

Queen's University
Faculty of Education
Introduction to Teaching History
Section 002

“Shall negroes be admitted as heretofore to the Medical School?": The 1918 Expulsion of
Black Medical Students from Queen's University

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This paper analyzes the events and circumstances that influenced and contributed to the expulsion of fifteen Black students from the Queen's University Faculty of Medicine in 1918. It investigates the role of Black students at Queen's University prior to the First World War, the social and political climate that led up to the expulsion, and the event itself. In examining the internal communications and minutes of the Queen's University Senate and Faculty of Medicine, the contemporary periodical coverage of the event, and the private correspondence and writing of various authors discussing the expulsion, it becomes apparent that the university administration attempted to blame the expulsion on the racism of the WWI veteran patients returning from the front who refused treatment by Black medical students. Though James Cameron Connell, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, presented the fifteen Black students as hard-working and capable, no effort was made on the part of the administration to take a stance against the racism of the veteran patients. These actions were in keeping with the prejudice of the period. As will be discussed throughout this paper, Queen's University has remained an institution fraught with issues over race, religion, and gender. Prejudice persists on our campus, albeit in more subtle and less official forms.

Racial Ideologies at Queen's University Prior to the First World War

In his research notes for his history of the Queen's Faculty of Medicine, A.A. Travill argues that prior to the First World War racism was not a significant issue at Queen's university, and that Black students were tolerated, if not completely integrated at the University.¹ In a letter to Professor Kenneth R. Manning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Travill argues that due to Kingston's rural atmosphere, there was

¹ A.A. Travill. *Black Students During WWI*. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

little interest from Black students to attend Queen's, who were drawn primarily to larger cities.² Travill asserts that creed, race or religion have never been criteria for admission into Queen's University, and that the race of students was never recorded in the registrar.³ The correspondences imply that Queen's University has always been open to all. A.A. Travill states that he personally knew and taught three Black students, and that he was aware of the presence of about five other Ugandan refugees on campus.⁴ According to Travill, there were no open hostilities towards Black students at the time.

Sentiments and Attitudes Towards Black People in Kingston

A.A. Travill asserts that Black people were tolerated in the Kingston community prior to the First World War.⁵ However, tolerance is not analogous to acceptance. The fact that Black Canadians were tolerated, but not fully integrated in the community, created a social divide between visible minorities and Caucasian people in Kingston. Racist ideals became prevalent in Kingston and at Queen's University during and after the First World War. Returning soldiers brought back with them a sentiment of hatred towards these people.⁶ Patients in hospitals began to openly refuse having Black students tend to them in the hospitals and clinics.⁷ The Dean of Medicine T.J. Boag acknowledged in a letter in 1978 that

there were apparently objections by patients to the attentions of students in general, which were gradually overcome, but the objections to contact with [B]lack students apparently continued and the University found itself unable to

2 A.A. Travill, Letter to Mr. Kenneth R. Manning. October 8, 1986. Black Students During WWI. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 A.A. Travill, Black Students During WWI. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

6 "Black Students, Expulsion from Medical School." In *Queen's Encyclopaedia*.
<<http://www.queensu.ca/encyclopedia/b/blackstudentexpulsion.html>>.

7 Jill Buchner, "AMS Considers Letter Of regret." The Queen's Journal, March 9, 2007.
<<http://queensjournal.ca/story/2007-03-09/news/ams-considers-letter-regret/?flavour=mobile>>.

guarantee that negro students would be able to obtain their clinical experience in the settings available here.⁸

The situation in the hospital had disintegrated so significantly that the Faculty of Medicine felt compelled to act.

Expulsion of Fifteen Black Students From Queen's University

In response to pressure from the Kingston community, Queen's University took the necessary measures to have the fifteen Black students in its Medical program expelled.⁹ The University's solution to communal pressures was to relocate these Black students to other universities with higher Black populations with the support of the Queen's University Senate.¹⁰ The University argued that the decision to expel the Black students from the Medical program was not a decision based on the sentiments or attitudes of the university, but it reflected the desires of the general population. Lewis Tomalty, the acting assistant dean of undergraduate medical education stated "the decision ... had nothing to do with the school not allowing them...I would suggest that, in terms of having diversity in the school, those values were already there."¹¹ In his opinion, the expulsions were not an indicator of racist sentiments on behalf of the University; the expulsions were a response to racism in the community.¹²

Furthermore, the University also argued that there were not enough patients even for the white students alone to gain enough clinical experience, and therefore the Black students would have to be expelled and continue their education elsewhere to facilitate adequate experience for the White students. Dean Connell of Queen's University released

8 T.J. Boag, Letter to C. Bartholomew. May 24, 1978. Black Students During WWI. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

9 Jill Buchner, "AMS Considers Letter Of regret." The Queen's Journal, March 9, 2007. <<http://queensjournal.ca/story/2007-03-09/news/ams-considers-letter-regret/?flavour=mobile>>.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

a letter of reference to other Canadian Universities guaranteeing the competence and ability of the expelled students, and encouraged the other Universities to strongly consider their admission.¹³ In a letter of recommendation for E.D.J. Bartholomew, the Dean wrote that “the medical faculty of Queen’s University commend him to the kindly consideration of the Faculty in and school to which he may apply for permission to continue his Medical studies.”¹⁴ The Dean Bartholomew’s praises his impeccable attendance, and asserted that he met satisfactory levels of academic success in the program.¹⁵

Response from Queen's Community

The response from the Queen's community of students was fairly muted at first. In the immediate aftermath of the Faculty of Medicine's decision to forcibly expel Black students from studying medicine at Queen's, it appears that pride in the righteousness of the university as an institution and community won out over any form of social activism to have the student's reinstated. This initial attitude could perhaps be attributed to the lack of institutional presence of the Black community on campus. In the future, when the black community had established a stronger cultural presence at the university, the response went quickly from muted to one that was emotionally charged and full of shame. However, by this time the expulsions had already become a concrete part of Queen's history, and as such it was more difficult to translate this shame into a solution for the expelled students.

13 Dean James Connell, “Letter to Whom it may Concern,” February 19, 1918. *Black Students During WWI*. Queen’s University Archives. Locator 5070.1. Box 8, File 10

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

In February of 1918, only weeks after the expulsions became official, *Queen's Journal* published its first acknowledgement of the controversial event. However, the article was not prompted by the faculty's decision itself, but rather from an article in the University of Toronto journal, *The Varsity*. The Toronto article, published on January 30th, lambasted the Queen's administration for bowing to local pressures and expelling students who had performed satisfactorily according to the expectations of the program.¹⁶ The *Journal* took offence to the notion that Queen's was “transferring these students to other colleges which 'are being run on a more cosmopolitan basis than Queen's University,” suggesting that students of the University of Toronto “look about the halls of its Medical School for negro students, and consult the registrar to see how many are attending at the present session.” The rhetoric of the article then turns to the defensive:

The action of Queen's in ceasing to train the coloured students in the Faculty of Medicine was not taken without a great deal of thought by the Medical Faculty and the Senate. It was not done from any antipathy to the negroes, among whom are gentlemen quite as cultured, and students quite as brilliant as any native Canadian undergraduates. Queen's has had many a coloured student whom she has been proud to graduate, but has found now that she has not the facilities for graduating any more.¹⁷

This defensive language straddles a difficult line in attempting to preserve an air of cosmopolitanism and racial tolerance within the university that came under attack by *The Varsity*, while simultaneously supporting the administration's decisions as an inevitable consequence of some harsh reality. The article is an attempt to preserve the integrity of the school in the face of criticism, and reverses the focus onto the University of Toronto, who in fact practiced similar racial expulsion in the postwar period.

¹⁶ “Queen's and the Coloured Students,” *Queen's Journal*, February 5, 1918, 2.

¹⁷ Ibid.

A more emotionally charged response to the events came much later in *Wahenga*, a Queen's University Black history journal. The journal claimed in a 1994 article that,

The medical faculty's response to the complaints seems to have been eager acquiescence from the first. It doesn't appear that authorities considered taking a firm and principled stand against the soldiers, telling them to accept help from the students assigned to them or do without... And they didn't just want to kick [Black students] out of the fourth or fifth years, the only ones which were required to treat patients – a move that would have been slightly less unjust than outright expulsion. They wanted to eject them from Queen's altogether, and not admit any more.¹⁸

The difference in rhetoric between this article and the one from the *Queen's Journal*, highlights a change in social attitudes as well as the importance of historical hindsight. However, it also highlights the importance of a centralized voice of the Black student community. There are no official statements from the fifteen expelled students in 1918. Nor was there much of a contemporary student voice that defended their right to practice medicine at Queen's. The perspectives of both the administration and the student was largely one sided. Only much later, when they had an established voice, were Black students able to verbalize their own position on the expulsions, and by then it was necessarily stated in a historical context. Criticisms of the administration's decisions were laid out by *Wahenga*, but were limited in effectiveness by the date of their publication.

Racial Attitudes in Ontario

However, this conclusion may unintentionally place an unfair onus on the expelled medical students. Taking the temperature of racial attitudes in the region shows that despite potential organization of Black medical students, legal avenues closed along racial boundaries would likely have forced them to accept expulsion. It may also be naive

18 Ian Malcolm, "Queen's Medical Faculty Expels Black Students," *Wahenga*, Spring 1994, 39.

to believe, as *Wahenga* suggests, that there was an unprecedented shift in racial attitudes upon the return of soldiers who fought overseas in the Great War. While the return of soldiers is undoubtedly what cued the expulsion of these medical students, an examination of legal policy on both micro and macro scales in the years before and after the war leads to the conclusion that the trajectory of racial postures had already started prior to the return of the soldiers. As the expulsions also occurred at the University of Toronto, it is useful to examine the attitudes not only in Kingston, but Ontario as a whole.

Perhaps most telling of the nation's attitudes as a whole was declaration of the Canadian Superintendent of Immigration in 1914 that Black immigration was not in Canada's best interests. Esmeralda Thornhill suggests that this, “irrevocably [skewed] outcomes in such ways that Blacks – even when grudgingly admitted – were... still perceived as interlopers and outsiders.”¹⁹ Thornhill also notes that Black Canadians were discouraged from serving in the military during the war²⁰. This is particularly interesting in terms of a returning military force perceived to have shaped the conditions leading to expulsions at Queen's. A culture of racial exclusion may have been propagated during service, but such a culture would have been uninformed by actual experience with soldiers.

Racism in the Canadian Military During WWI

Racism during WWI in Canada borrowed much from British and American conceptions of white supremacy and racial hierarchies. Minorities attempting to enlist in the Canadian army faced serious challenges and restrictions, and in many cases were

19 Esmeralda M. A. Thornhill, “So Seldom for Us, So Often Against Us: Blacks and Law in Canada,” *Journal of Black Studies* 38(3), January 2008, 329.

20 Ibid.

denied outright. Despite the fact that the Canadian forces needed more troops, officials were unwilling to enlist minorities to fill the deficit.²¹ Canadian military officials made some effort to put together segregated battalions, some suggesting that a “Half-Breed Battalion” could be raised in Alberta.²² Much of the anxiety centred on worries that individuals of colour would demand the vote once they had served Canada in the war.²³ In addition, entrenched racism, such as the Canadian militia council’s fears that “the Germans might refuse to extend to them [non-white soldiers] the privileges of civilized warfare”, and military leaders’ resistance against integrated regiments stymied attempts made to create avenue of military participation for minorities during the war.²⁴

There were various attempts at integration made during the war with mixed success. Walker notes in particular the refusal of the 48th Highlanders to accept Black enlistments, stating, “we have, being a kilted regiment, always drawn the line at taking coloured men.”²⁵ This attitude changed as the war went on and demand for recruits became more dire, but many blacks, Indians, and Asian Canadians had been disillusioned by the repeated demonstration of racism by the Canadian military, and were reluctant to join. Those that did often found themselves in a labour company or battalion rather than on the front lines.²⁶ Though they occasionally worked alongside white battalions, Black soldiers often found themselves in situations of obvious segregation; banned from evening activities with whites, treated in segregated hospital wings when injured, jailed in

21 Walker, James W. St.G. 1989. "Race and Recruitment in World War I: Enlistment of Visible Minorities in the Canadian Expeditionary Force". *Canadian Historical Review*. 70 (1): 1-26. P. 3.

22 Walker, 6.

23 Ibid., 7.

24 Ibid., "Race and Recruitment in World War I, "4, 6, 7.

25 Ibid., 10.

26 Ibid., 11-18.

segregated punishment areas, and offered the services of a Black chaplain who could not attend to the spiritual needs of the white soldiers.

The experiences of Black soldiers during WWI may have had much to do with the expulsion of the black medical students at Queen's in 1918. Having experienced almost complete segregation on the warfront, the contemporary prejudice of the veterans may have been compounded by their witnessing Black soldiers in a subordinate labour position throughout the war, and increased their unwillingness to receive medical attention from Black medical students in a position of authority. The racial discrimination faced by Black medical students at Queen's has been outlined above. Once brought to the attention of the administration, the discussion on whether or not to admit Black students to the faculty of medicine was carried out quickly. These concerns were outlined in a letter by Dean Connell, recorded in both the minutes of the Faculty of Medicine and the minutes of the Queen's University Senate. Dean Connell's letter begins with a mention of "certain difficulties" concerning Black students in the faculty of medicine. Connell outlines the recent expansion of the medical degree to five years and to include far more clinical practice, which brings medical students into "close contact with patients."²⁷ Connell cites the general hesitancy of the Kingston public to receive treatment from medical students at all, but emphasizes, "it appears to be impossible to break down the repugnance of many people to receiving intimate services from negro students."²⁸ He goes on to state that "The Officer Commanding Queen's Military Hospital has notified

27 Minutes of the Faculty of Medicine, Jan. 4/1918. Queen's University. School of Medicine fonds. 1854-2004.

28 Ibid.

me that soldier patients have absolutely refused to allow negro students to attend them and I am therefore unable to assign negro students to duties in this hospital.”²⁹

Connell’s effort to pass responsibility onto the prejudice of the Kingston public is clear, as he states that their attempts to mollify this fraught environment by limiting contact between Kingston patients and Black medical students have reduced them to laboratory and dispensing duties has resulted in their inability to offer appropriate teaching to Black medical students. He appeals to the authority of the senate, asking the following questions: “Shall negroes be admitted as heretofore to the Medical School?”; “Will it be advisable to give them registration for the first three years as trouble does not arise till the fourth year?”; and “If none are to be admitted hereafter, what shall be done with those now in attendance?”³⁰ There is no discussion in the minutes of any of these questions. If they were discussed in the meeting, they were not recorded in the Senate minutes. In the minutes record, it notes that the motion was seconded and carried without hesitation. The Queen’s University Senate Minutes of January 25th, 1918 include Dean Connell’s aforementioned letter to the Senate regarding the situation. It follows that “Moved by Dean Connell, seconded by Dr. Third, that negro students be not admitted to the Medical School. Carried...Dean Connell was given power to act with reference to those negro students now in attendance.”³¹ Thusly carried out, the minutes go on to discuss other more mundane matters, in particular debates over the sale of dance tickets to the medical formal.³²

29 Minutes of the Faculty of Medicine, Jan. 4/1918.

30 Queen's University. *Office of the University Secretariat fonds*. 1828-2007. “Minutes of the University Senate”, 1918, p. 118-119. 25 January 1918.

31 “Minutes of the Faculty of Medicine”, Jan. 4/1918. Queen's University. *School of Medicine fonds*, Coll 1204. April 30 1915-March 5 1920.

32 Queen's University. *Office of the University Secretariat fonds*. 1828-2007. “Minutes of the University Senate”, 1918, p. 118-119. 25 January 1918.

The Faculty of Medicine Annual Report 1918 emphasizes that despite the enrolment issues due to the war, the school's work "has been entirely satisfactory", though it notes that the administration was unable to fill the fellowships in the departments, "owing to the general enlistment of recent graduates."³³ Despite this problem with enrolment, this report also includes the notice that the Faculty of Medicine has ceased the admission of Black students to the faculty with the following notice:

The Faculty, with the concurrence of the Senate, has decided that it is not advisable to continue the instruction of negro students in the department of Medicine. During the past twenty years a considerable number of black [sic] students from the British West Indies have been in attendance and have formed a desirable class of students. Most of these graduating have returned to the Indies and have pursued a creditable professional life. A few have established practice in the United States. The difficulty of the Faculty is in providing adequate clinical and hospital training in a community where prejudice persists against receiving intimate services from black [sic] men. Every effort will be made to complete properly the training of those now in attendance, or to transfer them to other schools, and no others will be admitted.

This announcement transfers responsibility from the faculty to the prejudiced Kingston public, while lauding and supporting the quality of the black medical students currently at the school. While the notice recognizes the unfairness of the discrimination, it makes no effort to denounce the behaviour of Kingstonian patients, nor does it challenge this racism by continuing to enrol Black medical students or forcing patients to receive treatment from Black medical students. This tacit acceptance and resignation to the status quo, in conjunction with the complete lack of debate over the issue in either the

³³ "Medical Faculty Annual Report, 1918". *Minutes of the Faculty of Medicine*, Jan. 4/1918. Queen's University. School of Medicine fonds Coll 1204. April 30 1915-March 5 1920.

minutes of the senate or the minutes of the faculty of medicine meetings, demonstrates the entrenched nature of the racist attitudes and social norms at play.

In the years following the war and the events at Queen's, legal avenues were equally as inaccessible to Black Canadians. Perhaps no case illustrates this as clearly as that of Ira Johnson, whose home in Oakville, Ontario was forcibly entered by the Ku Klux Klan in order to remove his White girlfriend from his company in 1930. However, the presence and actions of the KKK are not so surprising as the reactions of law officials in the town. The London *Free Press* reported Oakville Police Chief David Kerr believed, “the conduct of the 'visitors' was all that could be desired,” adding that when the men removed their cloaks, he recognized many as prominent businessmen. As such, he saw no reason to pursue any form of justice in the matter.³⁴

These examples are not intended to merely show the height of racism of the era, which has been thoroughly documented. Rather, they highlight the limited avenues that would have been available to the expelled students of Queen's. It seems unlikely, in a society that saw no issue in a man's home being invaded for racial reasons, that they would have been able to pursue legal action, regardless of financial or institutional means. Similarly, they had little opportunity to prove their character to the soldiers who so vehemently refused their medical service. As such, it is more appropriate to claim that a lack of institutional presence, in combination with a society that provided little mobility for Black Canadians created a scenario that made it difficult for students to do anything but accept their expulsions.

34 Constance Backhouse, *Colour Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 175.

Social Attitudes Towards Eugenics in Early Twentieth Century Kingston

Racism in Canada at the outset of the twentieth century was widespread. Blacks and Asians were not considered members of Canadian society. Furthermore, one even had to be the right kind of white person to be treated fairly in Canada in the early 1900s. Some ethnicities not making the cut for the “ideal” Anglo Canadian included Italians, a culture whose people were viewed as shameless, the Chinese, who were addicted to opium and gambling, and the Jews and Blacks who were entirely unwanted in the nation.³⁵ These ethnic groups were accused of stealing jobs from hardworking, “true” Canadians, especially in forestry and railroad work and the industries surrounding these fields. Most ethnic groups from outside of Western and Northern Europe residing in Canada were believed to be much less intelligent and thus incapable of contributing positively to society. Further evidencing this national attitude is the writing of Edwin Bradwin, who noted that mining and forestry companies split workers into two distinct groups: “’whites,’ meaning Canadian, British and American employees and ‘foreigners,’ meaning all the others.”³⁶

Canada, therefore, was an Anglo dominated nation in the early 1900s. English, Scottish and Irish people born in Canada, or immigrants to Canada composed this so called “legitimate” white group as they were the only ones who could really attest to being Canadian. This was the case because Canadian citizenship as it is currently defined did not come into existence until 1947. The only people who could in fact claim legitimacy in Canada were British subjects, as Canada was still ruled by the United

35 Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1990), 47.

36 Barry Ferguson, “British-Canadian Intellectuals, Ukrainian Immigrants, and Canadian National Identity,” in *Canada’s Ukrainians*, ed. Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 307.

Kingdom.³⁷ The term Anglo Canadian and “true” Canadian became synonymous terms at that time for this reason. These “true” Canadians carried themselves with an air of superiority over their ethnic counterparts which allowed for the construction of a hierarchy of racial whiteness. On this scale, the Britons fared best, followed by Northern Europeans and Scandinavians, then Central and Eastern Europeans, and finally Southern Europeans. These less sought after whites were only accepted if they bought into the ideology of “Canadianization”, or the idea that the white Anglo-Saxons were racially and socially superior to them.³⁸

The British liked to predicate their claim to greatness over other cultures, a practice which led to the rise of a new field of science called eugenics. Eugenics provided Canadians with more ammunition with which to defend themselves against the immigrants among them and consequently not feel guilty for mistreating them. This was because under Francis Galton, the father of eugenics, intelligence was considered a hereditary feature.³⁹ This belief led scientists to determine which ethnicities should be allowed to procreate en masse and which ethnicities should be restricted in this regard. It was a form of Social Darwinism which suggested that those who possessed a lower mental fitness or ability should be weeded out of the national bloodline.⁴⁰ Eugenacists at the turn of the 20th century determined that it was the poor who were reproducing at a higher rate than any other socioeconomic class. This trend troubled them because they believed the poor to be the most intellectually degenerate of all classes. Many early Eugenacists were British, but Canadians latched onto the idea wholeheartedly as it

37 “Canadian Citizenship Act 1947,” <http://theshipslis.com/forms/citizenship.htm> (Accessed April 24, 2011).

38 McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 47.

39 Ibid., 15.

40 Ibid.

allowed them to blame national issues on groups of people who threatened national ‘degeneration.’⁴¹ These threats to national degeneration would come from outside of the already established British pedigree, and consist of alien elements that would cause both social and economic problems for Canada. Canadian eugenicists believed that it was the people who were not able to survive in their own nations who were immigrating to Canada and contributing to the issues that the nation faced such as increasing unemployment rates and the flooding of the job market by immigrant workers.

An example of eugenic discourse leading to racist action in Canada during this time period occurred at the commencement of World War I and struck close to home as it in fact transpired in Kingston. Fort Henry, today a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was at the beginning of World War I transformed into something much darker, an internment camp whose purpose was to house those considered enemy aliens. These enemy aliens were defined as recent immigrants to Canada who were still reservists in their home militaries. German and Austrian men were immediately interned, however, soon to also be interned were a large number of Ukrainians, who while their territory was inside the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they held no loyalty to the Empire and considered themselves as loyal patriots to their new country. They were shocked to discover that they were being branded as enemy aliens because of their link to Austria and its political goals.⁴² They may have been termed and considered as reservists, but they had no intention of returning to fight for Austria as many of them had been in Canada for a number of years. In fact, most Ukrainians considered themselves Ukrainian Canadian and when the Great War began, they joined the Canadian ranks in record numbers, even though they knew they

41 McLaren, *Our Own Master Race.*, 28.

42 Bohdan S Kordan, *Prisoners of War: Internment in Canada during the Great War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 45.

might be interned if it was discovered that they were of Ukrainian origin.⁴³ Furthermore, once the Ukrainians got to the battlefield, they fought with bravery and valour. One such brave soldier was Corporal Philip Konoval who was one of only sixty men to receive the Victoria Cross during the war.⁴⁴

It becomes quite clear after one looks at the Ukrainian example that Canada and Kingston were racist and often unwelcoming places to live in the early twentieth century, influenced by eugenic policies. The Ukrainians posed zero threat to Kingstonians, yet beliefs held by an Anglo dominated populace allowed for Ukrainians cries of injustice to go unheard. After all, if these men were to be living in internment camps, jobs would again be readily available for the deserving, “true” Canadians. This small example illustrates well the lengths that people in this time period bought into eugenic and racist ideas, and contextualizes the expulsion of Black medical students from Queen’s University which followed.

Continuity and Change in the Queen’s University Historiography:

Interestingly, no mention of the 1918 expulsion appears either in the index or within Frederick W. Gibson’s famed official history of Queen’s University. This is a surprising oversight given Gibson’s discussion of Japanese internment issues, and a WWII attempt by the Queen’s University to reduce the number of Jewish students at the university.⁴⁵ This odd silence in the historiography of the event mirrors the brief and perfunctory description of the expulsion in the records of the time. Gibson’s history appears not to mention this expulsion at all, though he does state briefly that James

43 Kordan, *Prisoners of War.*, 25.

44 M.H. Marunchak, *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History* (Ottawa: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), 326.

45 Gibson, Frederick W. *Queen’s University: to serve and yet be free*. Volume II: 1917-1961. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens, 1983., 200-201.

Cameron Connell, the Dean of Medicine at the time, “raised standards of admission into this faculty.”⁴⁶ However cryptic this line may be, it should not be taken automatically as an intentional omission. As Gibson’s book does frankly discuss the Japanese internment and the efforts of the Queen’s administration to limit the Jewish population during WWII, the exclusion of this event remains a baffling oversight.

Present Day Prejudice at Queen’s University

Queen’s University has an uncomfortable history with racism and intolerance. Evident racism by the Queen’s University administration during the early and mid twentieth century has been mirrored by many more recent incidents of racism demonstrated by Queen’s students in the twenty-first century, including instances of both islamophobia and anti-Semitism on the Queen’s campus. Queen’s student Rachel Kucharczuk faced anti-Semitism in 2008, when swastikas and the words “dirty Jew” were written on her car windshield, an incident which she reported to police and was labelled a “hate crime.”⁴⁷ Of particular note was the refusal of then Principal Tom Williams to comment on the issue.⁴⁸ In the same year, the office of the Queen’s University Muslim Students Association was broken into and stolen from, and Muslim students became the targets of racially driven verbal aggression and harassment on campus.

The 2006 Henry Report, which examined issues of racial prejudice and privilege at Queen’s University, argued that “white privilege and power continues to be reflected in the Eurocentric curricula, traditional pedagogical approaches, hiring, promotion and

46 Gibson, *Queen’s University: to serve and yet be free*, 19.

47 Davis, Emily. “Another racist incident reported: Student’s car defaced with anti-Semitic comments” *The Journal*. 136 (21) November 14, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2008-11-14/news/another-racist-incident-reported/>

48 Ibid.

tenure practices, and opportunities for research at Queen's.”⁴⁹ Casual racism and sexism was apparent in the scandal over Queen's Bands songbook in 2011, in which the Queen's bands were banned from university football games and official events after their songbook and internal communications were leaked to the public, and included explicit sexual content, and racist, sexist, and ableist remarks.⁵⁰ Queen's, described as recently as 2010 by MacLean's Magazine as a “white university”, has faced criticism, not only for its alleged racism and cultural essentialism, but also for its heavy-handed treatment of recent incidents of racism and intolerance on the Queen's campus. The hasty banning of Queen's history professor Michael Mason from his own class, over alleged racist and sexist comments he made, was widely criticized by the media as an overreaction on the part of the university, which did not acknowledge the context in which Mason made these comments.⁵¹ Efforts to employ student discussion “moderators” as part of a 2008 pilot program called the “Intergroup Dialogue program” were also widely derided by the media as an attempt on the part of the Queen's administration to install “thought police.”⁵² It is evident that while Queen's has made an effort to dispel stereotypes of its “white” and conservative identity, there is much that still needs to be done.

At a national level, Canada has developed into a diverse and multicultural nation.

We are all subject to the same rights and freedoms, and Canada continues to strive to

49 Clancy, Clare. “Henry Report Revisited: SGPS President asks University to move forward with recommendations.” *The Queen's Journal*. Issue 136 (17): October 24, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2008-10-24/news/henry-report-revisited/>

50 Fernandez-Blanc, Katherine. “Bands Banned for Term.” *The Journal*. 139 (21). November 18, 2011. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2011-11-18/news/bands-banned-terms/>

51 Boesveld, Sarah. “The phantom censor: Professor ‘banned’ from his own class when out-of-context statements deemed racist and sexist.” November 3rd, 2012. NationalPost.com. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/11/03/the-phantom-censor-professor-banned-from-his-own-class-when-out-of-context-statements-deemed-racist-and-sexist/>

52 Deane, Patrick (Vice Principal Academic). *Statement Regarding the Intergroup Dialogue Program*. Queen's University. November 25, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://www.queensu.ca/news/articles/statement-regarding-intergroup-dialogue-program>

provide equal opportunities for success and happiness. However, it is irrefutable that Canada was once, and at times still is, home to racism and prejudice. Despite this, we continue to learn from our history. The experiences of the past, however unpleasant, have allowed us to make progress. Commenting upon the 1918 expulsion, Queen's Commissioner Allison Williams stated, "If we discuss and become aware of the incidents in our history that are racist or discriminatory, it makes us more aware of what we as an institution have been and what we want to become."⁵³ It is crucial for students to learn about the past. To truly understand, and to be able to realize the faults and significance of past actions, are essential to our understanding of modern conflicts, and to our ability to seek solutions. Despite the discomfort of accepting blame and recognizing past injustice, it is this very recognition that allows us to move forward, and to create safe learning environments for all students, regardless of cultural, social, religious, or ethnic difference.

⁵³ Jill Buchner, "AMS Considers Letter of Regret." *The Queen's Journal*, March 9, 2007. <<http://queensjournal.ca/story/2007-03-09/news/ams-considers-letter-regret/?flavour=mobile>>.

Works Cited

Backhouse, Constance. *Colour Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Backhouse's book takes a look at racism in Canada through the lens of the legal system. The book has a broad scope, but was used mostly for its reference to an article about Ira Johnson, a Black Canadian man whose home was invaded by the KKK, and who received no justice from authorities. The case serves to highlight the limited legal options for Black Canadians in the interwar period.

"Black Students, Expulsion from Medical School." *Queen's Encyclopaedia*. Accessed 16 November 2012 from
<<http://www.queensu.ca/encyclopedia/b/blackstudentexpulsion.html>>.

This is an article from the Queen's University Encyclopaedia that briefly describes prewar tolerance towards Black populations in Kingston, and argues that a tacit tolerance of Black medical students in the prewar period developed into open hostility upon the return of wounded soldiers from WWI. It states openly that Queen's University expelled fifteen Black medical students as a response of this racism of the veteran patients in the Kingston hospital.

Boag, T.J. "Letter to C. Bartholomew." May 24, 1978. *Black Students During WWI*. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

This is a letter written from the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine to Mr. C. Bartholomew, the nephew of one of the expelled Black Students in 1918. The Dean explains in the letter that he was unable to find any personal information about the expelled uncle, but informs him of the nature of the situation for which the fifteen students were expelled. Among them was his uncle, who was subject to expulsion due to racism in the community and objection to the attendance of Black medical students in the hospitals. This is powerful primary source, which explains to a family member of one of the expelled students the specific nature of the situation, which was based on pure racism.

Boesveld, Sarah. "The phantom censor: Professor 'banned' from his own class when out-of-context statements deemed racist and sexist." November 3rd, 2012. NationalPost.com. Accessed 18 November 2012 from
<http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/11/03/the-phantom-censor-professor-banned-from-his-own-class-when-out-of-context-statements-deemed-racist-and-sexist/>

This National Post opinion piece details the banning of Queen's professor Michael Mason from his undergraduate history course focusing on post WWII imperialism and neo-colonialism after students complained that he had made sexist and racist comments during class. Mason's comments, which were direct quotations taken from primary historical sources and highlighted the prejudices at

work during the history period, caused controversy over the limits of free speech in the classroom. The article quotes Queen's University Provost Alan Harrison, stating that ""We would never seek to censor anything that anyone says so long as it's appropriately contextualized," implying that Mason failure to contextualize his comments in the moment justified the actions taken against him.

Buchner, Jill. "AMS Considers Letter Of regret." *The Queen's Journal*, March 9, 2007. Accessed 16 November 2012 from <<http://queensjournal.ca/story/2007-03-09/news/ams-considers-letter-regret/?flavour=mobile>>.

This is an article from the Queen's Journal on March 9, 2007. It discusses the events that led to the expulsion of the fifteen Black students from the Queen's University Medical program, and that the Alma Mater Society (AMS) should consider a letter of regret. It is a great article illustrating the University's level of regret for the expulsions and the level of progress the University has made since the event.

"Canadian Citizenship Act 1947," <http://theshipslist.com/forms/citizenship.htm>.

This was an article that described the changes which occurred when the Canadian Citizenship Act came into effect in 1947. The Act now granted citizenship to those who were not British subjects. If this version had been in effect at the beginning of World War I, the Ukrainian Canadians who were interned at Fort Henry arguably would not have been.

Clancy, Clare. "Henry Report Revisited: SGPS President asks University to move forward with recommendations." *The Queen's Journal*. Issue 136 (17): October 24, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2008-10-24/news/henry-report-revisited/>

Clare Clancy's article for the Queen's Journal outlines the brief history of the Henry Report, a 2006 survey investigating the experiences of minority students and faculty at Queen's University, and documents the appeals of the author (Frances Henry) for some recommendations for change to be made at Queen's.

Connell, James Cameron. (Dean of the Faculty of Medicine from 1903 to 1929) "Letter to Whom it May Concern." February 19, 1918. *Black Students During WWI*. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

A general letter written to other Canadian universities from the Dean of Queen's University assuring them that the expelled students are highly competent and educated and it encourages other universities to consider the admission of these students. It is a great primary source which provides ample evidence that the students were expelled strictly based on racist sentiments, and was irrelevant to their academic standing.

Davis, Emily. "Another racist incident reported: Student's car defaced with anti-Semitic comments" *The Journal*. 136 (21) November 14, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2008-11-14/news/another-racist-incident-reported/>

Emily Davis's 2008 Queen's Journal article reports on the targeted act of anti-Semitism directed at then Queen's student Rachel Kucharczuk, in which Kucharczuk's car was defaced with swastikas and the words "dirty Jew" written on her windshield. The article references other incidents of anti-Semitism on campus, and the refusal of then Principal Tom Williams to comment on the issue.

Deane, Patrick (Vice Principal Academic). *Statement Regarding the Intergroup Dialogue Program*. Queen's University. November 25, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://www.queensu.ca/news/articles/statement-regarding-intergroup-dialogue-program>

This Queen's University official statement discusses the controversy over the Queen's Intergroup Dialogue pilot program, acknowledging the negative media attention and restating the original intentions of the program. The Vice Principal Academic emphasizes within the statement that "we[Queen's University] regret that the program has been inaccurately characterized as intrusive and in conflict with the right of freedom of expression." The statement announces plans to conduct an assessment of the program that is in keeping with the "constructive and self-critical spirit of the program," and that steps will be taken to ensure the university's commitment to improving "diversity and inclusiveness" on the Queen's campus. This statement, and the attempt at mediating classroom and campus discussions to increase inclusivity on campus is just one of many examples of rather awkward attempts on the part of the administration to rectify problems of racism, sexism, and homophobia at Queen's.

Ferguson, Barry. "British-Canadian Intellectuals, Ukrainian Immigrants, and Canadian National Identity." In *Canada's Ukrainians*, ed. Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk, 304-325. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

Ferguson's article appears in a large volume documenting Ukrainian life in Canada since their arrival en masse towards the end of the nineteenth century. It provided invaluable information on what it meant to be the right type of white person in Canada at the start of the twentieth century, how Ukrainian Canadians did not fit the ideal, Anglo based description, and their subsequent troubles. The chapter gave context for how the Ukrainians were considered outsiders even before World War I broke out.

Fernandez-Blanc, Katherine. "Bans Banned for Term." *The Journal*. 139 (21). November 18, 2011. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2011-11-18/news/bans-banned-terms/>

This 2011 Queen's Journal article written by Katherine Fernandez-Blanc discusses the sanctions faced by Queen's Bands after their songbook and internal communications were linked to the public, which includes explicit sexual content, and racist, sexist, and ableist remarks. The songbook, which was argued to be satire and not intended to purposefully offend, resulted in the banning of Queen's bands from football games and University events for the fall term of 2011. As the Queen's bands receives mandatory student funding and publically represents Queen's, their actions were viewed by the administration as unacceptable and requiring punishment.

Findlay, Stephanie, Köhler, Nicholas. "The enrolment controversy: Worries that efforts in the U.S. to limit enrolment of Asian students in top universities may migrate to Canada." November 10, 2010. Macleans.ca. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/11/10/too-asian/>

This rather controversial Maclean's article outlines the racial distinctions present in the Canadian university landscape, and presents a "dilemma" for Canadian universities over the issue of the purely meritocratic admissions process, which MacLean's alleges results in an overly high admission rate for Canadian Asian students. Acknowledging the delicate aspect of the issue, the authors argue that if Canadian universities "openly address the issue of race they expose themselves to criticisms that they are profiling and committing an injustice. If they don't, Canada's universities...risk becoming places of many solitudes, deserts of non-communication. It's a tough question to have to think about."

The article has faced criticism for presenting a simplistic view of racial and cultural difference, and for subtly stoking racial prejudice, an accusation which the authors vehemently deny. Their rebuttal may be viewed here: <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/11/25/who-gets-into-university/>

Gibson, Frederick W. *Queen's University: to Serve and Yet Be Free*. Volume II: 1917-1961. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens, 1983.

This official history of Queen's University documents the period from 1917 to 1961. Interestingly, Gibson's history does not appear to mention the 1918 expulsion of Black students from the Faculty of Medicine. This appears to be an oversight rather than an intended omission, as Gibson's book covers other unflattering incidents of racism on the Queen's campus during the first half of the twentieth century, including attempts by the Queen's administration to limit the enrolment of Jewish students during WWII. The 1918 expulsion of Black medical students is also not covered in the first volume of the Queen's University written by Hilda Neatby. The reasons for this omission are unclear.

Kordan, Bohdan S. *Prisoners of War: Internment in Canada during the Great War*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

This book documented the period of internment faced by Prisoners of War during World War I in Canada. It was useful in that it explained the criteria the Canadian government had for labelling enemy aliens and subsequently documented their internment across Canada. It also explained the shock that Ukrainian Canadians had when they were labelled enemy aliens just because they were reservists in their home militaries.

Malcolm, Ian. "Queen's Medical Faculty Expels Black Students." *Wahenga* (1994): 38-40.

Malcolm's article from the a Queen's Black History journal is emotionally charged and makes no issue of the author's moral opposition to the expulsions of 1918. Its suggestions for how the situation could have been handled better, in retrospect, are not always thoroughly thought out. However, it is included in order to highlight the way in which the presence of a Black voice offers a different perspective, one much more condemning, than that presented contemporary to the events.

Marunchak, M.H. *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History*. Ottawa: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970.

Marunchak argues in his book that the Ukrainians were unfairly interned during World War I and adds that the Ukrainians fully embraced their new nation of Canada and when given the opportunity fought bravely for Canada. Many Ukrainians upon arrival to Canada changed their last names and assimilated quickly into the Anglo dominated culture. As a result they were not interned and fought for Canada, proving Ukrainian allegiance. One man, Corporal Konoval, even won the Victoria Cross for his bravery.

McLaren, Angus. *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1990.

This book gives a major overview on eugenic discourse in Canada. Not only does it provide an idea on who was leading the field in research between 1885 and 1945, but it also describes how the discourse wove its way into Canadian society through the elite of other nations, most notably the United Kingdom and the United States. Finally, the book provided a social ranking scale that was beneficial in constructing the "scale of whiteness" which was discussed in the eugenics section.

Queen's University. *Minutes of the Faculty of Medicine*. April 30 1915-March 5 1920. Archives, Locator 1204.

The minutes of the Faculty of Medicine available in the Queen's University Archives document the meetings of the administrators of the Faculty of Medicine,

and provide insight into the events and discussions that led to the faculty's decision to expel 15 Black medical students from its program in 1918, after incidents of racism in the hospital in which the students worked, including refusals from WWI veterans to be attended to by Black doctors. This source includes the memorandum in which Dean James Cameron Connell presents his explanation of the incident and his recommendation Black students be removed from the faculty of medicine on January 4th, 1918, and the subsequent discussion of the issue, which culminated in the decision, in conjunction with the Queen's University Senate, to expel the students.

Queen's University. "Minutes of Senate." Sept. 19-1917 to May 21, 1924. Queen's University Archives. *Office of the University Secretariat fonds*. 1828-2007. Locator 1240.

This primary source, available within the Office of the University Secretariat fonds, includes the minutes of the Queen's University Senate. These minutes contain the memorandum by Dean James Cameron Connell is included, in addition to the decision on January 25th, 1918, that "negro students be not admitted to the Medical School." The record notes that "Dean Connell was given power to act with reference to those negro students now in attendance."

"Queen's and the Coloured Students." *Queen's Journal*. February 5, 1918, 2.

This article is the only mention of a from the contemporary Queen's community in response to the expulsions. It is included to highlight that this perspective is one in defence of the university's reputation, which it sees as being under attack from the University of Toronto; as opposed to in defence of the expelled students. It is a primary source that works towards exemplifying a muted community response to the expulsions.

Switzer, Jane. "Muslim students targeted in racist incidents: Poster defaced, donation money stolen from QUMSA" *The Journal*: 136 (10), September 26, 2008. Accessed 18 November 2012 from <http://queensjournal.ca/story/2008-09-26/news/muslim-students-targeted-racist-incidents/>

This 2008 article by Jane Switzer from the Queen's Journal details ongoing acts of racism at Queen's University. The article examines the outbreak of acts of islamophobia on the Queen's University campus during 2008 and 2009, focusing in particular on the break-in and theft of funds from the office of the Queen's University Muslim Students Association, and the targeted acts of verbal aggression against Muslim students on campus.

Thornhill, Esmerelda M. A. "So Seldom for Us, So Often Against Us: Blacks and Law in Canada." *Journal of Black Studies*. 38(2008): 321-337.

Thornhill's article serves to broaden the scope of racial attitudes in the legal sphere from the base of Backhouse's book, which offers only a single case study highlighting the Black Canadian experience. Whereas Backhouse focuses on racism more generally (i.e., in relation to Natives, the Jewish, and other minority groups), Thornhill focuses specifically on the Black experience. Her examples of discrimination include Black Canadians being discouraged from enlisting for service in the War, and a mass rejection of Black immigrants to Canada.

Travill, A.A. *Black Students During WWI*. 1986. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

This is an untitled, unaddressed, undated, and unsigned letter available in the Queen's Archives folder entitled *Black Students During WWI*, a collection of letters and documents from A.A. Travill. The letter addresses the expulsion of fifteen Black students from the Queen's University Medical program in 1918. The letter states that Black people lived comfortably in Kingston prior to the First World War, and that racial tensions increased dramatically upon the return of soldiers from the War. It also states that Queen's University expelled fifteen Black students in response to the communal sentiment, and argues that other Canadian universities behaved in a similar manner.

Travill, A.A. *Letter to Mr. Kenneth R. Manning*. October 8, 1986. Black Students During WWI. Queen's University Archives. Locator 5070.1, Box 8, File 10.

This a letter from A.A. Travill to Professor Kenneth R. Manning of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology dated October 8th, 1986. Travill states in the letter that Queen's has attracted a small number of Black students due to the fact that it is not located in a large metropolitan center, and that Queen's University registrar has never identified a student's race, or colour, and that since 1912 they have stopped recording religious affiliation. Travill also states that he has personally know three Black students, and had knowledge of about five other Black students.

Walker, James W. St. G. 1989. "Race and Recruitment in World War I: Enlistment of Visible Minorities in the Canadian Expeditionary Force". *Canadian Historical Review*. 70 (1): 1-26.

Walker's article documents the attempts of various forces within the Canadian military and government to create military units of Black, Asian, and Native Canadian forces during WWI, and the racial prejudice and resistance experienced by those attempting to integrate the Canadian military during this period. This secondary source provides historical context for the racism present amongst the Queen's and Kingston community during and following WWI.

Appendix

Figure 1: Med. '17 Executive, Queen's University, 1915-1916.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ *Queen's '17: A Resume of Student Life in Queen's University at Kingston to All Whom It May Concern*, (Kingston: Queen's University, 1917), 103.



Figure 2: Med '18 Executive, Queens University, 1917-1918⁵⁵



Figure 3: George Hilton Theodore Napoleon Clark, the last Black graduate from the Faculty of Medicine before the 1918 expulsions⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Queen's University Year Book* (Kingston: Queen's University, 1918), 55.

⁵⁶ *Queen's '17: A Resume of Student Life in Queen's University at Kingston to All Whom It May Concern*, (Kingston: Queen's University, 1917), 113.



Figure 4: Fort Henry set up as an internment camp⁵⁷

Figure 1 and 3

Queen's '17: A Resume of Student Life in Queen's University at Kingston to All Whom It May Concern. Kingston: Queen's University, 1917.

The image from the 1917 Queen's University Yearbook shows the Faculty of Medicine executive for the class of 1917. The photo shows two Black students out of nine total students on the executive. It is particularly striking in comparison to Figure 2, which shows the executive for the class of 1918, which contains no Black students. The 1917 yearbook also gives a picture of George Clark, who was the last Black student of medicine to graduate at Queen's before the expulsions. Interestingly, the biography under his photo is significantly less sentimental than those of his peers, listing instead a scientific list of achievements in academics and athletics.

Figure 2

Queen's University Year Book. Kingston: Queen's University, 1918.

⁵⁷ "During the early 1940's when Fort Henry was a POW camp for Germans," last modified October 27, 2012, <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=162612767216246&set=a.162612527216270.51776.161554060655450&type=3&theater>.

The photo from the 1918 yearbook provides a look at the executive of the Faculty of Medicine class of 1918. The photo is striking in its inclusion of only white students, as this was the first year that the expulsions had taken effect.

Figure 4

“During the early 1940's when Fort Henry was a POW camp for Germans,” last modified October 27, 2012,
<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=162612767216246&set=a.162612527216270.51776.161554060655450&type=3&theater>.

The photo of Fort Henry used as an internment camp for German POW's highlights a history of localized racism in the Kingston area. It cannot be considered outside of its broader historical context within the Second World War, but speaks to the bred culture of racial superiority in the city nonetheless.