what the University did with respect to religion it was sure to be criticized. The students, once again, took up the cause.

The YMCA at UGA

The revival at the University of Georgia in 1858 did not directly lead to the creation of any particular organization, but it did demonstrate that there was an interest among students at the University for organized and civilized study of religion. For nearly a century this interest would be served by the YMCA. By one account, a YMCA existed at UGA as early at 1866, but it was quickly dissolved (Skerpan, 1998). Through the majority of the nineteenth century, of religious study and discussion at the University of Georgia was guided primarily by the literary societies and student led private Bible studies, but in 1889 another, better suited, organization came to Athens with a well-developed set of tools and big ambitions. It was that year a group of students, seeking a deeper connection to each other and to their religious heritage revived the shuttered

YMCA (Skerpan, 1998). According to the records of the YMCA, the first collegiate association in the state of Georgia was chartered at Emory College in 1884. While new to the state of Georgia, the YMCA had already experienced success around the country. At that time there were 176 Associations across 31 states and 1 foreign province. The Y celebrated it 9,250 student members that accounted for 26% of all college students at that time (*College Bulletin*, 1884). The YMCA at UGA formed in an era when the YMCA already had an established foothold on campuses around the country. But this revived Y did not enter into a vacuum. The students were also working on ways to meet their other needs.

Competition for Student's Attention

As was the trend nationally, some of the earliest official student organizations at the University of Georgia were literary societies. The two literary societies at UGA held a critical place in campus and academic life. In addition to active student participation The Demosthenian Society was the proud owner of an impressive meeting hall (Coulter, 1951). The Phi Kappa Society had an equally as impressive hall and rivaled the Demonsthenian society with its own list of prestigious members on and off campus. The societies played a central role in the life of the university. They held weekly lectures, maintained the primary libraries on campus, and sponsored guest speakers for special lectures on campus. Membership was selective, but their influence was broad. At times they were called on to support the community through the use of their halls, but the suspension of their meetings was not taken lightly (Coulter, 1951).

Greek letter fraternities followed quickly behind the debating societies. The Georgia Beta chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon (ΣAE) received its charter at the University

of Georgia in 1865. By that time it was already the premier Greek letter organization in the South and fifteen other chapters existed on campuses in Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, and Texas. Students at the University of Georgia now had the opportunity to connect with students from other states in ways that were not possible only a few years before. A move by the trustees of the University of Georgia caused Greek organizations to officially lay dormant for most of the 1870s (Coulter, 1951), but seven fraternities were chartered at the University by 1878 (Robson, 1977). By 1897, 160 of 218 students at the University of Georgia were members of one of nine fraternities (*Pandora*, 1897). It was not until 1921 that women at The University of Georgia had their own Greek letter organization. The Alpha Alpha chapter of Phi Mu received a charter that year, and began a robust history of Pan-Hellenic participation at the University (Dyer, 1985). Four more sororities were chartered by the end of 1924 (Robson, 1977).

The fraternities also played a role in other campus organizations. At the University of Georgia, they originated the *Pandora*, the student yearbook, in 1887. Interestingly, the YMCA was listed with the fraternities as late as 1897 and likely had a hand in the original editions of the yearbook (*Pandora*, 1897). A plethora of other clubs was also available for students at the university. Some such as the yearbook committee and class officers remain to this day, while others had unique names such as the "Ancient and Rancid Order of Fowl-Snatchers" and the "Elongated Order of Attenuated Moon Fixers" (Pandora, 1907). College life was certainly not boring, and students had no shortage of organizations to join. In addition to academic and social competition they also found enjoyment and meaning from competing in the world of sports.

Organized club sports found a home at the University of Georgia in 1867. For twenty years these clubs – similar to contemporary intramural sports – provided students an opportunity to develop physically parallel to their intellectual development. They proved quite popular and provided a base for competitive athletes when UGA entered the world of intercollegiate athletics. Baseball was the first intercollegiate team. A group of students banded together in 1886 to field a team and led it a perfect season – albeit a short season. With a win over Emory, and an undefeated 1-0 season the University of Georgia officially entered intercollegiate athletics (Coulter, 1951). The football program began six years later with a perfect 2-0 season of its own with wins over Mercer and Auburn (Georgia Athletics, 2013).

The Growth of an Institution

The University of Georgia in the late nineteenth century looked little like the university in 2016. One notable difference was size. The class of 1875 graduated only 57 men ("Souvenir Volume of the Class of 1875, Issued for its quarter-century reunion at the University of Georgia," 1900). But even in this small community, there was a desire from the students for organized study and activity.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the YMCA at the University of Georgia followed closely to the national trends. It established itself at the center of many campus activities and put in place the effective tools shared from other associations around the country. One of the most important tools of the YMCA was the room or building occupied by the Associations. This was certainly true at the University of Georgia, although for many years, the Y found itself in a new home as often as not.

In its earliest years, the YMCA had a small building on campus that contained the General Secretary's office and small meeting rooms for conversations or student groups. For larger gathering, a larger assembly room in the University library was reserved for the Y. In that room they held Bible studies, missions courses, Thursday services, and nightly vespers (*G Book*, 1915). Throughout those early years many attempts were made to raise the funds for a separate building. Although these attempt to construct its own building fell short the Chancellor noted in 1903 that "the Young Men's Christian Association Building is undoubtedly the greatest present need of the University" (*The Next Step Forward of the University of Georgia*, 1903). In 1921 the Y moved into a building near Denmark Hall lovingly referred to as "the shack" (Tate, 1966). This new space was "open to all students" and afforded the YMCA with a reading room with "daily papers, magazines, games, and writing materials" as well as additional space for "facilities for the pleasure and convenience of the students" (*G Book*, 1921). This arrangement was convenient, but it did not last long. In 1924, the University administration was finally able to raise the funds for that long needed building. Named Memorial Hall, it was constructed as the first student center at the university. It was not exclusively the YMCA's building, but it was placed in the control of the Y and the association's secretary. Memorial Hall was home to the YMCA, the Athletic Association, the Alumni Association, and Student Activities; however, the administration had such a strong belief in the effectiveness of the Campus Y to program student activities that Eddie Secrest, Secretary of the YMCA, was placed in charge of the new facility (Secrest, 1924). In a sign of institutional support for the YMCA, the trustees of the university supported a plan proposed by Secrest to charge a $3 activity fee to all

students at the university. The majority of this money would go to the upkeep of Memorial Hall, the home of the YMCA (Moyle, 1954). Although Memorial Hall was on the edge of the campus, it was a fitting location for the Y, since it had been a part of the original plan for a recreational facility for the campus as early as 1903. The Athens YMCA was supposed to offer financial support for the building, but quickly backed out. After a few false starts construction did not complete until 1924 when the Rockefeller Foundation, George Foster Peabody, and other benefactors raised the $800,000 needed to complete construction (Dyer, 1985).

Memorial Hall proved to be a good home for the YMCA. From Memorial Hall the Y expanded its offerings and sought to maintain its central place in campus life – even with the growing administrative presence from its co-tenants. Simultaneously, the university was going through another change. On September 21, 1918, 12 women became the first co-eds at the University of Georgia. There had been women enrolled at the State Normal School in Athens since 1891, and although its students certainly interacted with the men at the University of Georgia, it functioned as a separate institution. In its mission to reach all students the YMCA established a YWCA by 1921. These organizations functioned largely as one until the merger of the University of Georgia and the State Teachers College in 1932 led to the creation of a Coordinate Campus for Women: the residential campus for first and second year women. The YMCA knew the importance of a place for its students, so it quickly established a presence in the "Little White House" on the Coordinate Campus. The Y, which by that time has merged into the Voluntary Religious Association, now had two buildings (McWhorter, 1938). In 1936 the headquarters on the main campus participated in

another move. Rather unceremoniously, the VRA was moved out of Memorial Hall into a building known as Chancellor Hall. As fitting as it was for the Y to be located in the former home of its long-time supporter, Chancellor Barrow, sharing the house with other organizations and only having access to the first floor proved to not be a suitable situation for the Y or the University (*G Book*, 1936). The following year, the Y moved to its final home in the Strahan House. The Strahan House was an adequate space for the Y; located more centrally near the main academic buildings of campus, it had two stories and a high basement – perfect for a game room – although it would prove to be a source of much contention in the years to come (*G Book*, 1937). While there was not a commitment to a permanent location for the Y, there had been significant support from the university administration.

In 1915 the chancellor of the university described the YMCA as a "blessing" and encouraged all new students to attend daily vespers services held by the Association. He made it clear how much he valued the Bible study opportunities availed to students by the Y and stated that he was not aware "of any organization or arrangement which can be successfully substituted for [the Y]" (*G Book*, 1915). Chancellor Barrows continued to encourage new students to attend the Bible studies until 1923, and his support of the daily vespers service remained until his retirement. This support was obvious across campus, but it was particularly clear in the UGA student handbook known as *The G Book*.

Like dozens of other institutions around the country, the YMCA at the University of Georgia was responsible for publishing the annual student handbook. As noted earlier, the national Y recognized these handbooks as a useful tool for the affiliated universities and as an effective tool for recruitment for the campus Associations. Generally these

handbooks contained general information about items such as laundry, rooms, board, where to trade, freshmen caps, lists of local churches and all other campus organizations, general regulations of the University, and perhaps most importantly football and baseball schedules. At UGA this was certainly no different.

Prior to the beginning of each school year the University of Georgia YMCA would print and distribute a *G Book* for all new students. The books were sent to their home addresses before student began their trek to Georgia. They were greeted by a message from the Chancellor and offered practical information regarding the beginning of their college careers. They were instructed to come to the YMCA building as soon as they reached campus so that they could "receive full information in regard to your room, board, etc." and notified that if they did not have their own transportation they could write ahead so that "they can be met at the station by a YMCA man." It also gave advice on where to do laundry, where to trade, and the proper way to wear their freshman caps. In addition it offered this suggestion to freshmen:

> Matriculate as soon as possible, Join a literary society, spend your unoccupied time in the library or YMCA rooms, acquire no bad habits that you did not have before entering college, don't forget that when you enter the University you are regarded as a man: men never whimper, don't fail to look up your pastor as soon as possible, write home often, don't get in debt, attend all YMCA services, join the YMCA, don't think that you are on a religious vacation; college men have temptations. (1915, p. 15)

This admonition was conveniently followed with the "Purpose of the College YMCA" and a list of weekly offerings offered by the Y (*G Book*, 1915).

The handbook was a handy recruiting tool, but it was also one that could be produced without taking funds from the social and religious activities budgets of the associations. Association members worked with local businesses to sell advertisements that filled the inside of the front and back covers. This was certainly nothing new. The College Bulletin noted as early as 1884 that these hand-books should "cost nothing" since "business houses patronized by students" were eager to sponsor the publication (*College Bulletin*, 1884, p. 4). In 1940, the VRA at the University of Georgia raised $836.75 in advertizing funds to support the publication of the *G Book* ("Summary of receipts and disbursements," 1941). However, both at UGA and around the nation, the YMCA offered many other services to their campuses.

In addition to the responsibility of creating and publishing the student handbook, assisting students in finding housing, and helping students find employment, the YMCA also originated the idea of freshman orientation (Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999). Academic placement exams had preceded academic terms prior to this new creation, but there had never been an official social orientation to college. At Georgia, information sent to students prior to their arrival on campus that encouraged them:

> When you reach campus come to the YMCA building where you can get full information in regard to your room, board, etc. Students can also write ahead informing the YMCA which train they will be on so they can be met at the station by a YMCA man. (*G Book*, 1946, p. 5)

New students also needed a cultural orientation to their new campus home, so the Y offered suggestions such as "it is the custom for all students to speak to each other whether they have been introduced or not" and "a man cannot afford to be snobbish at

Georgia" (*G Book*, 1916, 15). In addition, the Y offered a number of entertainment opportunities for students on campus and discussion series on pressing topics of the day, including a six week series on "the inter-racial question" in 1924 (UGA YMCA, 1924). The YMCA worked to fill the social and cultural voids on campus. Of course, they were also there to recruit members. For these types of services the University assisted the Y with some financial compensation.

However, the school support was not enough, so to help pay for these events and the upkeep of the association building, the Y initiated a student activity fee. In 1923 the trustees of the University of Georgia approved for a $3 fee to be added to each student's bill; the feel was allocated for the upkeep of the YMCA building at the urging of the Y Secretary (Moyle, 1945). When the Y moved buildings, the university continued the fee and kept the money (Shedd, 1941). This move marked more than a change in campus geography. This was also an important sign in the changing role of the YMCA at the University of Georgia. Where the Y had once been primarily responsible for the complete religious and extracurricular activity on campus, it was now one among many.

By 1939 President Caldwell received a quarterly audit of student activities at the university; the Y was one of 19 student organizations. Some, like the literary societies, predated the Y; however, others, such as Georgia Agriculturalist and the Saddle and Sirloin club, were new to the campus (Heckman, 1939). In addition to the competition for student attention, the YMCA now also competed for funding. Where it had once had full discretion over the use of the student activity fee and boasted that all of the operating budget of the VRA is coming from that fee (Secrest, 1924), by 1940, its annual university appropriation of $6,300 was only about one third of the $18,499.93 the university

disbursed to student clubs and organizations. The VRA appropriation was still the largest, but its annual budget of $7,520 was comparable to the budget of the student paper and well below the $12,464.22 budget of *The Pandora*, the university's yearbook. One place the VRA did far outpace all other student organizations was its personnel expense. The $5,325 allocated for the secretary and his assistant accounted for nearly seventy percent of the total personnel costs for student activities and seventy percent of the total budget of the VRA ("Summary of receipts and disbursements, 1941).

Although its position within the university changed, the YMCA remained at its core a religious organization. To this end *G Books* also contained a number of Christian hymns and prayers and continued to push students towards religious participation. Popular hymns of the day like "Onward Christian Soldiers," "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name," and "Come Thou Almighty King" were situated alongside "My Country Tis of Thee" and a selection of UGA songs and chants. They also reminded students how important it was to attend daily chapel from 8:55 to 9:10 each morning and religious services at local churches on the weekends. A list of local churches and their pastors was usually included to help (G Book, 1916)(*G Book*, 1916). In 1921, the *G Book* noted that the YMCA was "still the only religious organization on campus" (*G Book*, 1921, p. 27). In the 1920s religion for most college students meant one thing: Protestant. This was about to change, and that change brought about significant transformation for the Y at Georgia.

The Voluntary Religious Association

Beginning in 1932 there was a new type of organization listed in the pages of the *G Book*. Listed among the fraternities and the Glee Club were four denominational

religious groups. Seemingly all at once, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians had their own religious organizations (*G Book*, 1932). At first these were staffed by volunteers from local congregations, but by 1936 both Baptists and Methodists had full-time staff directing these student groups (Tate, 1966). No longer was it the sole provider of student religious education; it was now one – albeit a big one – among many.

In addition to the growing presence of denominational groups, the decade and a half of female students at the University meant that there were two student groups (YMCA and YWCA) serving essentially the same function – one for men, the other for women. In light of the growing presence of denominational ministries, the increased number of female students from the 1932 merger with the State Teacher's College, and changing attitudes towards coeducational activities, the YMCA and YWCA merged in 1933 to become the Voluntary Religious Association (VRA) of the University of Georgia (*G Book*, 1933). Eddie Secrest had directed both organizations for a decade, so this was not a change of power but rather a statement that the majority of events overseen by the Religious Association would – and should be – coeducational. This was a significant change and a new role for the YMCA in the religious life at the University. This changing status was further institutionalized in 1935 with the creation of a Student Christian Council. Since the first *G Book* in 1915, the YMCA had worked to connect students with local Athens churches, but the creation of the Student Christian Council was the first time that the VRA had recognized the importance of collaboration with other religious groups on campus. Celebrated by the VRA in the *G Book* as an opportunity to "promote cooperation and good fellowship between the different religious groups of the

city," it was a recognition that the VRA no longer held the monopoly on student religious activity it maintained for over sixty years (*G Book*, 1937, p. 76).

With the broadening religious competition from organizations that more closely resembled the religion of student's homes, the VRA was forced to be less Christian in its message. For most of the first few centuries of American higher education, Catholics and Jews had limited opportunities for enrollment; if they made it campus, they had even fewer opportunities for full inclusion and involvement (Thelin, 2011). While there had been Jewish students at UGA since the beginning of the twentieth century ("Religious census of University of Georgia, 1906), by 1937, there were enough Jewish Students at the University of Georgia to officially form a Jewish Student Union (*G Book*, 1937). While never a part of the Religious Council, growing numbers of Jews and Catholics – who also had an active Newman Club – further demonstrated the weakened role the VRA held in the religious activity and instruction of Georgia students. It looked for common denominators and worked hard to entertain the students in a morally acceptable manner, but it certainly did not stop trying.

A Changing Higher Education Landscape

Following World War I, these opportunities greatly expanded, but the growing inclusion of women and students from other religious backgrounds made groups like the YMCA and YMCA begin to feel obsolete. Ecumenical and coed college student bodies desired a student group that looked more like them, and colleges looked for ways to expand their influence into the lives of their students beyond the classroom. A significant part of this change was the growing field of student affairs.

As noted earlier, the growth of student services began in the first decade of the twentieth century; however, a proliferation of deans did not begin until the end of World War I. Looking for ways to better document the special skill and talents of their students and organize a new student population, student personnel offices and specialized deans were hired on campuses across the country.

Student Services at UGA

This change came to the University of Georgia in the 1920s. The title of this new administrator at the university was Dean of Men, and he was tasked with student conduct, student activities, and student personnel administration. His role was to coordinate and document the lives of students beyond the classroom. The move of the VRA from Memorial Hall in 1936 coincided with the addition of a new position to the University administrative staff. The Dean of Students created a new Dean of Freshman position and recruited William Tate, a young alumnus of the University, to return to Athens. Recognizing the increasing complexity of campus life in the period following World War I, the University joined the national movement of professionalizing the responsibility for the growing number students on campus and the number of clubs and activities in which these students participated. Secrest had directed the entirety of the university's student activities with part time help in the coordination of activities for women for a dozen years. The addition of a second full-time staff member to the Dean of Students office marked a significant transition in organization at Georgia.

Originally from Calhoun, GA, Tate was an active member of the YMCA during his time as a student. During his freshman year the campus YMCA did not have a secretary, so the arrival of Edward "Eddie" Lee Secrest was met with great hope. The

student and his new leader developed a close relationship, and they worked incredibly well during their three years together in Athens. With the arrival of Secrest and the anticipated new home, the Association was busy during the 1923-24 school year, organizing rooming lists, hosting orientation and welcome events, implementing numerous activities, and overseeing the freshman registration process (*Annual Report*, 1924). At the opening of Memorial Hall and the beginning of the 1924-25 school year, Secrest was anxious to have Tate back on campus to help "get the Old 'Y' started right" (Secrest, 1924). He did, and the first year in Memorial Hall was seen as a success by all on campus. Tate served as treasurer of the YMCA during his junior year and completed his time at UGA as president of the Association. He and Secrest appeared to be quite close and fond of each other (Tate, 1966).

Following his graduation from the university, Tate accepted a position as an instructor of English and enrolled in a Masters program in the English Department. This marked the beginning of a long tenure as an employee of the University of Georgia, and was the first of many positions he held. Although he left UGA in 1929 to teach English at the McCallie School in Chattanooga, TN, Tate spent the majority of his professional career in Athens. Tate was young and inexperienced as an administrator. While he certainly held a number of responsibilities beyond teaching during his tenure at McCallie, he had no preparation for the new field of undergraduate student affairs. However, this was more the norm than an exception. For the 1940-41 school year the Dean of Students to whom Tate reported was two years his younger and had previously served as an Assistant Professor in the School of Education (Reed, 1949). Tate's return to Athens in 1936 was also likely encouraged by his recent marriage to the granddaughter of David

Barrow, the University Chancellor; however, his time back at UGA would be anything but easy.

Friendship Lost

In the eleven years after Tate's graduation significant changes took place with the Christian Associations on campus. With the opening of the Coordinate Campus in the 1930s, Secrest oversaw the creation of a YWCA to serve the religions and social needs of the students there. An Assistant Director was hired to organize the YWCA and its home, the "Little White House" (McWhorter, 1938). This Assistant Director for the YWCA, and later the Associate Director of the Voluntary Religious Association served as the Director of Campus Activities and Dean of Women for the Coordinate College. Running a full slate of activities and programs out of the "Little White House" on the Coordinate Campus, the YWCA was as active for its students as the YMCA was for those on the main campus; however, the deans of women at the University of Georgia differed from the national trends. While they were viewed as indispensible for the women of the Coordinate Campus, they were neither academics nor experienced professionals (McWhorter, 1938). This remained the case until the closing of the coordinate campus in 1943 and the end of the Associate Director position in that same year (Tate, "Memo from William Tate to EL Secrest," 1943). While successful, the YWCA did not survive long as a standalone organization. In 1932 Secrest oversaw the merger of the YMCA and YWCA into a new organization at the University known as the Voluntary Religious Association (VRA). The VRA was still affiliated with the national Student Movement of the YMCA, but it was now a single association for men and women. Secrest and been the secretary for both organizations, so the move was more symbolic than a dramatic shift

in the organization. Nonetheless, it was a sign of changing times. Membership rules were broad, and the *G Book* noted

> All students are considered members of the Voluntary Religious Association and are urged to take an active share in the varied programs. The Association respects religious traditions, experiences, and loyalties, in the membership and program, and seeks to include all students, irrespective of religious belief. No fees are charged for membership. (*G Book*, 1933, p. 2)

It was attempting to be an organization for all of the students at the university; however, the creation of a Jewish Student Association only five years later suggests that it was not successful in this endeavor (*G Book*, 1937).

Another important change was the changing relationship between the leadership of the association and the university administration. In 1903, the Chancellor had proclaimed that the greatest need of the University was a building for the YMCA. When Memorial Hall opened in 1924, the YMCA was responsible for its operation. Less than two decades later, in 1942, the President of the University urged the Dean of Students to have Eddie Secrest "get another job" (Tate, December 20, 1943). From the 1920s to the 1930s Eddie Secrest went from trusted confidant of the Chancellor, to regular thorn in his side. Since the University created the position of Dean of Men in the 1920s, each of the first Deans recommended Secrest's dismissal as Director of the Voluntary Religious Association. Around campus, it was hoped that Tate's return to campus would help ease the strained relationship (Coulter, 1951).

The first few decades of the twentieth century had proven themselves to be a period of growing campus complexity. Where the YMCA had once had almost exclusive

control of the voluntary religious activity of the students on American campuses only twenty years earlier, it no longer held that position. Among growing number of students and this growing complexity, the Christian Associations found themselves more and more in the presence of a whole group of organizations, each one of which is doing a part of almost all of that which was the program of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. At the same time the new field of student personnel moved to take over certain functions the YMCA had controlled a generation earlier (Graham, 1934). While the rise of denominational campus ministries, the increasing professionalism of student services, and a growing willingness to outsource religious activity at the University of Georgia all played a factor, the decline of the VRA on this one campus had more to do with a quarrel between two long-time friends than it did with socio-cultural shifts.

In the first twenty years under the leadership of Eddie Secrest, the YMCA at the University of Georgia flourished. During the 1923-24 school year the Y held no fewer than ten entertainment events for the entire University, prepared rooming and boarding lists for new students, met all new students at the train station, helped students register for classes, and sent letters to all students over Christmas alerting them to on-campus changes that would greet them in January. The Association also held a series of lectures over the course of the year.

Through the 20s and 30s the YMCA/VRA was a regular presence on campus. In 1925, Secrest borrowed an idea from other campus Associations around the country and began a "Religious Welfare Conference" at the University ("University of Georiga dedication of Memorial Hall Religious Welfare Conference April 21-22," 1925).

Although the name would later change to "Religion in Life Week," this event was an annual occurrence at the University through the 1960s. Created to "cultivate and broaden" the religious life of students at UGA it covered topics over the years such as "Genuine Religion," "God on the Campus," and "Is Your Life Worth Living?" As the enrollment of the University grew towards 3,000, it was typical for several hundred students to attend guest lectures on topics such as the Holy Land ("Large crowd of students hear Miss Mildred Rutherford's address at YMCA; Other campus news," 1924) or the regular Sunday services held at the Y ("Students observe week of prayer," 1924). In the 30s the YMCA was also known for its "free old fashioned square dance" ("YMCA to Give Student Dance," 1930). Events like this were typically open to all students whether they were officially members of the Association or not.

With the merger of the YMCA and YWCA into the Voluntary Religious Association (VRA) in 1933, the support continued. In 1936 Dr. Robert Russell Wicks, Dean of the Princeton University Chapel delivered the keynote address during the annual Religious Welfare Conference, noted that the students of the day were facing a "scarred world" where "Christian heritage seems to be in a state of temporary eclipse" ("Religious welfare conference," 1936). Sharing a similar view of the role of Christianity to address the ills of the current age, President Caldwell was a regular presence at Association events and gave a speech at a VRA meeting in 1938 extolling the virtue or intellect, spiritual power, religious training, and recreation (Caldwell, 1938). In addition to programming on campus, the VRA at UGA also participated in the larger student Association tradition of attending the annual conference at Blue Ridge. In 1937 forty students from the VRA attended the annual retreat, and represented the University among

the Southern Student Conference ("Blue Ridge Scrapbook 1937," 1937). These students represented just a fraction of the over 130 students on the student leadership team of the Association at that time (*Pandora*, 1937). The VRA was a campus power, but trouble was on the horizon.

Beginning with the 1920s conversations on the "inter-racial question" the YMCA showed a tendency to push the University administration in uncomfortable ways. While on campus conversation were frustrating, Secrest pushed too far when he chaperoned a group of students to an integrated meeting in Atlanta in the fall of 1938. Although the VRA had already been brought under the umbrella of the Dean of Students office at that time, this action elicited a stern letter directly from President Caldwell stating that "in the future it must be the policy of the University not only to refrain from sending delegates to [integrated] gatherings but also to oppose the attending of such meetings by members of our student body" (Caldwell, December 8, 1938).

The longer Secrest was on campus the more he seemed to get under the skin of those around him. Although he had more latitude that most University employees, since his arrival to campus he had been just that – a university employee. When the YMCA was located in Memorial Hall, his salary came from the student activity fee meant for the upkeep of the building (Secrest, 1924). When the Y was moved from Memorial, his salary was transitioned to a line item in the Student Activities budget. Because of his salary and the additional funds allocated to the YMCA it received just over one third of the allocation to the twenty-one clubs and organizations at the university (Heckman, 1939). In the late 1930s Secrest began to show growing dissatisfaction with the

organizational changes and the university's inability to move quickly on the social and racial issues of the day.

As noted above, his persistence was not appreciated by the administration. By 1940, a combination of Secrest's social liberalism and increasing university administrative procedures codified his position as subordinate to the Dean of Students. In March of 1941 Kenneth Williams, Dean of Students, wrote a memo to President Caldwell suggesting that the VRA be reorganized as a part of his office. Caldwell responded that he was "heartily in accord" with this proposal and that he wanted Williams to "move as rapidly" as possible to implement it (Caldwell, March 28, 1941). He took his direction to heart and by May the Board of Regents charged the Dean of Students with maintaining "the proper religious and moral influences" for the students. Furthermore, the Director of the VRA "should be considered as a professional staff member assigned to the Division of Student Activities." The memo that includes these statements is laced with frustration about all aspects of the VRA and its supervision. Its author was William Tate, Dean of Freshmen (1940, p.1). This was a significant reorganization. The VRA was closely connected to the university since its founding, but it had functioned with limited university oversight while being supported by university funds. By some measures, the VRA was having one of its best years, so the timing of the move is strange.

Only two months earlier, the VRA had hosted its largest Religion in Life Week ever. Over four days in January over 17,000 contacts were made with students at the university and people from the city of Athens (*G Book*, 1941). Throughout that year, the association also coordinated numerous activities as well as the publications to which it had traditionally published. Those activities included total expenditures on those

publications of $1,415.88, entertainment of $114.55, and $96.13 spent on communication ("Summary of receipts and disbursements, June 1940-1941," 1941). In today's dollars, this is the equivalent of over $26,000 dollars spent in direct service to the university. The VRA was active in both the religious and social life of the university. It would be challenging to make the case that this reorganization was intended to aid an ailing organization.

Although Tate and Secrest had once been close, by 1940 it was clear that the hopes of Tate helping to improve the relationship between the VRA and the Dean of Student's Office had been dashed. If anything, Tate's presence accelerated the speed with which Secrest burned bridges around the University, but Tate was only Dean of Freshmen. That was until October of 1941 when Kenneth Williams, Dean of Students, submitted his resignation to take a position at the University of Florida (Williams, 1941). Tate was promoted to Dean of Students, and with that Secrest's former student became his boss. The troubles grew almost immediately.

It was a time of trouble around the world. Only a few months earlier Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States had launched into another world war. Enrollment at American universities dropped almost immediately. Even with state appropriations, the University of Georgia was forced to make significant budget cuts mid-year. This included a ten percent cut to the student activities budget – of which the VRA was a part. While most organizations made the adjustments to their budgets, the VRA continued to spend as though nothing had changed (Strozier, March 11, 1942). That is not to suggest that it spent wastefully. During the 1941-42 school year, the VRA hosted seven special religious services; dozens of retreats, forums, vespers, and

counseling session; leadership training activities for the student cabinet; many parties, teas, and other social events; Freshman Orientation, the Lost & Found, Recreation Center for commuters; and published two important university publications – *The G Book* and the Student-Faculty Directory ("Annual Synoptic Report of the Voluntary Religious Association, 1941-1942," 1942). But it did spend too much, and the frustration from the Dean of Students office continued. By March of 1942 it was clear that the new organizational structure was not relieving the headaches that all parties involved hoped it would. Tate wrote to Caldwell to share his frustration. Caldwell offered to mediate between Tate and Secrest but reminded Tate that the VRA reported to the Dean of Students, so it was his responsibility to make it work (Caldwell, March 16, 1942).

The following fall, the number of people on college campuses began to grow again and soldiers were assigned to temporary positions on a variety of campuses. The VRA welcomed the soldiers to campus, encouraging them to "feel at home" at UGA. Soldiers were invited to come to the Strahan house for ping-pong, books, magazines, newspapers, a piano, and a radio in a "home-like atmosphere." They also made sure to include a *G Book* for the new soldiers so that they could take full advantage of the opportunities available to them at the University of Georgia ("Welcome soldier," 1942). Publicly the VRA looked poised for significant growth; however, in dealing with the administration, Secrest and the VRA at the University of Georgia continued along their same trajectory. At the beginning of the 1942 school year, Secrest and Tate met in Tate's office to discuss the VRA's plans for the year. Some progress appeared to have been made as Secrest left convinced that Tate would "like to help our religious program on the campus," but he was unwilling to stop there. He continued,

> but your letters and your conversations with me and with some of my student leaders have almost led some of us to feel that you are not sympathetic to the Religious program and that you are looking for something to criticize… I will ask you to join with me in quitting talking in about criticism and attitudes of people concerning religion on the campus.

Secrest did admit blame for some of the "misunderstandings," but it was clear that in his mind Tate was the problem (Secrest, 1942).

Secrest's efforts at an apology did not go over well with Tate. "I cannot agree to join you in not discussing criticism of the religious program on the campus, nor your policy of 'taking it on the chin,' " Tate responded. He went on to say that he agreed "that friction within the VRA has mitigated against its usefulness, against your usefulness, and also against my usefulness." But perhaps the most damming part of the letter was Tate's characterization of his relationship with the VRA as "the unhappiest relationship that I have on the campus" (Tate, August 28, 1942). Two men, who twenty years earlier anxiously awaited the beginning of a new semester so that they might be reunited, were now at each other's throats.

Secrest's response was not one of humility. Instead, he took the opportunity to write a three page bulleted list of disagreements over the financial decisions Tate made with regards to the VRA during his time at Dean of Students. He noted the difficulty of communicating by letter, as letters "are so easily misunderstood and misinterpreted" and asked to meet face to face with Tate – although it was a face to face meeting only a month earlier that had started this most recent volley of communication. While Secrest was on the attack for the bulk of his letter he did admit that

> It hurts me deeply to have you say that the VRA is the unhappiest relationship that you have on the campus. I simply cannot understand how you can honestly feel this way towards this organization which has always cooperated with you to the fullest extent. Only last year the VRA dedicated the G-Book to you as a slight token of respect and appreciation for your interest in our work. (Secrest, August 29, 1942)

Secrest closed by committing to cooperate with Tate and the work of the Dean of Students office "in every way possible," but it may have already been too late to help (Secrest, 1942). That these two men, whose offices were less than fifty yards from each other and who had once been close friends, had taken to communicating almost exclusively by letter suggested the size of the problem. In the entirety of Tate's letters, there is no mention of a meeting for two months, from August to September of 1942; however, there are a dozen letters expressing frustration with each other during this same time.

Tate took a sabbatical from the University for the spring of 1943, but time away did not heal the wounds with Secrest; the two men continued to antagonize each other. Tate was not alone in his frustration. Tate's colleague for the past four years, Robert Strozier, served as acting Dean of Students while Tate was on sabbatical. In a letter to Tate intended to catch him up on what he had missed while away Strozier noted the budget crisis the University found itself in and recommended several cuts. The *Pandora*, the Phi Kappa Society, and the Demosthenian Society's appropriations were all cut significantly; he proposed a more dramatic cut for the VRA. "It seems to me," said Stozier, "that the VRA might very well be conducted by the workers of the various

churches" (Strozier, May 1, 1943). Tate almost immediately set to encouraging Secrest to leave.

During the spring of 1943 Secrest received several job offers from the USO to help coordinate activity for the growing numbers of soldiers in training camps around the United States. On numerous occasions he politely declined – quite happy with his currently situation. On May 4 Tate asked Secrest to join President Caldwell and himself in a meeting to discuss "the possibility of accepting one of these offers and allowing us to reduce our budget for general university administration" (Tate, May 4, 1943). By June of 1943 it had reached a point of no return. During his time at Dean of Students, Williams saw "no value" in Secrest's work with the VRA, and Strozier, Director of Student Activities, recommended that Secrest not be continued as the Director of the VRA. Based on these comments, in a private meeting with President Caldwell, Tate requested that he be able to fire Secrest. According to Tate, Caldwell had previously "questioned the value of [Secrest's] work" at UGA when Tate had recommended Secrest be fired only a year earlier, so this appeared to be an easy personnel move; however, Caldwell denied the request. Over the next few months Caldwell, Tate, and Secrest attempted to remove the "temporary difficulties" they were experiencing. These attempts were unsuccessful (Tate, December 20, 1943). Tate did not back down; rather, he took to putting together an alliance of support.

On July 19, 1943 Tate began a letter writing campaign to solicit support for his desire to terminate Secrest. His first letter was to his former boss, Kenneth William. He wrote to Williams:

> For over a year I have been trying to get Mr. Secrest to accept other work; but seemingly he expects to stay here and run the VRA exactly as he wishes. You know the situation and the personalities of this campus, and I do not need to elaborate on what you can imagine are my difficulties. Possibly Mr. Secrest has felt in a position to dicker with me more than he did with you; but I feel he has been disloyal to me in many minor ways in complaining to others about my decisions that he has been disrespectful in objecting to Mr. Caldwell about what I have done, and has been frequently unpleasant in a nagging and backhanded way whenever I did anything he did not like

Tate's frustration was clear, and he intimates the peculiarities of his personal relationship with Secrest, but the goal of the letter was not simply complaint. He closed by asking Williams for a favor. "You know the difficulties the Mr. Secrest presented to you. Bob [Strozier] is going to write a letter, to be used only in an emergency or a row before the Regents; and I would prefer your doing the same, preferably a letter addressed to Mr. Caldwell, but to be held by me along with Bob's and some others until it is needed" (Tate, "Letter to Kenneth Williams," July 19, 1943).

These letters were to demonstrate the systematic and consistent concerns with Secrest's leadership. It is difficult to assess Tate's motives, but based on the mention of Secrest's "position to dicker" with Tate – who was two years older than Williams – it appears that Tate was concerned that his problems with Secrest would be dismissed as a personal conflict. He worked to establish cause for Secrest's dismissal that could not be blamed on this personal issue.

The last letter of the day was to President Caldwell. Although Tate was looking for reinforcements, he was still willing to take his fight directly to Caldwell. He shaped his letter in light of the dramatic enrollment decrease at UGA – from 3,500 to 1,000 students – but was clear in what he desired. "This letter is to reaffirm my earlier oral recommendations, as tentatively approve by you both in a private conference and later with Mr. Hill and Mr. Secrest, that I am forced to recommend that after a period given for Mr. Secrest to make adjustments and find other work, he be relieved of his position in connection with the VRA, effective December 31, 1943." Tate laid out his grievances against the VRA and Secrest.

The primary issue in the letter revolved around the budget as Secrest had continued to spend as he pleased. He refused to reduce his staff, although he had fewer students to work with, and Secrest even requested to hire a secretary – expanding his staff. However, a secondary, and ultimately more important, issue presented itself in the perceptions of the VRA among a number of students at the university. Tate noted that students had complained to him that the

> VRA has been more concerned with organization than with religious work, have frequently been a political activity on the part of some of its student members rather than an expression of religious interest, and has gone to the formal side of religious organization of committees and deputations rather than individual religious effort with students. (Tate, July 19, 1943)

Tate felt that both the University budget and the students would benefit from the departure of Eddie Secrest. Only a few months later another group of students shared similar feelings with Acting Dean of Students Robert Strozier. Due to the potential for a

"strong Religious Council" the students no longer felt that the Voluntary Religious Association was necessary. Each of the largest churches in Athens already had a full-time staff member working with students at the university, and coordination of these efforts was well underway (Strozier, August 24, 1943). Students that had the ear of the Dean of Students Office were making the case that the VRA had outlived its purpose at the University of Georgia and had lost its religious authority. It was difficult for the VRA to make the case that it was for all students when enough students to warrant mention did not feel that the VRA was an organization that represented them.

Within a week Tate wrote to Caldwell again. This time with what he believed would be an end to the unpleasantness. "I have written to Mr. Secrest," he noted, "that his services would not be needed after the 31st of December." It was clear that some time had passed between Tate's letter to Secrest and his letter to Caldwell, as Secrest had already begun to discuss "with people on the campus the Statutes of the University in terms of the VRA and his right as a member of the Faculty to be tried through certain procedures." Although "person after person on the administrative staff who has been subject to such pressure will no longer work with Mr. Secrest or believe in his program," and that it "seem[ed] to the be the consensus of many people on the Faculty that Mr. Secrest is not doing a good job and is not capable of coordinating his activities with others," it was clear that Tate was concerned that his decision would not stick (Tate, August 3, 1943). After all, only a month earlier Caldwell had denied Tate's request to fire Secrest.

It appears that President Caldwell, whatever his actual opinion on the situation, did not desire to become a part of the personal fight with Eddie Secrest. Within three

days they reached a compromise that Secrest would take a leave of absence to assist in the war effort by leading the USO in Charleston, SC. The exact terms of the leave of absence are not clear, but Secrest left for Charleston with a letter in hand from Caldwell for a leave of absence "for a period of one year beginning September 1" (Caldwell, 1943). The letter included a clause that allowed for either party to extend the leave for one year at will, so the possibility for an extended leave existed. Caldwell hoped that the distance would do everyone well.

This series of letters are an interesting look into early student affairs administration. In this case, the Dean of Students was unable to fire an employee of the university who reported directly to him. While the university organizational chart may have shown one thing, Secrest and the VRA were clearly more important than just an organization. In addition, President Caldwell appeared to waiver in his support for Secrest leaving Tate in a challenging position. But throughout the discussion, although student opinion is mentioned on occasion, there is little evidence of basing the decision around what is in the best interest of the students.

Secrest departed with what was proving to be his typical stubbornness. In his last month on the University of Georgia campus he received three parking tickets – which he refused to pay – and about which he had to be reprimanded by the business manager of the university (Bolton, 1943). He also undermined the Dean of Students office by publishing a *G Book* that was different than the format, size, and content upon which they had agreed. He did what he wanted, and he didn't seem to care about the opinion of the university leadership (Tate, August 13, 1943). The organization of religious life on campus began to change almost immediately after his departure.

By the end of September Tate wrote to Secrest with confidence that the students were in good hands under the leadership of local religious leaders. The students were kept busy and the religious atmosphere on the campus was strong. Tate shared a schedule of events with Secrest that local religious leaders and denominational chaplains had planned for the students, and did his best to make Secrest comfortable that everything on campus was going well. However, there is little possibility that Secrest took any of this as good news. The denominational chaplains who had been the competition of the Association for the last ten year took less than a month to supplant the VRA as the religious force on campus (Tate, September 25, 1943). A personnel move, had opened the door for systematic change at UGA. While Tate could have asked Strozier to oversee religious life or appointed an Interim Secretary of the VRA, he instead outsourced religious life to the religious council. His discussions and letters make it clear that he had regular contact with at least some of the council members, but none of them were employees of, or had any responsibility to, the university. It may have been nothing more than a pragmatic decision made in the moment, but from the letters noted above, it looked to be a renewal of the effort to hand religious activity over to the local churches. It also took Tate less than a month to restore his campaign to remove Secrest from his responsibility permanently.

In a series of letters to Caldwell in September and October of 1943, Tate again outlined out his issues with Secrest and the need for permanent changes to the VRA. He also made it clear that he felt that his authority was undermined by Caldwell during the attempted firing of Secrest. While it was clear that Tate did not get his original desire of termination for Secrest, it appeared that Caldwell and Secrest even changed the terms of

the leave of absence without consulting Tate. "Since his leave is entirely different from what I expected," Tate wrote, "and since he is planning to give up [his position with the USO] no matter what the status of the war, to return here next September, I think there was little point in ever having given him the leave." Tate was clearly frustrated with Caldwell and Secrest: so frustrated in fact that he was ready to give up responsibility for the VRA to Caldwell. At a minimum he wanted absolute control of the VRA and Caldwell to back his decisions (Tate, September 11, 1943).

Secrest couldn't stand to be away for even a month. On Friday, October 1, Tate wrote to Caldwell that Secrest was in town and that Tate was trying to avoid any conflict with him. However, he also wanted a final resolution on the matter of Secrest and the VRA.

> I recommended earlier Mr. Secrest's dismissal as the VRA director on the campus, a recommendation which seemingly had met the universal and unanimous approval of those who work with students on the campus. On several occasions you and I have agreed that his work on the campus was ineffectual, and I think now is the time for us to reach a definite understanding whereby we can really secure a wholesome atmosphere of religious sincerity on this campus. (Tate, October 1, 1943)

This time, Caldwell appeared to be in agreement with Tate on the need for improving the "religious work" on campus (Caldwell, October 7, 1943).

Also in agreement were the leaders of the Religious Council. They were enjoying their new freedom to engage with all students on campus and they believed that their success quickly showed that the work of the VRA was not necessary (Strozier, August

24, 1943). It appeared that Secrest's days at the University of Georgia were numbered. Religious life was going smoothly, the President agreed that changes needed to be made, and the Dean of Students was all too happy to allow Secrest to remain in Charleston indefinitely. However, Secrest was not finding his work with the USO fulfilling and desired to return to Athens.

The End of the VRA at UGA

With Secrest away, Tate felt more freedom to dream about a new religious program that he felt would better meet the needs of the current students of the University. Not surprisingly, he began by once again airing his frustrations with the VRA under the leadership of Eddie Secrest. In a letter to President Caldwell, Tate wrote that he believed "there can be no worthwhile religious interest among the students while [Secrest] is head of the VRA." He went on to share complaints from Williams as well as current faculty and students, noting that he had only received one positive comment about Secrest in the past year (December 20, 1943). But Tate was focused on the future more than the past. In a letter to Rev. David Cady Wright, rector of Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Athens, Tate laid out his plan to reorganize all religious activities at the University. This plan includes the formalized offering of classes in religion and philosophy and to expand the activities of the VRA, "if the proper person is found." All of this would come under a new division in the Dean of Student Office called the "Division of Religious Activities" under the direction of Chaplain Hargate, the current Wesley Foundation Director (December 22, 1943). Caldwell was in on the plan and a few months later independently consulted with Wright himself, noting that "the [religious] organization that we have had in the past and its programs have failed to measure up to expectations. I am confident

that we must follow a different set of procedures" (February 17, 1944). Tate was in full discussions with local religious leaders about the future of campus religious life at the University of Georgia; however, Secrest was still employed as the Secretary of the VRA.

In early April of 1944 Secrest visited Tate in Athens to learn what arrangements had been made for his return to campus in September of 1944. Tate wrote to Caldwell that he did not see how the budget would allow for Secrest's return and a week later shared the same with Secrest (Tate, September 15, 1944). Secrest responded a day later with a letter directly to the President. It is a most peculiar letter because it is written as though his conversation and correspondence with Tate never occurred. "While considering my plans for the next school year," Secrest wrote, "I have re-read your courteous letter of August 30, 1943, offering me a leave of absence for a period of one year." He shared how much the members of the VRA wanted him to return to campus, and that it was clear to him that his services were "needed and desired." Furthermore, his time in Charleston had been "a year of spiritual growth," and had made him "confident that [he] will be a more useful Christian" upon his return. Secrest's end run around Tate appeared to be put down quickly. Caldwell responded on the 22nd, that he had discussed the state of religious life and the VRA at Georgia with Dean Tate and that it was Tate's opinion that Secrest's "services would not be essential to the University during the 1944-45 session." Caldwell went on to lay out the financial pressure on the University that year and encouraged Secrest to remain in Charleston for at least another year (April 22, 1944). The yearlong extension was well within the original agreement.

Secrest had another plan. He wrote to Tate that he and Caldwell had discussed previously that Secrest "would decide definitely whether or not I wished to return to the

University on May 2" when he was on campus for the annual VRA banquet (Secrest, April 21, 1944). Secrest firmly thought that the decision to return was his, and he was not one to sit idly by. He immediately enlisted the help of friendly faculty and community members who had been a part of the VRA Board write a letter of support for him to Caldwell. A letter from the President of the VRA, the President of the VRA Board, and the Chairman of the VRA Committee noted that Secrest's year of service to the USO made him particularly well suited to work with the expected wave of servicemen returning home from the war who would enroll at the University of Georgia (Wheeler, Young, & Maynard, 1944). At the end of May Tate wrote to Secrest responding to what he felt was an accusation on the part of Secrest that Tate was lying about the terms and conditions of Secrest's leave of absence. He told Secrest that he was being "misleading" and that Tate never made any commitment to Secrest returning and notified Secrest that "your name does not appear in the current budget, that no funds are set for your salary," and that the University expected him to request an extension to his leave of absence for the good of UGA. He went on to clarify that the issue of the VRA was not "a slight misunderstanding between you and me" and that he felt Secrest was

> ignoring a basic fundamental problem – that there is on the part of many people a distinct feeling that the VRA program has not been adequate, that is has been a personal program on your part with the feeling that you carefully excluded from the program any person who viewed differently from you, that there have been many personal conflicts that have mitigated against the VRA, and that ultimately we would do well to consider a drastic change in the program and personnel of this department. (May 31, 1944)

Tate expressed similar feelings to R.C. Singleton, Director of the Wesley Foundation, the Methodist student ministry run out of a local Methodist Church, a few weeks earlier; while thanking him for his work with the VRA in the year of Secrest's leave he noted that the University would be better served by a "coordinated and more cooperative" religious program than the "competitive" one put in place by Secrest (May 11, 1944). But Caldwell intervened again.

On June 5, 1944 with Tate in his office, Caldwell dictated a letter to Secrest stating that "Both Mr. Tate and I agree that you have the privilege of returning to the University of Georgia as soon as money is available for the payment of your salary." He made no promise of when that money may be available, but suggested that it would likely not be in September – when Secrest wanted to return (June 5, 1944). But Secrest returned to Athens in September anyway. By the second week of the month he was in Athens making his rounds through the Strahan House telling students that he would be returning to campus in January to take over his old role as Director of the VRA. Tate wrote to Caldwell under the assumption that Caldwell had given this idea to Secrest, but acknowledged that Secrest "is not a responsible person in some of his statements," and that he had been "personally embarrassed on several occasions by the illogical and unfair statements made by Mr. Secrest on the campus" (September 15, 1944). He followed up with a letter to Secrest noting a previously agreed upon return date of August 31, 1945, and noted that arrangements had already been made for the current school year. In addition, Tate notified Secrest that they were working to hire a person as the head of a Division of Religious Activities to whom Secrest would report when he returns and he

would like for Secrest to make an appointment to see him the next time Secrest in Athens (October 5, 1944). This was the latest of Tate's ideas to reorganize religious life at UGA.

In the first of a barrage of letters over the course of October, Tate accused Secrest of wasting a great deal of time, causing unnecessary "friction," and being "unfair" to Tate (Tate, October 10, 1944). Secrest quickly rebutted that he has never been called "unfair" before in his life and he is offended that Tate would accuse him of such behavior and again quotes previous letters from Caldwell (Secrest, October 18, 1944). Trying to simplify the situation, Caldwell removed himself from the conversation and instructed Secrest that all future communication must be only with Tate and apologized for any "misunderstanding" he may have caused (Caldwell, October 18, 1944). There can be no doubt that all three men were annoyed and frustrated with the situation. These letters were strongly worded and full of emotion. It is a wonder that any other business was accomplished during this month as much research went into each correspondence. Although the vast majority of this transition played out through letters, it appears that some conversations occurred in late October of 1944 for which we do not have a record. Because, as if out of nowhere, Tate wrote a memo to Caldwell on October 23 that recommended "Mr. Secrest return to the University as of January 1, 1945… as Director of the VRA" and continue under the supervision of the Dean of Students office. Secrest was to no longer have any communication directly with the President and to negotiate the deal Secrest agreed to retire at the end of the academic year during which he turned sixty (Tate, October 24, 1944).

Within his first month of being back Secrest ruined plans of the Religious Council for a Day of Prayer Program and refused to follow several direct orders from Tate ("UGA

Religious Council," 1945; Tate, February 21, 1945). Everything appeared to be back to normal. Over the next few years this type of behavior continued from Secrest and Tate appeared to have no course of action to change it. However, he was simultaneously working on plans for the restructuring of religious life at the university.

In the spring of 1945, Tate began a series of correspondence with Clarence Shedd. Shedd was a professor at Yale Divinity School and an expert on religion in American higher education – particularly in public institutions. The correspondence began with a request for him to speak at the University of Georgia during a trip he had planned for that summer. Tate also requested his help in "a new set-up for religious work." This new set up would address the need both for religious instruction as well as a separate plan addressing the "concerns of the churches" about the VRA that would bring about a "great increase" in religious activity on the campus. It is clear from Shedd's response that Tate also asked for specific advice on Secrest, but he declined to offer any as he did not know Secrest. Shedd also declined the invitation to visit UGA because he felt that the type of help for which Tate asked could not be accomplished in a quick visit, but would take at least three days and hoped that it could wait until June (Shedd, March 9, 1945).

Tate responded that he was confident the reorganization could wait until that time because President Caldwell did not have any specific person in mind and that "finding the right person is probably the major part of the problem." In the meantime, Tate asked for a list of state universities with strong religious programs so that he could begin research before Shedd's arrival to campus (Tate, March 14, 1945). Shedd responded that he was aware of at least a dozen state universities "financing chairs of religion" He noted that even though Tate's plan to have one person overseeing religious instruction and religious

activity on campus had not been "too satisfactory," that he agreed with the principal (Shedd, April 4, 1945). He also included his 1941 article, "Religion in the state universities" (Shedd, 1941). The correspondence with Shedd would last another year and although it came with much delay, he finally visited the University of Georgia in 1946 and offered suggestions for the reorganization of religious life. Strangely, this plan was delivered to Eddie Secrest and it is not clear that Tate ever received a copy of it. Tate's frustration with Secrest keeping the plan from him "on several occasions" was expressed in phone calls, visits to the Strahan house, and through a letter (Tate, January 7, 1947). As with other requests, Tate hit a roadblock.

Time after time Tate wrote to Caldwell complaining about Secrest. In 1946 he noted again that "Mr. Secrest's usefulness to the University is generally gone," and that he "regret[ed] we let Secrest come back." He went even further in noting to Caldwell, "I think you do not realize how subtle but how deadly Mr. Secrest works" (April 19, 1946). A few months later he wrote to Caldwell that Secrest was "knifing [him] in the back" (July 3, 1946). Throughout the escalation of his complaints, Tate continued to look for ways to rid himself of the Secrest problem. At one point Tate unsuccessfully suggested that Secrest be reassigned to the new junior college in Savannah (August 3, 1946). Over the next two years the activities of the VRA at the University of Georgia limped along. There was some controversy during the 1947 school year over the acquisition and use of a station wagon by Secrest and the VRA (Henderson, 1947), and then another confrontation between Tate and Secrest over the use of one of the rooms in the Strahan house by the *Georgia Cracker*, a student publication (June 27, 1967). In the spring of 1948 Secrest engineered a student uprising over the suggestion that the VRA be moved

from the Strahan House so that the Law School could expand (Secrest, March 30, 1948). It appears that this was all that Caldwell and Tate could take.

Over the next few weeks Caldwell and Tate negotiated a forced retirement with Secrest. They were so desperate to be rid of him that they offered a sabbatical for the upcoming school year followed by his immediate retirement. To no one surprise, Secrest did not go peacefully. In a cover letter to his resignation letter Secrest took great pain to illustrate how hard he had worked for the University for twenty-five years and that

> Of course you know that I have been rather bitterly persecuted during the last few years by a certain person of the faculty. I feel that God has heard my prayers, and I have no resentment or bitterness in my heart for this party or for anyone else. I do not mean to say that I have any feeling of close personal friendship for this person, but I am glad that the Lord has not allowed this persecution to embitter my life or to affect my daily course of living. (Secrest, April 3, 1948)

Although he may not have had resentment or bitterness towards Tate, it was obvious that he felt persecuted by their troubled relationship. Tate was troubled by the relationship as well. Two years earlier he wrote to the Dean of Columbia Seminary in Decatur, GA

> I do not believe that [Secrest] has been very frank or loyal in his dealings with me. Unfortunately, I was his student treasurer as an undergraduate and also his student president and he has never realized that I have grown up. (Tate, March 23, 1946)

At one point they were mentor and mentee, running the largest and most powerful organization at the University of Georgia. By the time of Secrest's retirement, they were bitter enemies.

After the submission of Secrest's resignation letter, Tate wasted no time in putting in place his reorganization plan of three years earlier. By the end of April the VRA was placed under the control of the Department of Religion and Chaplain Napier hired two new Assistant Chaplains, one male one female, to direct the religious activities of the campus (*G Book*, 1948). By the following year the name is changed to the "University of Georgia Religious Association" and any remaining ties to the YMCA were severed (*G Book*, 1949). An era had come to an end. The war, the rise of denominational campus ministries, and a growing professionalization of students services all put pressure on the VRA at schools across the country; however, elsewhere the VRA lasted as a campus institution for another decade or more before meeting its demise. The YMCA had always existed in a competitive space. It grew into a national movement in spite of sports, Greek life, literary societies, and other student organizations. Ultimately, the challenge of competing religious organizations created a type of competition against which the YMCA had a harder time defending itself; however, at UGA an institution had crumbled largely because of a friendship lost. Tate remained at the University of Georgia for another several decades and became an icon for a generation of UGA students.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS: MOVING FORWARD

While the Voluntary Religion Association at the University of Georgia came to a dramatic close in 1948, other student associations around the country continued to thrive. Seeing an injection of students and interest in campus life following World War II, most associations grew and benefited from the ability to offer campus services, counseling, and religious instruction to traditional students and returning veterans alike (Setran, 2007).

However, this growth was not long lived. The changing needs of more diverse student bodies and the continued rise of denominational campus ministries put campus YMCAs under stress against which they could not sustain themselves. By the 1970s campuses across the country were home to an average of 12 sectarian campus ministries (Burkhardt, 1995; Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999). In this same decade, the national YMCA dismantled the entire student department. Some campus branches continued to survive under strong local leadership, but most did not. Some morphed into other campus ministries, some became local branches of the Y, and a few became even more closely associated with the universities; most just withered away (Burkhardt, 1995; Fidler, Poster, & Strickland, 1999). But its legacy lives on, and campus associations also remain.

The Y, in some form, is an active religious organization on fifteen campuses around the country. Students continue to gather each summer for annual conferences and these associations organize a variety of activities for members and non-members alike.

At the University of North Carolina, the Y continues to organize a Freshman Camp as a way for incoming students to begin their transition to college and familiarize themselves with the role and activities of the campus Y ("What is freshman camp?," 2013). However, its time as a leader of campus activities has long past.

Campus ministries continue to play an important role in the development of college students. Their impact is not as deep or as wide as that of the YMCA in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but students are transformed through campus ministries and these ministries continue to be involved on campuses. The importance of including denominational ministries into the full life of the university is beginning to be recognized again (Craft, Weber, & Menke, 2009). As for the YMCA, it is now left largely in a position of reflecting on the heyday of its institutional history and what happened to its campus domination. One Y publication made the case from its perspective.

> An outstanding characteristic of the Student Associations has been the constant focus on the student, his interest and needs. Long before the colleges themselves were alert to the situation, Student YMCAs were engaged in counseling work, sponsoring intramural sports, running employment bureaus and maintaining student housing lists. When the institutions moved aggressively into these fields with expanded student personnel services, our groups tended to withdraw to devote their energies to other pioneering areas. In all periods, however, their objective has been the provision of programs and groups geared to student interests and needs, with the hope of drawing at least some of the participants into increasingly meaningful experiences of worship, study and action from which

commitment to Jesus Christ and the Christian way of life might emerge. (Johnson, 1958, p. 32)

The YMCA always saw itself as committed to the students, and this was certainly the case at the University of Georgia. A long history of providing creative and innovative student services, religious instruction, and institutional support provided three generations of students a campus home. For many years, one man led the organization as it experienced success on campus. Eddie Secrest, through his progressive roles as Secretary of the University of Georgia YMCA, YWCA, and Voluntary Religious Association (VRA), directed the religious and extracurricular life of the university from 1924 to 1948. As with any organization, over time the activities changed, and so did the measure of success. As the association transitioned from a growth organization to one of significant power and maturity the requirements for and demands on its leadership grew. As organizations move from a growth period to an age of maturity, creativity wanes and is replaced with bureaucracy and control from those in leadership positions (Cameron & Whetten, 1981). Secrest proved himself well suited for creativity and growth; his final years suggest he was not cut out for a life in bureaucracy.

Adding to the bureaucracy was the growing prominence of student services and the expansion of administrative roles in American higher education. The University of Georgia was a leader in this national trend. One year prior to the publication of the *Student Personnel Point of View* (1937), the university added William Tate as the Dean of Freshmen and grew its Dean of Men office to two full time administrators. At this time, the field of student personnel felt that its primary responsibility was to assist the faculty (Doyle, 2004), but the actions of Williams, Tate, and Strozier made it clear that at

Georgia the Dean of Men's Office was also deeply concerned with student religious life and student activities. It may have been forced to do so by the size and scope of the YMCA under the leadership of Eddie Secrest, but even beyond Secrest's actions – or lack thereof – the men leading the student affairs movement at UGA appeared to be making intentional and systematic decisions that increased the prominence of their work.

For twelve years, the YMCA and the office of the Dean of Men shared resources and Memorial Hall. As the Dean of Men's Office came into its own, it supported and encouraged the YMCA to oversee the entirety of the religious life on campus as well as the majority of the extracurricular activities. The new administrative office and the YMCA symbiotically existed and appear to have helped each other. A significant change occurred in 1936. In this year two transitions took place at the university. First, the YMCA was moved from Memorial Hall – the center of student life. Second, William Tate was brought back to the University of Georgia as Dean of Freshmen. With these two changes, UGA took a noteworthy step into developing student affairs culture on its campus. While a Dean of Men had been employed by the university since the 1920s, the addition of a second position, especially one focused on first year students and their transition to college, was important. The first year experience had been a specialty of the YMCA and it was also its primary recruiting tool. It is difficult to assume the motivations for these two significant changes, but it put in place a dramatically different relationship with the YMCA and a more central role for the student affairs staff for managing student activities and religious life.

The simultaneous growth of denominational campus ministries only added to the pressure under which the YMCA at the University of Georgia found itself in the 1930s.

Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopalians simultaneously founded ministries devoted to student work in 1932; the same year that the YMCA and YWCA merged to form the VRA. Five years later Jewish students formed the Jewish Student Association simultaneously affirming the desire for an organization that could address the religious needs of students and signifying that the VRA was not that organization for them. Although the importance of the religious instruction and council that these five ministries – and many more to follow – provided for students should not be marginalized, the more important detail is that the leaders of these organizations provided an alternative to the administration of the university to provide for the religious life of students when relationships with the YMCA soured beginning in 1936. Campus ministries formed at other institutions around the country around the same time as they did at the University of Georgia, but as noted above, the downfall of most campus associations was a full decade or more past that at the University of Georgia. The rise of denominational campus ministry was important to the demise of the VRA, but they are not the primary culprit.

While the damaged relationship between Tate and Secrest is not the sole reason the YMCA no longer has a presence at the University of Georgia, it is what differentiates this story from that of countless other campuses around the nation. With the university's on again off again relationship with organized religion over its history, perhaps it was fated that the UGA VRA would meet its demise before the majority of YMCA campus associations. But this particular transition is ultimately a story about people. The struggle documented previously between Tate, Caldwell, and Secrest was critical to the development of student affairs culture at the University of Georgia. Although the struggle at UGA was amplified over a lost friendship and a changing power structure

between an association secretary and his former student, the points of disagreement were echoed around the nation.

First, the issue of authority and responsibility overshadowed all of the correspondence between Tate, Caldwell, and Secrest. To whom, for what, and to what extent the YMCA was responsible dominated many of the letters. Secrest clearly wanted the YMCA to be responsible to itself and its Board – as it had been since its earliest days. Williams, Tate, Strozier – and to a lesser extent Caldwell – wanted the YMCA to be responsible to the growing Dean of Students office and under the direct authority of the university. Shifting authority and responsibility were also central in the growth of student affairs around the nation.

Second, money played a role in the downfall of the VRA. Secrest's own creativity in encouraging the university to asses a student activities fee for the benefit of the YMCA ultimately provided Tate and Strozier with some of their most potent criticisms of Secrest and the VRA. That the VRA had the biggest budget, the highest payroll expenses, and seemingly the least responsibility in managing the money allocated it to it from that student activities fee allowed the student services staff to make arguments with which there could be little room for interpretation. In addition, Secrest's inability to pay parking tickets pulled the business manager of the university into the conflict only elevating the importance finances in the transition. To this day, finances remain a powder keg on many campuses and accountability for growing university budgets was a factor in student affairs development.

Finally, student interest became the last rallying cry for Tate and Strozier. For Tate's first seven years in the Dean of Students office, there is no mention of student

discontent in his correspondence with Caldwell or Secrest. That changed in 1943 when both Tate and Strozier noted student frustrations with the VRA. During the summer of 1943, Tate highlighted student frustration that the VRA was more political than religious and that this led a number of students to feel as though there was not a place for them in the association. A month later Strozier shared that students no longer saw a need for the VRA due to the high quality of religious instruction, fellowship, and counseling from the denominational campus ministries. The student affairs staff made it clear that students were concerned that the VRA was not all that religious, was not welcoming to all students, and that there were better alternative already active on campus. Hearing and acting upon what is in the best interest of students is a hallmark of student affairs culture.

Beyond the points of conflict, Tate's plan was influenced by academic research. Through his correspondence with Clarence Shedd, it is clear that Tate stayed up to date on current scholarship in the area of religious life and instruction. It is impossible to say if he was equally as well versed with the scholarship in the other areas under his purview, but it is hard to imagine that a former English teacher would only study literature on religious life. His outreach to Shedd also showed a willingness to consult with experts and bring outside opinions into his decision making. Secrest's ultimate departure and the dissolution of the VRA did not come until two years after the consultation and report from Shedd on a future for religious life and instruction at the University of Georgia. This was the first era of scholarship on student affairs, and a period of great change for the field. Tate and Secret's conflict and the changing role of the YMCA at UGA overlap precisely with the dozen years between the first and second versions of the *Student Personnel Point of View* (1937, 1949). Although there is no mention of Tate's direct

involvement with the scholarship of student personnel, he clearly sought research and sound advice from scholars on his decisions.

In addition to the importance of the demise of the VRA at the University of Georgia holds for the history of student affairs, this is also a story of transition. Colleges have been called organized anarchies (Cohen & March, 1986), and perhaps there is no better illustration of this description than the fall of the campus Association at UGA. Creativity is critical to institutional leadership, and in the case of Secrest, Tate, and Caldwell at UGA creativity appeared to be lacking. The attempt to farm Secrest off to the USO showed some creativity, but the vast majority of the correspondence did not. Ultimately, Secrest felt betrayed, Tate felt disrespected, and Caldwell appeared to just be trying to keep a quarrel from overtaking his daily routine. This betrayal and disrespect eventually led to a transition of student religious responsibility from the YMCA to a new department of Religion and denominational campus ministries.

Three models for understanding institutional transition were shared at the beginning of this dissertation: copy, build, and by default. The transition of the institutional responsibility for religious activities from the VRA to the administration of the University of Georgia was not an example of March's (1991) appropriation theory. The University saw no benefit in copying the work of an organization already on its campus, and the issue at hand was not a shortage of options, but rather an issue of control. Toma's (2003) demonstration of institution building through college sports appears to offer a stronger parallel. There was a clear move to take control of a student organization; however, there was little to gain for the university in tightening control over religious life on campus. There was a clear effort to consolidate control over religious

life – as shown through the correspondence with Clarence Shedd, but it was never thought of as a recruiting or fundraising tool. In the end, Fenske's (1980) larger theory on the growth of student services appears to hold. Through changing institutional demographics, growing competition from denominational ministries, and a growing interest in the field of student services the University of Georgia found itself organizing the religious life of its students by default. As seen on campuses around the nation, the end of the Voluntary Religious Association was nearly inevitable. The timeline of that demise was not.

The timeline at the University of Georgia shows that people matter and relationships with key administrators are important for organizational success on a college campus. Tate's inability to recognize the pressure under which Secrest found himself from Tate's work and the growing success of denominational campus ministries made it difficult for him to find empathy with the VRA in its search for relevance in a changing campus environment. Secrest's lack of recognition that Tate was no longer the nineteen year old sophomore he had first met in 1924 caused an inability to work together on sustaining the future of the VRA at UGA. Tate had grown up, but at times neither man acted as though that was the case.

On every campus there are strong personalities. Some are members of the faculty; others hold key administrative positions. This dissertation of the rise and fall of the YMCA at the University of Georgia stands apart from other works on student services and the student associations of the YMCA. The history of student services neglects the important role of the YMCA in developing and overseeing campus activities through both peace and war as well as how student services developed on campus. The story of

the VRA at UGA provides an example of both the development of student activities and a student services office. The YMCA served a central role at the University of Georgia in first serving as a creative catalyst for student activity and involvement and then a catalyst – although mostly as a foil – for the development of a student services culture at the University of Georgia.

Likewise, this work stands apart from the work of Setran as well as Finnegan and Alleman who have masterfully shared the story of the student associations and their role in developing orientation respectively, but neither showed the breadth and depth of a student association's influence on an individual campus. For nearly forty years the YMCA was a fixture on campus at the University of Georgia and played a central role in generations of religious instruction and counseling as well as the activities of all students – religious or secular. Then over the course of 10 years it also helped to usher in a new era of student services through its inability to live within a new organizational structure, stay on budget, and serve the needs of the students of the university. Additional histories of the YMCA paint student associations as victims of aggressive student services offices and denominational ministries. That story has merit, and this dissertation offers an account of collaboration between these two forces against the VRA. I am not aware of another example of this type of coordination between a student services office and denominational campus ministries in replacing a campus association. However, the history at the University of Georgia also runs counter to the position of the Y because at UGA the VRA was also implicit in its own downfall.

In addition, while the role of buildings has been well documented in the rise of the YMCA, existing literature does not examine the role of buildings in the decline of student

associations. The majority of universities where there is still an active YMCA are home to a building funded and constructed by the student association. At the University of Georgia, the move from Memorial Hall corresponded with the beginning of the decline in the importance of the VRA at the university. This suggests to an importance to the Y building beyond activities and athletics. Without a building of its own at UGA, the YMCA faced a larger challenge in sustaining itself than others. It would be interesting to see if there is a difference in the ways in which associations with and without ownership of their buildings fared during the middle of the twentieth century.

This dissertation has been written under the assumption that the relationship between Tate and Secrest is an outlier. It is unlikely that there were many other equally contentious relationships between association secretaries and the student affairs office on the same campus, but the other factors where the VRA fell short offer an opportunity to investigate if the same held true around the country. The 1930s and 40s were momentous decades for the development of student personnel and a shifting of responsibility from the YMCA to these new administrative offices. Did other student associations also contribute to their eventual removal from campus through struggles with the changing responsibility, changing accountability for money, and new pressure to deliver a meaningful and authentic student religious experience? If these themes repeat themselves on multiple campuses the history of the YMCA student associations during this era will need revision.

As a part of continuing the story of the importance of the YMCA in developing student affairs, another valuable contribution could tell the story of other early pioneers of student affairs who had leadership experience in their respective YMCA student

associations during their time in college. William Tate developed as a leader as a part of the YMCA and led the professionalization of student affairs at his alma mater. He may stand alone in his connections to both, but the prominence of the Student Movement of the YMCA in the 1920s suggests that there must be other early student affairs officers with connection to the Y. How these men and women were shaped through their Y experiences and how they developed as student affairs professionals would be useful.

Growing up can be hard. For the YMCA at UGA an inability to grow up beyond the 1920s and an inability to acknowledge that William Tate had grown up accelerated a decline faced by hundreds of associations around the country throughout the twentieth century. But in both its ascent and its decline the Young Men's Christian Association left a lasting legacy at the University of Georgia.

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