Desegregating Private Higher Education in the South

DUKE, EMORY, RICE, TULANE, AND VANDERBILT

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IV

At Tulane University, the search for Rufus Harris’s successor began in 1959. For the first time, the Board of Administrators authorized a faculty advisory committee to assist in the task, and this committee saw desegregation as a major consideration. The new president, they said, “should recognize that during his tenure of office desegregation will be one of the crucial problems facing educational institutions, private as well as public. He should be capable of furnishing leadership to the Board, the faculty, the student body, the alumni and the general public in arriving at an equitable solution of this problem which will reflect credit on both the University and the region.” President Harris’s longtime secretary and close confidant Kathryn Davis took the bold step of writing board chairman Joseph Jones with her own thoughts on the matter. Miss Davis argued that the next head of Tulane ought to come from the ranks of Tulane’s professoriate. The disadvantages of bringing someone from outside were many, “not least of which would be to find someone acceptable to not only the South but also New Orleans. Not only must he—and his wife who is a most important campus personality—be accepted here but he and she must accept us and accept segregation and drinking and Carnival (many people are against these things!) and yet go to church and know how to handle themselves with these other things.”

The Tulane board did not follow Miss Davis’s advice, shrewd though it was. They hired instead a man who was an outsider in almost every con-
Herbert Longenecker was a northerner, a native of Pennsylvania. A chemist, he was educated entirely at Penn State, where he received his B.S. in 1933, his master’s in 1934, and his Ph.D. in biochemistry in 1936. He went abroad as a National Research Council Fellow in the biological sciences, studying at the University of Liverpool, the University of Cologne, and Queen’s University in Kingston, Canada. Longenecker taught chemistry for eight years at the University of Pittsburgh, becoming dean of research in the natural sciences in 1942. He held that position concurrently with the deanship of Pitt’s Graduate School from 1946 until 1955. He came to Tulane from the University of Illinois, where he was responsible for the university’s professional schools in Chicago, including a graduate college, medicine, dentistry, nursing, social work, the University of Illinois hospitals, and related research institutes.

Longenecker was a generation younger than Rufus Harris and had reached professional maturity in an environment that was far different from the one that nurtured his predecessor. He had spent his entire academic career in large, northern, public institutions. His style, for both good and ill, was that of a bureaucrat. The kind of personal leadership that had always been the hallmark of small southern universities was not familiar to Longenecker. Harris’s total identification with Tulane was not to be repeated, was, in fact, probably not repeatable. Harris well understood the situation Longenecker was walking into and shared his thoughts in a letter he wrote on his last day in office. “I wish,” Harris told his successor, “that I could express some measure of the warm good wishes I have for you. I have every confidence in you and in your intent and ability to direct Tulane’s course wisely into another generation. . . . I do know the stumbling blocks ahead, and believe me, I will be rooting for you and will be on your side, and always available to you for anything you want of me.”

Longenecker hit those stumbling blocks the minute he set foot on campus in April 1960. With the New Orleans public schools under court order to integrate in the fall and the city’s business establishment (unlike Atlanta’s) unwilling to stand up to segregationists in the state government, racial tension was near a peak of hysteria. As the crisis unfolded, it became a regular topic of discussion at Tulane board meetings. In May the University Senate asked the board to make a statement about the need to preserve public education in New Orleans. They refused, saying that “such a statement would be a disservice to the University and would have a detrimental result.” They were more amenable to another Senate request, however, and agreed to look into the possibility of setting up a school (segregated, of
course) for the children of Tulane staff, faculty, and students if the New Orleans public schools closed. 142

Tulane administrators also spent much of May and June dancing to the tune called by the South Louisiana Citizen's Council, which had been "reliably informed" that Tulane was violating state segregation laws by allowing black employees to use "white only" drinking and toilet facilities. With offhand menace, the council's executive director, Jack Ricau, professed that he was trying to help out: "We are anxious to hear from you—to know that you will correct conditions in these matters—so that we can assuage those who have complained of the violations." 143 This letter set off a barrage of fact-finding on campus. Vice President and Comptroller Clarence Scheps had the business manager conduct a thorough census of which maids and custodians used which toilets. Scheps wound up stymied—although there seemed to be no problem with the employees, Tulane allowed black professionals to eat lunch when they attended meetings on campus, which was against the law. Despite counsel's repeated assurances that the Louisiana law was certainly unconstitutional, Scheps was troubled that he could tell the Citizen's Council only that Tulane was in compliance with the spirit of the law.144

Trouble came from another direction when Tulane students joined demonstrations and sit-ins organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) at New Orleans businesses. Although these sit-ins were not as successful as others around the South and soon ended, public awareness that Tulane students were involved was cause for alarm. After one of these students, Sydney Goldfinch, brought black friends to the snack bar at Tulane's University Center, the administration began to compile dossiers on the students, threatened them with the loss of their graduate school teaching positions, and generally made life difficult.145 Tulane did not, however, expel them. The lesson of the Lawson episode at Vanderbilt had been well learned. In Longenecker's files, a copy of the Christian Century editorial of April 13, 1960, entitled "Vanderbilt Should Reinstate Lawson" is marked with his handwritten comment: "There is a significant lesson in the wide reaction to the hasty drastic step taken by Vanderbilt."146 Outraged citizens, though, let Tulane know that allowing these "troublemaking students" to remain enrolled "will surely degrade your institution in the eyes of many." The South Louisiana Citizen's Council again weighed in, insinuating in an echo of the late 1940s that the students involved with CORE as well as two sympathetic Tulane professors were engaged in "subversive or Communistic activity" and that the university would do nothing about it because "Tulane is the
recipient of numerous Grants from certain Foundations and therefore Tu-
lane's hands are tied."147

Matters only got worse in the fall. In the face of federal court orders that
required the New Orleans public schools to begin desegregating first grade,
the Louisiana legislature enacted a series of laws designed to take control
of the city's schools and shut them down. A restraining order from Judge J.
Skelly Wright prevented this, but the state froze payroll funds meant for the
city's teachers. Nonetheless, on November 4, four black children enrolled
in previously white schools. White parents at these schools formed jeering,
rock-throwing mobs. Mayor Morrison remained unswervingly focused on
his own political future and denied any responsibility for the situation. The
national press had a field day as the mobs gathered to scream and spit at
children day after day.148

At Tulane, the faculty was unhappy. On December 14, 1960, the College
of Arts and Sciences adopted a resolution that in rather intemperate terms
called for an end to the street protests and for the governor and the legis-
lature to stop fueling the discord and resolve the crisis. The next day, the
graduate faculty proposed a slightly different statement, with the language
toned down. This statement was signed by over three hundred Tulane fac-
ulty members and released to the press. This, together with a similar public
appeal from a group of businessmen, was the first hint that anyone might
possess the will to confront the crisis.149

As bad as all this was, however, it took money to really get the Tulane
board's attention. During the fall of 1960, Longenecker and Joseph Jones
had been overseeing the preparation of a proposal for a major Ford Foun-
dation Challenge Grant. Tulane, now engaging in deep deficit spending,
badly needed the money.150 The foundation had already announced sev-
eral of these very large grants, including the one to Vanderbilt, aimed at
strengthening research universities. Talks with James W. Armsey, director
of the Foundation's Special Program in Education, were going well and ex-
pectations were high. Armsey visited Tulane, however, at the very height of
the chaos in the city's streets. He attended the board meeting on November
22, along with New Orleans Mayor DeLesseps Morrison, who apparently
was there to assure Armsey that the present school crisis was temporary,
that law and order would soon return, and that New Orleans was well able
to solve its racial problems.151 Armsey, though, was not assured. On De-
ember 8, at the next meeting of the board's executive committee, Joseph
Jones reported that he had received a letter from the Ford Foundation "rela-
tive to Tulane's position in the matter of segregation." The following week, at a meeting of the full board, Jones explained that Armsey wanted a reply in advance of Tulane's application materials. He offered two possible statements, neither of which survives.152

One piece of evidence that sheds light on the board's debate about how to answer the Ford Foundation is a memorandum prepared by law committee member Marie Louise Snellings on January 24. She very quickly covered the basic legal quandary—that the original gifts to create Tulane and Newcomb (the women's college) were bound by restrictions that limited their use to the education of whites, but that Tulane later came to include the assets of the public University of Louisiana, giving the school a public aspect that would seem to require the admission of blacks. "However," she continued, "we have remained a private university, privately supported, and under the recent Girard Case which we followed with interest, the day is not yet here when the Supreme Court is ready to invalidate conditions such as Paul Tulane's and Mrs. Newcomb's as contra bonos mores. The day may come, anytime. But are we ready to seek it?"153

Mrs. Snellings's answer was no. While insisting that she had no personal objection to "the admission of a bona fide qualified negro applicant to Tulane University in the Graduate School," she had several reasons for declining to support such a move.

1. I fear the possible repercussions in the form of contests by the Tulane heirs and angry dissatisfaction among the alumni.
2. I do not see that we are forced to this decision at this point, and when the state of Louisiana is in a condition of upheaval and unrest in the public schools because of this question it seems an ill advised time to take such action. My loyalty to my home, my neighbors, and to the South and the burden of the problem she has had to bear compels me to say that I must vote to maintain our status quo at the present.
3. The last reason is very important to me. Any change we would make in our policy at this time would be caused, to all practical intent, by the possibility of the grant of money from the Ford Foundation. This I cannot do. Under no circumstances could I vote for a change which would appear to all the world as a sell out.

If I had to guess, I would guess that I could vote for this change in good conscience somewhere from three to ten years hence.154
The letter that Jones finally sent to the Ford Foundation was exactly wrong. It was the sort of letter that might be expected from a board chairman with an inflated estimation of his own power and without any real understanding of the people, culture, and intertwined relationships of the philanthropic foundations. Jones produced an extraordinarily dense, four-page, single-spaced explanation of why Tulane would do nothing to desegregate. He leaned heavily on the language of Paul Tulane's 1882 donation, which stated that the funds were "for the promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral, and industrial education among the white young persons in the City of New Orleans," and asserted that the administrators were bound by this language to continue barring black students. Any attempt to change this would be "improvident" because of the "dependence of the University upon the wholehearted support of the community and the very tense situation existing regionally respecting the racial question." Much of the rest of this letter is reminiscent of Hollis Edens at his windiest and touches repeatedly on the themes of the need to rely on the judgment of the board members and of Tulane's importance as a regional leader.155

Armsey forwarded the letter to Henry Heald, the head of the foundation, along with a very crisp summary and reaction:

We are boxed in by legal restrictions; we cannot get out of the box except by instituting legal action; to do so now would be unwise, so we have decided officially to do nothing; we must ourselves decide our future course of action.

In short, the legal status is segregation; the policy is to keep it that way; there is no intent to change; and there are no plans to do so.

In this context, I don't see how we can continue to carry on discussions about a possible SPE grant to Tulane.

The following week Jones sent a supplemental statement, almost four more pages of reasons why desegregating Tulane was impossible. His patience at an end, Armsey wrote Heald what was really the bedrock statement of the situation: "Tulane could find ways to enroll Negroes if it really wished to. The reason it does not is not the legality of an original agreement; it is a current policy decision reached and maintained for reasons other than the founder's statement about 'white young persons.'"

Barely ten days later, Longenecker received a brief letter from Armsey
declining to support Tulane's proposal. Until this moment, Marie Louise Snellings had been right—the only problems caused by failing to desegregate were prospective. But by refusing to take the threats seriously, Tulane courted disaster and disaster came. And it was only that disaster, finally, that created a consensus on the board that they had to do something.

When they met on March 8, it seemed that the dithering might finally be over. Longenecker had gotten a letter from Walter Martin at Emory about their desegregation, which he reported, and then he raised the matter of the Ford Foundation rejection. Jones was a sudden convert, proclaiming that reconsideration of the admissions policy was now of "the utmost importance." After discussion, "it was the sense of the meeting that the Board recognize it is incumbent upon it, to the extent it legally can, to change the admissions policy, which on a controlled basis, would permit the admission of any qualified student to attend any college in the University." On April 12 the board approved the announcement of this decision. Longenecker also notified the presidents of the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

The dithering, though, was far from over. In spite of Joseph Jones's claim that "the action taken was bold and courageous," the statement that the administrators released was a masterpiece of equivocation. "Tulane University would admit qualified students regardless of race or color," it read, "if it were legally permissible." The board maintained, however, that it was not legally permissible. Further, they had no plans to seek a declaratory judgment on the question. If they truly intended to desegregate the university, their failure to file such an action is difficult to understand. Although it is possible that the board feared bringing such an action because it would have to be filed in a Louisiana state court rather than in federal court, the most likely explanation of their refusal to ask for a declaratory judgment is that they were afraid of the reaction.

This concern is clear in the hiring of a public relations firm to help manage the news of their decision. In August a member of this firm accompanied Tulane's director of public relations, Horace Renegar, to New York to seek the counsel of a pioneer of American public relations, Earl Newsom. Probably not coincidentally, Newsom and his firm had deep ties to both the Ford Motor Company and the Ford Foundation. Newsom, an old hand at crisis management, gave the Tulane representatives clear and cogent advice, identifying several possible strategies for dealing with "the spotlight of national attention." The first—the option he endorsed—was simply to admit qualified black students. Newsom pointed out that the administra-
tors had acted for the past eighty years as if they were not bound by the restrictions in Paul Tulane’s gift—except for the restriction against blacks. Admitting the students would “avoid a defensive posture in the face of the threatened lawsuit; it would implement the stated opinion of the Administrators on April 12; it would avoid the criticism inherent in excusing itself by legal inhibitions it had not heretofore recognized; it would align itself with the inevitable; and would take a position endorsed by a majority of the American people.” A second option was to institute a suit for a declaratory judgment, which had the disadvantage of being unpredictable but was at least positive action. Finally, Newsom concluded, if the board failed to take any action on its own, they would certainly be sued and would then be left to claim that they welcomed the suit as a way to “clarify the matter.” This was the worst possible choice because “it is inconsistent with the facts of University decisions over the years, and this inconsistency would immediately be exposed by thoughtful people all over the land—including editors and commentators. The Administrators would be put in the public position of recoiling timidly from prosecution of a line of action that the University has, in reality, consistently followed.”

The administrators, inevitably, chose the last option. One factor seemed to outweigh all others in their decision—the likelihood that most of white New Orleans, including the upper crust from which the school drew many of its students, would be angry about allowing blacks to attend Tulane. The administrators probably hoped that if they waited for someone to sue them, they would be seen by the white community as defending themselves rather than instigating more unwanted racial change in a troubled city. Rufus Harris later endorsed this explanation with his usual candor. In 1963 he wrote that Tulane had not desegregated earlier because of “a small group of illiberal members [of the board] who wanted a court decision ordering them to integrate, which they could hide behind.” In 1962 an article in the student newspaper, the Hullabaloo, entitled “The Ford Foundation and Integration: Money Talks,” stated it just as bluntly. “Sensitive as they are to public opinion in this region, [the administrators] were extremely reluctant to make any blatant shifts in admissions policy without having a fall guy on whom to pin the blame.”

So as applications from qualified blacks began to arrive, the Tulane board sat and waited to be sued. Too fearful to initiate legal proceedings in which they would argue for what they claimed they wanted—the right to admit any qualified student—they put themselves in the position of having to defend the exact opposite. The board minutes reveal a clear understanding
that they would be sued and their carefully drafted response to black applicants seemed to beg for a lawsuit, confessing that the student would be admitted if it were legal.164

On September 1, 1961, Pearlie Hardin Elloie and Barbara Guillory, qualified applicants who had been rejected, filed suit in the federal district court to compel Tulane to admit them.165 Tulane’s administrators responded by vigorously trying to stop what they had announced they wanted. Not, they said, because they meant to keep blacks out—they asserted that they wanted them to come in—but because they wanted to defend the donor’s wishes in an effort to find out if they were valid. Whatever it was they really thought they were doing, it did not take long before they found out they were playing with fire.166

On March 28, 1962, U.S. District Court Judge J. Skelly Wright, a New Orleans native and the man who had ordered the desegregation of the New Orleans public schools, granted the plaintiff’s motion for summary judgment. Just as the administrators had feared throughout the late 1950s, Tulane’s undeniable public aspects provided a wedge for a ruling that could strip away the school’s independence. Wright declared that the racial restrictions in the original donations were unenforceable. But then he went much farther, ruling in sweeping terms that Tulane had sufficient public aspects to bring it within reach of the Fourteenth Amendment. Its refusal to admit black applicants was thus unconstitutional “state action.” Wright enjoined the university to admit the plaintiffs.167

Tulane’s trustees were horrified. They would never acquiesce in a decision that could conceivably make them subject to the whims of the Louisiana legislature. Wright’s probably intentional failure to address one of the other issues—whether the heirs of Paul Tulane could now sue for the rescission of his donation (or even the present value of that gift)—also caused consternation, in spite of the palpable lack of interest in such a suit on the part of the three Tulane sisters in St. Petersburg, Florida.168

Angered by Wright’s decision and by the sarcastic language he directed at the university’s board, Tulane immediately announced that it would appeal the decision. In a letter to Rice University’s president, Kenneth S. Pitzer, Longenecker stressed that it was the uncertainty about Tulane’s public status that prompted the appeal. “While it maybe said that Judge Wright’s reference to Tulane University as a public institution is ‘obiter dicta,’ there is enough doubt about the meaning of his judgment to make it necessary for Tulane not to accept the decision.”169 Tulane’s lawyers quickly shifted strategy when Wright was appointed to the Second Circuit Court of Ap-
peals in Washington, DC, and was replaced on the New Orleans District bench by Frank Ellis. Rather than appeal, they filed a motion for a new trial, which Ellis granted on May 12, 1962.170

The board’s refusal to accept Wright’s decision brought varied reaction. While it certainly helped Tulane’s reputation among staunch segregationists and with the Citizen’s Council, it drew anger from other quarters. In correspondence with Mark Etheridge, a longtime friend and the editor of the \textit{Louisville Courier-Journal}, Rufus Harris wrote,

And speaking of good old Tulane, I somehow bleed for her. So much of the image of her stimulating life and action she has lost. That hurts, for it is so much easier to lose it than to form it. Better than anyone, I know her difficulty. She is in very bad trustee leadership and action. Too many new trustees came in who are too juvenile, materialistic and egotistic. They came within too short a period to be either trained or absorbed. You know so well that such training is frequently necessary if the fine university is to escape their basic ignorance and lack of sympathy or understanding of the nature of a great university and its raison d’etre. Even in the awful segregation conflagration—not to mention some other juvenile decisions—they have not permitted the University to manifest any leadership, or prepare the community for its responsible action and life in a desegregated society. Their posture of bitter enders is almost tragic.171

This correspondence is of particular interest because Etheridge was also a member of the board of the Ford Foundation. His reply to Harris indicates that Etheridge believed Tulane’s administrators had deliberately misled the foundation about their intentions regarding desegregation (a problem that could easily have been avoided by filing a suit for a declaratory judgment):

I share your sorrow over Tulane; in fact, I’m shocked at what seems to be the board’s turnabout from what I had understood the situation to be. We on the Ford board were told that this suit was to protect the trustees, that the outcome was foregone and that the board would not vigorously appeal. That does not appear to be true. We voted Tulane $750,000, if I remember the figure correctly, in spite of the feeling of almost all the members of the board that we were not willing to vote money to private institutions which, if not legally bound by the Su-
The early 1960s Supreme Court decision, were at least morally so. I must say that in my own case had I known that Tulane was doing more than to protect itself from Paul Tulane’s will, I would have voted differently.172

Longenecker and the board faced other complications in the spring of 1962. The local CORE chapter, reinvigorated after the 1961 Freedom Rides (in which Tulane students participated), was again organizing demonstrations and sit-ins at downtown lunch counters. Although internal problems led the now numerous Tulane student members to leave CORE in early 1962, these students were far from defeated. They responded by bringing direct action to the Tulane campus. In January and February, and again in April, they staged numerous interracial sit-ins in the cafeteria of the Tulane University Center. Longenecker and the board stepped very carefully, conscious that their litigation was pending. By and large, they simply tolerated the sit-ins, stationing security in the room but otherwise doing little. Only one student, Ed Clark, was suspended, and he was later allowed to return. Much of Tulane’s faculty supported the students. The College of Arts and Sciences passed several resolutions urging that students not be suspended for the sit-ins, that the University Center be desegregated, and that black students be admitted. The board rejected these resolutions and prepared for the trial scheduled to begin that summer.173

The trial took place in early August, but Judge Ellis’s decision was not handed down until December.174 The months in between were difficult ones on campus. Faculty who favored desegregation suspected that the board was dragging its feet. The faculties of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Social Work both adopted resolutions that implicitly threatened resignations if the racial ban was not dropped soon. The College of Engineering, on the other hand, expressed its willingness to abide by whatever the board decided.175 Students, almost equally divided on segregation, agitated on both sides. Cafeteria sit-ins began again in October, now with tempers flaring, fueled in part by the crisis over James Meredith’s enrollment at the University of Mississippi. After violence nearly broke out during a cafeteria protest on October 8, the campus quieted down, but it was an anxious peace.176

On December 5, 1962, Judge Ellis announced his decision.177 Tulane, he said, was a private institution that could not be compelled to admit blacks under the Fourteenth Amendment. However, following the reasoning of the United States Supreme Court in Shelley v. Kramer, Ellis also concluded that the racial restrictions in Tulane’s founding documents were unenforce-
Whether the heirs could sue for return of the gift was uncertain, but the disinclination of Paul Tulane’s relatives to do so, coupled with awareness of the federal courts’ refusals to enforce any private racial restrictions, led Tulane’s attorney to believe there was no danger. Two days later the board’s law committee met and decided that Tulane would not appeal. On December 12 the full board endorsed this conclusion and voted to admit Barbara Guillory and Pearlie Hardin Elloie for the spring semester of 1963. Rufus Harris telegraphed his congratulations to Longenecker on December 13. Two days later, Mark Etheridge’s Louisville Courier Journal praised Judge Ellis and the Tulane board for removing the “dead hand of the past.”

In the end, segregation at Tulane went out with barely a whimper. Although the university anticipated media coverage and possibly demonstrations at registration that spring, there were none. The first black student to register (out of eleven that semester), Percell Church, signed up for classes on January 24. Tulane registration officials reported, “It was an overstatement that not an eyebrow was raised. Very quiet. No one seemed to give a damn.”
121. Excerpt from Chancellor's Report to the Board of Trust of Vanderbilt University, Oc­
tober 24–25, 1958; Memorandum, "The University Senate," March 9, 1959, Box 217, RG 300, 
Chancellor's Office Papers, VUSC.

122. Digest of the Minutes, Board of Trust, Vanderbilt University, May 4–5, 1963, Box V-27, 
Stahlman Papers, VUSC.

123. "A communication from the University Senate to the Board of Trust adopted April 26, 
1962, by unanimous vote of those members present and voting," April 26, 1962. Box 212, RG 300, 
Chancellor's Office Papers, VUSC.

124. Ibid.

125. Branscomb, "Present Status of this Problem," May 4, 1962, Box V-29, Stahlman Papers, 
VUSC. Wade discussed the Tulane case before the meeting in a letter to board chairman Harold 
Vanderbilt. John W. Wade to Harold Vanderbilt, April 4, 1962, Box 212, RG 300, Chancellor's Of­
vice Papers, VUSC.

126. There are several drafts of the data that Vanderbilt provided to the other trustees and a 
text of his long presentation to the board, which he apparently read largely verbatim, at Box 3, 
Harold S. Vanderbilt Papers, VUSC.

127. Branscomb to Hubert W. Morrow, May 23, 1962, Box 199, RG 300, Chancellor's Office 
Papers, VUSC.

128. Confidential Digest of the Minutes, Board of Trust, Vanderbilt University, May 4–5, 
1962, Stahlman Papers, Box V-27, VUSC. This requirement was apparently more honored in the 
breach. Conkin, Gone with the Ivy, 577.

129. Alan W. Heldman to Branscomb, June 21, 1962; Branscomb to Alan W. Heldman, 
June 28, 1962, Box 176; Richard J. Burrow Jr. to Branscomb, May 23, 1962, Branscomb to Burrow, 
May 30, 1962, Box 135, Chancellor's Office Papers, RG 300, VUSC.

130. Vanderbilt Hustler, May 11, 1962. The 1963 editor, Roy Blount Jr. went on to become a 
well-known and prolific writer and humorist.

131. Branscomb to John W. Gardner, May 14, 1962, Box 137; William C. Finch to Branscomb, 
May 14, 1962, Box 158, RG 300, Chancellor's Office Papers, VUSC.

132. Hustler, May 11, 1962. Not surprisingly, James Stahlman knew exactly what he was 
looking for in a new chancellor. "I have some very definite ideas about the type of man we 
want," he wrote fellow trustee Devereaux Lake, "and I am determined as best I can to see that 
we don't get any of the left-wing boys who would like to subvert Vanderbilt, the last bastion of 
educational conservatism among the better institutions of higher learning." After a long search, 
the board settled on Alexander Heard, dean of the Graduate School at the University of North 
Carolina. Stahlman to Devereaux Lake, January 10, 1962, Stahlman Papers, Box V-3, VUSC. On 
the selection of Heard, see Conkin, Gone with the Ivy, 583–87. Heard, certainly no left-winger, 
went on to have his fair share of scrapes with Stahlman, particularly in 1967 when Stokely Car­ 
michael spoke at a Vanderbilt forum. This incident is discussed in Conkin, Gone with the Ivy, 617–
22, and much more circumspectly in Alexander Heard, Speaking of the University: Two Decades at 

133. Harvie Branscomb, Speech to the Faculties, September 14, 1962, Box 5, Branscomb Pa­
pers, VUSC.

134. The Advisory Committee worked closely with the board in the search that resulted in 
the selection of Herbert Longenecker. Report of the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Selec­
tion of a President, April, 1960, Harris Papers, Box 20, TUA.
135. Advisory Committee to Joseph Jones, June 25, 1959, Harris Papers, Box 31, TUA.
136. Kathryn Davis to Joseph Jones, June 15, 1959, Harris Papers, Box 31, TUA.
137. Dr. Maxwell Lapham, dean of Tulane's Medical School since 1940, served as acting president from the time of Harris's departure in March 1960 until Longenecker assumed his duties in September.
138. Press Release, Tulane University News Bureau, December 18, 1959, Box 42, Harris Papers, TUA.
139. Harris to Longenecker, March 31, 1960, Box 42, Harris Papers, TUA.
140. Longenecker arrived on campus in the spring and attended his first board meeting on April 20, 1960. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, April 20, 1960, TUA.
142. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, June 15, 1960, TUA. Plans for a Tulane elementary school are in Box 14, Longenecker Papers.
143. Jack Ricau to Tulane University Maintenance Department, April 18, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.
144. Memo, Business Manager to Clarence Scheps, April 25, 1960, Box 66, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Each black employee was assigned a specific toilet and given a drinking glass with instructions to draw water from any fountain and drink only from the glass. Clarence Scheps to Edmund McIlhenny, May 3, 1960; McIlhenny to Scheps, May 4, 1960; Scheps to McIlhenny, May 26, 1960; McIlhenny to Scheps, June 8, 1960; Scheps to Max Lapham, June 14, 1960, Box 99, TUA. Scheps advised Lapham to bring this up with the board, which he did at the June 15 meeting. They reaffirmed the policy of allowing blacks to participate in professional meetings on campus. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, TUA. At the same time, Citizen's Council president Joseph Viguerie objected that blacks were being allowed to take law and medical school admissions tests from the Educational Testing Service alongside whites at the Tulane testing site. Joseph E. Viguerie to M. E. Lapham, May 3, 1960; Lapham to Viguerie, May 5, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.
145. A memo entitled "Integration Problems" discusses the attempts to desegregate the snack bar at the University Center as well as the participation of Tulane students in the CORE sit-ins. October 12, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA. On the formation of the New Orleans CORE chapter and the 1960 demonstrations, see Fairclough, Race and Democracy, 272–76.
146. Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Longenecker was also in contact with Vanderbilt administrator Rob Roy Purdy, who sent him a report of the Vanderbilt faculty, written in the wake of the Lawson episode, on proper procedures for disciplining students. R. R. Purdy to Longenecker, September 30, 1960; Longenecker to R. R. Purdy, October 4, 1960, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA.
147. Copy of Confidential Police Report, Dave McGuire to Horace Renegar, October 13, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA. McGuire was Mayor DeLesseps Morrison's chief administrative officer. His death in November deprived Morrison of perhaps the steadiest hand in City Hall during the worst of the school crisis. See Haas, DeLesseps S. Morrison, 274, and 249–82 generally on the chaos that enveloped the city in the fall and winter of 1960–61. F. C. Haley to
Longenecker, October 6, 1960 (quotation); Jack Ricau and Joseph Viguerie to Longenecker, October 25, 1960 (quotation), Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

148. Fairclough, Race and Democracy, chapter 9, recounts the battle between Wright and the state, as well as the battle in the streets of the city.

149. College of Arts and Sciences Resolution, December 14, 1960; Statement by Members of the Faculty of Tulane University, December 16, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Rufus Harris, now president of Mercer, wrote to Provost Bob Lumiansky of his pleasure at the publication of the statement. He quoted a prominent New Orleanian who likewise strongly approved. "It looks like decency and dignity have a chance to come back, which already would have occurred but for the State Legislature. It would exhaust your imagination to dwell on the amassed ignorance and prejudice of our law making body. When they speak before the state and nation I have the feeling that the family half-wit has come downstairs to talk to the company." Harris to Robert Lumiansky, December 22, 1960, Box 28, Harris Papers, TUA.

150. For the Ford Foundation program, see Roger L. Geiger, Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II (New York, 1993), 113–15. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, October 12, 1960, TUA.

151. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, November 22, 1960, TUA. On November 14, Jones also wrote to Dean Rusk at The Rockefeller Foundation, which was considering a grant to the Medical School, asking for "sympathetic understanding" of the vise in which Tulane found itself. Joseph Jones to Dean Rusk, November 14, 1960, Box 75, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Also in November Longenecker had his first taste of the Association of American Law Schools pressure, when Dean Ray Forrester of the Law School sent him a copy of a letter from the chairman of the Committee on Racial Discrimination, who warned that "unless something is done, then those who advocate stronger measures may prevail." Ray Forrester to Longenecker, November 30, 1960; Longenecker to Forrester, December 2, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

152. Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, December 8, 1960, Box 99, Longenecker Papers; Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, December 14, 1960, TUA.

153. Marie Louise Snellings, To the Board of Administrators of Tulane Education Fund, January 24, 1961, Addendum, "Policy—Negroes," Harris Papers, TUA.

154. Ibid. The only other person whose opinion on this matter survives, interestingly, is Rufus Harris. He wrote to Joseph Jones, hardly his close friend, on January 30, about Tulane’s dilemma with the Ford Foundation. "I deeply hope the Ford Foundation will deal generously with Tulane. I know something of your difficulty. Have you considered having Tulane publicly announce now a decision to admit qualified Negroes in September of 1962, or even in 1963, to the graduate and professional schools, the idea being that it is well to announce now such a decision, even though its consummation is set for a later date?" Harris to Jones, January 30, 1961, Box 64, Harris Papers, TUA. Jones replied only that "I would like to thank you for the thoughtful suggestion which you made in this direction." Copy of letter, Jones to Harris, February 4, 1961, Box 75, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

155. Joseph M. Jones to James W. Armsey, January 16, 1961, Grant #PA06400247, Ford Foundation Archives. The following letters of January 18, 20, and 24 are from the same source.

156. In a letter to Longenecker, Jones indicated that he had sent an answer to Armsey, and a similar letter to the Rockefeller Foundation, on February 4. Neither letter is in the files. Jones to Longenecker, February 4, 1961, Box 75, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Interestingly enough, Arm-
sey's letter, like much of this material, is only found in Rufus Harris's papers. James Armsey to Longenecker, February 15, 1961, Box 64, Harris Papers, TUA.

157. In the intervening board meeting on February 8, Longenecker raised another prospective problem, federal appropriations to segregated schools. "One of the first acts of the new housing administrator [in Washington, DC] will be an attempt to place restrictions on the new college housing loans against those institutions which have admissions policies barring Negroes. It is expected that there will be a strong effort made to attach discrimination clauses on all appropriations made by the government to institutions of higher learning." Minutes of the Board of Administrators Meeting, February 8, 1961, TUA.

158. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees, March 8, 1961, TUA. The correspondence from Emory is S. Walter Martin to Robert Lumiansky, February 23, 1961; Longenecker to Martin, February 28, 1961; Martin to Longenecker, March 1, 1961, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA. In a remarkable coincidence, the Duke Board of Trustees was meeting to decide the same question on this very same day. Duke provost Taylor Cole recounts in his memoirs that he was called out of the meeting in Durham to answer a phone call from a Tulane administrator who "wished to know what 'progress' we were making," Cole, Recollections, 161.

159. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, March 8, 1961; April 12, 1961, TUA; Longenecker to Henry Heald, October 20, 1961; Longenecker to George Harrar, October 20, 1961, Box 100, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

160. The announcement appeared in the local press the following day. *New Orleans Times-Picayune; New Orleans States-Item*, April 13, 1961. In reaction, the South Louisiana White Citizen's Council purported to be "stunned." Given the kid-glove treatment they had received from Tulane in the past, they probably were. On campus, a random sampling of student opinion found a wide range of reactions. *Tulane Hullabaloo*, April 28, 1961. An October 1962 poll revealed the same lack of consensus, with 48 percent favoring integration and 42 percent opposed. Tellingly, 90 percent of faculty members and graduate students wanted the school to desegregate. *Tulane Hullabaloo*, October 26, 1962.


162. Earl Newsom to Horace Renegar and Kenneth H. Gormin, August 29, 1961, Box 100, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Tulane officials readily acknowledged among themselves that "other than 'young white persons' have long been admitted" but took great care to keep this out of their public discourse. Horace Renegar to Joseph Jones, May 11, 1962, Box 87, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

163. Rufus Harris to Frederick Hard, March 8, 1963, Box 40, Harris Papers, TUA; *Tulane Hullabaloo*, April 13, 1962.

164. At least thirteen applications or requests for application materials were received from blacks by the middle of June. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, June 14, 1961, TUA. Among the first and best of these applications were those of Pearlie Hardin Elloie and Barbara Marie Guillory, both graduates of Dillard University. Dillard political science professor Paul Furey and Rosa Freeman Keller had been quietly working to prepare a legal challenge to Tulane's admissions policy and had identified these two women as potential applicants. Keller and Furey were probably unaware of the Tulane board's decision on March 8 when they
undertook this effort. Ellio's application was dated March 6, and Furey sent it to Tulane's admissions director, Cliff Wing, on March 13, after the March 8 board decision but before the April 12 announcement. Furey included both a cover letter and a brief personal note. In the note, he acknowledged that he had encouraged the application and that it was his "intention to put Tulane University squarely on the spot." In the letter, he said that he had "selected this student with the same care with which the Brooklyn Dodgers selected Jackie Robinson for big league baseball." March 13, 1961, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA. On Keller's role, see Mohr and Gordon, Tulane, 262-65. The rejection letters are in Robert Lumiansky to Miss Barbara Marie Guillory, June 23, 1961; W. L. Kindelsperger to Pearlie Hardin Ellio, April 19, 1961, Box 100, Longenecker Papers, TUA.


166. Despite, or perhaps because of, the clear invitation to a lawsuit, the administrators expressed frequent concern that this action not be perceived as a "friendly" suit. There is absolutely no doubt that it was not. Horace Renegar, Memorandum, March 30, 1962, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA. Ellio and Guillory's attorneys crafted an argument that struck directly at Tulane's status as a private, independent university and Tulane's attorneys furiously defended that status. See Fairclough, Race and Democracy, 263.

167. In spite of Tulane's loud claims that Wright had "ruled" that Tulane was a public school, he did not seem to claim that Tulane was a "public university," only that it had enough public aspects to bring it under the sway of the Fourteenth Amendment. Wright found these public aspects in several areas: Tulane was originally a public university, and its name was changed by the state legislature in 1846; it retained state university property and three state government representatives as ex-officio members of its board; it operated under a special state franchise that provided a tax exemption for state property; and, most arguably, it performed a function "impressed with a public interest." Guillory v. Administrators of Tulane University, 203 F.Supp. 858 (March 1962). See also New Orleans Times-Picayune, March 29, 1962; Tulane Hullabaloo, April 6, 1962. On Wright, see Arthur Selwyn Miller, A "Capacity for Outrage": The Judicial Odyssey of J. Skelly Wright (Westport, CT, 1984).

168. Lida Tulane to Susan B. Keane, June 29, 1962; Susan Keane to Lida Tulane, July 6, 1962, Box 100, Longenecker Papers, TUA. The sisters were brought in as third party defendants in 1962.

169. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, April 5, 1962; Longenecker to Kenneth Pitzer, May 29, 1962, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

170. Tulane's attorneys judged that they were better off with a new trial under a less liberal judge than in front of the activist Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. On the Fifth Circuit, see Bass, Unlikely Heroes. Remarkably, just before he left New Orleans Judge Wright spoke at a large meeting sponsored by the AAUP at Tulane's University Center, discussing the Tulane case and segregation law in general. New Orleans Times-Picayune, April 6, 1962; Tulane Hullabaloo, April 13, 1962.

171. Harris to Mark Etheridge, April 11, 1962, Box 55, Harris Papers, TUA. Harris also wrote Skelly Wright congratulating him on his appointment to the DC Circuit and on his decision in the Tulane case. "I regret to observe the assumed petulance of the Tulane Board over it," he wrote. Harris to Wright, April 6, 1962, Box 55, Harris Papers, TUA.

172. Mark Etheridge to Harris, April 16, 1962, Box 55, Harris Papers, TUA.


175. Minutes of the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, Special Meeting, September 14, 1962; Minutes of the Faculty of the School of Social Work, September 28, 1962; Proposal of the Faculty of the School of Social Work, October 1, 1962, Box 87, Longenecker Papers; Statement of the Faculty of the School of Engineering, Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Administrators, October 8, 1962, TUA. Longenecker also received a letter from a group of Newcomb faculty who deplored the university's failure to exercise responsible leadership on race relations. Cecilia Davis to Longenecker, November 5, 1962, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA.

176. Tulane Police Report, October 3, October 8, 1962, Box 102, Longenecker Papers, TUA; *Tulane Hullabaloo*, October 12, 1962. On campus response to the trouble at Ole Miss, see *Tulane Hullabaloo*, October 5, October 12, November 2, 1962. More ordinary problems associated with the continuation of segregation did not dissipate either. In November, for example, Tulane turned away an NSF grant for a summer mathematics institute because it contained a nondiscrimination requirement. Edmund McIlhenny to Longenecker, November 15, 1962; Longenecker to McIlhenny, November 19, 1962, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.


179. Horace Renegar to Longenecker, December 29, 1962, Box 100, Longenecker Papers; Interdepartmental Memo, January 25, 1963, Box 99, Longenecker Papers, TUA.


181. Houston to Faculty, July 27, 1960, Box 13, Pitzer Papers, WRC; Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees, July 27, 1960, September 19, 1960, Rice University; *Rice Thresher*, September 10, 23, 1960. Houston was given the title of chancellor and appointed distinguished professor of physics. When Carey Croneis was named chancellor upon Pitzer's appointment as president, Houston's title became honorary chancellor. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees, May 31, 1961.


184. Interview with Kenneth S. Pitzer, conducted by John Boles and Louis Marchiafava, March 22, 1994, Rice History Project Oral History Series, WRC.

185. In 1959, at the suggestion of NASA director Keith Glennan, Rice was working on a proposal for a $1 million grant for materials research. This grant would carry the standard federal nondiscrimination clause.

Desegregating Private Higher Education in the South

Duke, Emory, Rice, Tulane, and Vanderbilt

Melissa Kean