Barons, and Sheriffs-- and lists the locales of these respective individuals. None of the locations listed are outside the kingdom of England. Another example which goes against the idea of assimilation of other cultures was mentioned by Stavrianos, and he states that city-states in Europe organized into powerful defense conglomerates, such as the Hanseatic League, in order to prevent outsiders from coming into the respective league's territory. Lastly, Stavrianos mentions that the Mongol Empire deliberately rejected much of China's religion and culture in order to separate themselves from China. These exceptions to the idea of "Medieval Synthesis" exist as the inevitable exceptions to the rule, and I believe that this is true because the amount of assimilation taking place during Medieval times far exceeded the amount of separation and non-assimilation that took place in the same period. In addition, these separatist activities took place in the Mongol Empire and in Europe where much effort was made to synthesize society into a great whole. The exceptions to "Medieval Synthesis" are inevitable exceptions to the rule.

The term "Medieval Synthesis" can appropriately be used to describe activities by cultures throughout Eurasia in the time period from 500 to 1500 A.D. Cultures that took part in this activity included the following: Confucian China, Islamic Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Mongol Empire, and Medieval Europe between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Contradictions to these synthesizing activities are few, and thus represent inevitable exceptions to the rule.

"A Walk in the Sunshine": Civil Rights and the End of the Southern Democratic Party

Susan J. Roth

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The Presidential election of 1948 was a significant event in the history of the American civil rights movement not only in that for the first time, civil rights took its place among "respectable" political concerns,[1] but in that it transformed the Democratic party. From the era preceding the Civil War, the Democratic party was identified primarily as the party of the South. The party's identification with southern tradition, states rights, and white supremacy were similarly entrenched. The African American, only nationally enfranchised since Reconstruction, had little if any place in the Democratic party. As a result, for the remainder of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, the black voter, when he could vote without obstruction, was more than likely to vote with the grand old party of Abraham Lincoln, the Republican party.[2]

The Democratic party ideology was slow to change in regard to race and race relations, and this intransigence usually reflected itself in the officeholders the party elected. Grover Cleveland, the first post-Civil War Democratic President, was the surprising exception, as displayed by his appointment of blacks to federal posts and reception of Frederick Douglass at the White House. If Cleveland had raised new hopes among blacks for the Democratic party, Woodrow Wilson (for whom some black leaders had actively campaigned) proceeded to crush them. Wilson, a Southerner at heart, made no move to end

1 Harvard Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election in 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics," *Journal of Southern History* 37 (Nov. 1971): 615.
2 Henry Lee Moon, *Balance of Power: The Negro Vote* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1948), 87-90.

segregation in the federal government, subscribing to the old argument that segregation was necessary "to prevent interracial friction." Wilson's betrayal turned blacks away from the Democratic party for years to come.[3]

Although local Democratic machine politicians still garnered black support, as they had even before the turn of the century, the first nationwide move of black voters in the direction of the Democratic party happened only with the arrival of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. Even then, Roosevelt's black support did not seriously coalesce until 1936. For example, in four wards in Cleveland, Ohio, black voters cast 7153 ballots for Roosevelt in 1932, in contrast with the 7456 votes Alfred E. Smith had received from the same wards in 1928. During that same time, according to Henry Lee Moon, "the Hoover rating among colored voters in Cleveland climbed to 72 per cent!" By the following election, however, most black voters were voting for Roosevelt, and the trend continued throughout Roosevelt's prolonged administration, despite the strong challenge posed by Wendell Wilkie, the Republican candidate in 1940.[4]

The role of the Roosevelt administration in the transformation of the Democratic party in the South was carried out in several ways. The most obvious was the New Deal. As Moon has succinctly expressed it: "At no time since the curtain had dropped on the Reconstruction had government focused so much attention upon the Negro's basic needs as did the New Deal." Moon has further explained that through the efforts of the Roosevelt administration, blacks began to see a way to full citizenship, and as a result, "voted repeatedly to retain and strengthen the New Deal."[5] At the same time, the New Deal had been affecting white Southern Democrats in seemingly paradoxical ways. At first, the traditional resistance to the centralization of economic and political power was dropped in the face of the massive need for relief from hunger and unemployment. Also, many Southern politicians made use of the provision of New Deal-generated jobs to build up constituent loyalties, which in turn helped to guarantee their own political futures.[6]

Even early on, however, Southern opposition to Roosevelt and the New Deal (at least on the part of the white upper classes) had begun to grow. This opposition had coalesced by 1935, during the "Second New Deal," which shifted

3 Ibid., 90-97.
4 Ibid., 18-19, 31-32.
5 Ibid., 210.
6 Robert A. Garson, *The Democratic Party and the Politics of Sectionalism, 1941-48* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 2-3.

the focus of the Roosevelt administration from recovery to reform. The Southern elite, already feeling their loss of power over the (black and white) masses through the various federal programs, took even greater offense at such measures as the Wagner Act, the "soak-the-rich" tax, the Farm Tenant and Housing Act of 1937 and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.[7]

Also at issue was the composition of the Democratic party.[8] By 1936 it was widely believed, even by Southerners, that Roosevelt "had destroyed the last vestiges of sectionalism and had united the party beyond all dreams." This perceived unity resulted in the decision of the 1936 Democratic National Convention to abolish the two-thirds majority requirement for approval of nominations and other party decisions. Then in the 1936 election, as if in affirmation in this belief in Democratic unity, Roosevelt combined the support of urban workers and Southern Democrats towards a landslide victory.[9]

The unity, however, was in many ways illusory. One of the earliest signs of southern discontent with the Roosevelt coalition became apparent at the Democratic National Convention that same year. South Carolina Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith, offended by the mixed seating of black and white delegates, made a dramatic exit from the convention hall. It would not be the last incident of a Southern walkout from the Democratic Convention over the issue of race.[10]

Other early cracks in the Roosevelt coalition included the "Grass Roots Convention," organized by Eugene Talmadge, which gave rise to an anti-New Deal wing of the party, dubbed the "Jeffersonian Democrats." While this early southern splinter wing did not last long, it nonetheless stimulated the idea of a Southern breakaway from a Democratic party that in the urban northern areas was being increasingly characterized by a "liberal-labor-Negro coalition." Additionally, it was the southern Democratic-dominated Congress who was instrumental in blocking Roosevelt's attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court in 1937.[11]

The Roosevelt coalition nonetheless managed to stay together through World War II, even as black political consciousness was increasingly raised,

7 George Brown Tindall, *The Disruption of the Solid South* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 30-31.
8 Ibid., 31.
9 Garson, *The Democratic Party*, 7.
10 Tindall, *The Disruption of the Solid South*, 31-32.
11 Ibid., 32-33.

both through the New Deal and the war effort. Although Franklin Delano Roosevelt was not about to risk further alienating the Southern Democratic contingent (that was already plotting against the New Deal) in order to advance the cause of racial justice, he was neither unsympathetic nor completely unresponsive to the needs of the black electorate. His most overtly pro-Civil rights act was Executive Order 8802, which created the first federal Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) in 1941. The executive order came in response to pressure from labor leader A. Philip Randolph, who had threatened a march on Washington. With the creation of the FEPC, blacks gained increasing employment in the defense-related jobs created by a wartime economy. The war work also stimulated the migration of over one million Southern blacks to the cities in the North and the West, between 1941 and 1946.[12]

Following World War II, blacks who had served in the military returned with an increased sense of equal worth and a new determination not to retreat from the gains of the New Deal and the war effort. In addition, fighting against Hitler's blatantly racist regime gave black GIs an increased sense of the gap between the democracy that the American government was promoting abroad and the often undemocratic America they experienced. While few blacks would have wished for an Axis victory, in light of Hitler's more blatant racialism, fighting the Nazis abroad gave black Americans new assertiveness to challenge racism at home.[13]

In the Democratic political arena, the challenges to the continuity of the Roosevelt administration were mounting. Although the state of Roosevelt's health was not widely known to the public at that time, by 1944, it became increasingly apparent to political operatives that Roosevelt was not well. While some delegates to the 1944 Democratic National Convention wanted simply to retire Roosevelt through the imposition of term limits, most were primarily concerned with whether or not he would live very long after 1944. As a result, the principle conflict of that convention was over who would be Roosevelt's running mate.

The members of the Southern Governors' Conference quickly deemed that the then Vice President, Henry Wallace, was "unsafe," and demanded his

12 William C. Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration* (Ohio State University Press, 1970), 6-7.
13 Steven F. Lawson, *Running for Freedom* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 20-22.

replacement. Wallace, outspoken and ultraliberal, was an anathema to the southern Democrats, most of whom already felt betrayed by the leftward shift in the national Democratic party. Replacing Wallace was of particular concern to the Southern Democrats that year because "in view of the age of the President, and in view of the inevitable wear of office" if Roosevelt were to win a fourth term, the end result might be "the elevation of whoever was Vice President at the time." [14]

The Vice Presidency was hardly the only issue threatening to split the Democratic party in 1944, but in the end, nearly all southern Democrats (even those who fiercely opposed Roosevelt and the New Deal) concluded that a southern breakaway was simply not worth the risk, either to themselves or to the party. Therefore, the southern Democrats focused their demand on the removal of Wallace from the ticket, and his replacement "with an acceptable Southerner." This according to historian Robert Garson, would give them "the symbolic satisfaction of knowing they could still influence their own party." [15]

Wallace, however, enjoyed strong support among northern liberal Democrats and blacks, who were equally aware of the possibility of a foreshortened fourth term for Roosevelt. Walter White, the head of the NAACP went so far to threaten that if Senator James F. Byrnes (a favored candidate of the southern Democrats) or any other southerner received the Vice Presidential nomination, "ninety percent of Negroes would either vote Republican or go fishing on election day." White furthermore advised Democratic operatives that a replacement of Wallace "would be construed as further surrender to the reactionary South by the Administration."[16]

When it came down to the Vice Presidential nomination the Democratic party faced a serious dilemma. On the one hand they knew that Wallace could not get nominated in the face of the united opposition of the southern Democrats. On the other hand, an unambiguously southern running mate would cost Roosevelt both the black vote and the labor vote. In the end, Roosevelt agreed to the selection of a "compromise" running mate, Senator Harry S. Truman of the border state of Missouri. Truman himself was initially reluctant to become Roosevelt's running mate, and in fact had previously announced his intention to

14 Garson, *The Democratic Party*, 96.
15 Ibid., 113-14.
16 Ibid., 116. Quotation from White to Joseph Guffey, July 19, 1944. In box 291/1, NAACP Files.

support James F. Byrnes. Truman was finally persuaded (following Byrnes' withdrawal from the running) after "eavesdropping" on a long-distance telephone conversation, that was in fact, meant for his ears. In this conversation, Roosevelt shouted into the receiver that if Truman "wants to break up the Democratic party by staying out, he can."[17]

Truman himself, today so firmly associated with Civil Rights advances, most notably the desegregation of the military, originally neither saw, nor sought to sell himself as the Civil Rights candidate. His record in that area, however, was particularly strong, especially for a politician of his time and locality. Back in the 1920s, he had launched his political career with the help of local party boss Tom Pendergast, who was instrumental in helping Truman win the black vote, which in turn gave Truman his first sense of its importance. By the time Truman was first elected to the Senate, in 1934, he consistently allied himself with the liberal bloc in matters of civil rights.[18]

Truman's early support of civil rights, however, was in many ways more a matter of politics than of conviction, especially as he also had a southern white constituency in Missouri whose vote he had to attract. One example of Truman's early ambivalence was a remark he had made to a southern Senator in 1938, regarding an antilynching bill, in which he said: "You know I am against this bill, but if it comes to a vote, I'll have to vote for it.....the Negro vote in Kansas City and St. Louis are too important." (The bill never made it to the Senate floor). Truman's views on civil rights fairly quickly matured beyond considerations of political expediency, but even then he continued to make a distinction between what he saw as matters of simple justice, and outright advocacy of the abolition of Jim Crow. In many ways, he had most succinctly expressed his early middle-of-the-road viewpoint in a 1940 speech to the National Colored Democratic Association, in which he stated: "I wish to make it clear that I am not appealing for social equality of the Negro....the highest types of Negro leaders say quite frankly that they prefer the society of their own people. Negroes want justice, not social relations."[19]

Aside from the Vice Presidential nomination, however, civil rights itself was the major bone of contention within the Democratic party in 1944. At a time

17 Ibid., 120.
18 Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights*, 8-9.
19 Ibid., 12.

when the Democratic white primaries were still operative in some Southern states, the inclusion of a civil rights plank in the party platform had genuine potential to split the party. The civil rights plank that was initially drafted, therefore, was intended to offend neither black leaders nor Southern proponents of states' rights and white supremacy. The plank ended up pleasing neither group. Providing no specifics one way or the other, the plank simply affirmed that "racial and religious minorities have the right to live, develop, and vote equally with all citizens and share the rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution." The closest thing this plank had to provisions for enforcement was the statement that "Congress should exert its full constitutional powers to protect these rights." Four years later, this middle-of-the road plank would be challenged by both factions of the party.[20]

The concerns for the Vice Presidency within both wings of the Democratic party turned out to be justified. Roosevelt handily won a fourth term and subsequently died April 12, 1945, not long after his fourth inauguration, conferring on Truman "not only the highest office in the land, but the deep political divisions that Roosevelt had left behind him within his own party." The biggest division, without question, was over the civil rights issue. No sooner had Truman assumed the Presidency, than he was asked by reporters about his civil rights position at his first Presidential press conference on April 17, 1945. In response to the query on "where the President stood" regarding fair employment and voting rights, Truman adroitly replied: "I will give you some advice. All you need to do is read the Senate record of one Harry S. Truman."[21]

It became clear fairly quickly, however, that Truman would not be able to continue to rest comfortably on his past record; nor would he satisfy the black electorate and civil rights advocates merely with words. The situation was no longer just a matter of regional or even national politics in the postwar era. The founding of the United Nations, the emerging independence of former colonies in Africa and Asia, and the Cold War would shine the world spotlight on the American racial situation as it had never been focused previously.[22] If America was to effectively champion freedom, human rights, and democracy abroad, it could no longer maintain the racial status quo at home, or as one historian has expressed it, be "more concerned with democratic elections in

20 Garson, *The Democratic Party*, 118-19.
21 Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights*, 23.
22 Sitkoff, "Harry Truman," 598.

Poland than in the American South." Indeed, by 1947, an NAACP division, headed by W.E.B. DuBois, had filed a petition to the U.N. Human Rights Commission concerning the treatment of blacks in the United States. The petition had little if any legal effect, but it did serve to focus greater attention on the disparity between American rhetoric and policies.[23]

Fighting the Communist Menace (perceived and actual) also ultimately compelled the Truman administration seriously to address the race issue, lest it play into the hands of Communists, both in-country and abroad. Up to the post-war era the civil rights issue, if it had appeared on the white American political stage at all, was promoted by leftist organizations, many of them communist-dominated. On the world stage, the U.S. found itself in "competition with the Soviet Union for the favor of the emerging nonwhite nations" making its racial policies at home "a damaging embarrassment" to the anti-Communist cause.[24] One of the tasks of the Truman administration and the liberal Democrats, therefore, was to defuse the Communist threat by co-opting its possible appeal to the emerging "third world" abroad and to minority voters at home.

Truman, however, initially hesitated to act decisively in the race matter, as he was preoccupied with establishing a mandate to guide the nation into the postwar era. For example, early in his presidency, he almost paradoxically endorsed the creation of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee and at the same time failed to push for appropriations for the existing temporary FEPC.[25] However, it was not even as if the temporary FEPC was going to receive support from the southern wing of Truman's own party. Already, southern Democrats were determined to block any measure of Truman's that seemed to favor civil rights.

What finally goaded Truman into action was a series of acts of racial violence in 1946, many over the issue of black voting rights. One of the most shocking to Truman, himself a war veteran, was the blinding of Isaac Woodward, who had just been discharged from the service.[26] Responding to the outcries of black organizations (including a picket by fifty women from the NAACP), Truman and his attorney general Tom Clark mobilized a somewhat

23 Donald R. McCoy and Richard T. Ruetten, *Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press, 1973), 66-68.
24 Robert Weisbrot, *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990), 10.
25 Sitkoff, "Harry Truman," 599.
26 McCoy and Ruetten, *Quest and Response*, 66-68.

handicapped Department of Justice to investigate the violence. Little was finally accomplished in terms of prosecutive action (the Justice Department's jurisdiction was limited at the time), but Clark subsequently announced that he would seek the passage of an anti-lynching bill in the next Congress (the elections were coming up too soon for action in the 79th Congress).[27]

In the meantime, Truman was further apprised of the details of the racial situation by the National Emergency Committee Against Mob Violence, headed by Walter White. The report ultimately convinced Truman to bypass the Congress to create a civil rights committee by executive order. White later recalled that after having read the report, Truman exclaimed: "We have to do something...Everybody seems to believe that the President by himself can do anything he wishes...but the President is helpless unless he is backed by public opinion."[28]

By the time of the 1946 Congressional election however, it seemed as if public opinion was definitely against the Democrats in general and Truman in particular. The Republican takeover of both the House and Senate convinced many high-placed operatives of Truman's forthcoming defeat in the 1948 election. Yet it was ironically the Republican takeover that helped to make Truman less beholden to the Solid South, and therefore freer to style himself as a liberal Democrat in general, and Democratic champion of civil rights in particular.

The rise of Progressive party candidate Henry Wallace also eventually gave Truman the incentive to shift leftward, in order to co-opt Wallace's appeal as the candidate of the common people.[29] Wallace, a biologist by profession, and for a while Truman's Secretary of Commerce, undoubtably had personal scores to settle as well as political convictions to advance in his presidential campaign. Already smarting from his removal from the 1944 Presidential ticket, he proceeded to exacerbate his alienation from Truman, largely through his Madison Square Garden speech (and other foreign policy statements) that ran counter to the administration's increasingly hard-line views. His subsequent dismissal, whether or not in response to the demands of Truman's conservative Secretary of State, undoubtably fueled Wallace's hatred of Truman as "a 'politician,' without

27 Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights*, 47-50.
28 Ibid., 51; Quoted from Walter White, *A Man Called White: The Autobiography of Walter White* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 330-31.
29 Karl M. Schmidt, *Henry A. Wallace: Quixotic Crusade, 1948* (Syracuse, New York: University Press, 1960), 91.

principle or conviction and with an amazing capacity to be on all sides of a question not only at different times but at one and the same time."[30]

Truman's most immediate response to the post-election situation was then to make a speech at the annual NAACP rally in front of the Lincoln Memorial, at the invitation of Walter White. Disregarding advice to keep the actual mention of civil rights confined to the last paragraph of his speech, "not to exceed one minute," Truman devoted his entire talk to the issue of civil rights. His speech included a discussion of the role the federal government in the protection of civil rights and the significance of civil rights to the growing cold war conflict. Throwing aside concerns for placating the South, Truman asserted "we cannot, any longer, await the growth of a will to action in the slowest state or the most backward community."[31]

Demands for Truman to back up his words with action increased with publication of the report of his Committee on Civil Rights. The now famous document, *To Secure these Rights* went even further than Truman had recommended, both in its description of the problem of American racial discrimination and in its proposed solutions.[32] The Committee on Civil Right's recommendations included, but were by no means limited to the following:

-- The establishment of a permanent Commission on Civil Rights in the Executive Office of the President, preferably by Act of Congress.

-- The enactment by Congress of an antilynching act.

-- Action by the states or Congress to end poll taxes as voting prerequisite.

-- The enactment by Congress of legislation establishing local self-government for the District of Columbia.

-- The enactment by Congress of legislation providing that no member of the armed forces shall be subject to discrimination of any kind by any public authority or place of public accommodation, recreation, transportation, or other service or business.

In addition, the committee's report pointed to the discrepancy between American civil rights goals and realities, which in the words of the Committee, created: "a kind of moral dry rot which eats away at the emotional and rational bases of democratic beliefs." [33]

30 Jules Abels, *Out of the Jaws of Victory* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959), 103-105.
31 Berman, 61-62; Quoted from a Memorandum to Matthew J.Connelly from David Niles, June 16, 1947, Clark Clifford File, Harry S. Truman Library; and from White, *A Man Called White*, 330-31.
32 Ibid., 70-71.
33 McCoy and Reutten, *Quest and Response*, 87-91: Quoted from *To Secure these Rights: The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1947), 139.

To Secure these Rights produced an immediate and largely positive response among civil rights organizations, which in turn served to increase the pressure upon Truman to act upon his earlier statements. The person who finally convinced Truman that decisive pro-civil rights action was not only morally right but politically sound was his advisor, Clark Clifford, who in his celebrated 43-page campaign memorandum advised Truman to do everything he could to "outbid the Republicans" (and Henry Wallace) in the matter of courting the black vote. More pointedly, Clifford assured Truman that "the South can be considered safely Democratic," and that in regard to formulating national policy "can easily be ignored."[34]

Following the submission of Truman's "omnibus" civil rights legislation, however, Southern Democrats began to make it perfectly clear that they could and would not be ignored in the upcoming Presidential election--at least not without serious consequences for the Democratic party and the President. As the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia approached, southern Democratic operatives threatened to walk out of the convention and run their own Democratic ticket if Truman and the national Democratic organization did not repudiate civil rights. They made this point clear early on in the campaign, at the annual Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner in Washington, D.C., when South Carolina Senator Olin M. Johnston and his wife, the vice-chair of the dinner committee, reserved an entire table prominently near the Presidential dais--and then did not show up. The irony was that Truman made no mention of civil rights during that entire evening.[35]

A meeting with the Conference of Southern Governors, convened by Democratic National Committee Chairman J. Howard McGrath, intended to reconcile sectional differences within the party, proved fruitless. South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond refused to be seated, as he fired off his questions at McGrath. In return, McGrath responded to his committeeman's suggestion that he compromise, with a firm "no compromise." McGrath further stated, that as Chairman, he was "not going to push this thing one spot further than the President's message." But, he added neither would he" withdraw one inch from the confines of that message.[36]"

34 Irwin Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948* (New York: New American Library, 1968), 22-23.
35 Ibid., 62-63.
36 Jack Redding, *Inside the Democratic Party* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), 135-37.

It was almost as if Truman did not have enough problems. Already in hot water with the South over the civil rights issue, Truman also found himself facing discontent on the left, from the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) an anticommunist liberal organization. The ADA, which had spearheaded the leftward shift in the Democratic party, never went as far as to endorse Wallace as an alternative (in the way that Strom Thurmond was for the "Dixiecrats"), but nonetheless decided to refrain from endorsing Truman or any other candidate until after the party convention. As political historian Steven M. Gillon put it; "There was certainly no enthusiasm for Truman, but no one knew a way out of the dilemma."[37]

The battle lines, therefore, were drawn, even before the Democratic conventioneers had reached Philadelphia. Several state leaders, beginning with Virginia Governor William Tuck sought various ways to get Truman removed from the Democratic slot on their state ballot, ranging from "a blind ballot" (by which voters would simply select the Democratic party, leaving the choice of candidate to electoral college operatives) to replacing Truman with an acceptable Southern candidate in the Democratic slot, effectively relegating the national Democratic party candidate to third-party status. (In the end, only a few states would accomplish the latter.)[38] On the left, the specter of Henry Wallace still loomed. At the same time, the most unlikely coalition of the ADA and Southern wings of the Democratic party was formed to "draft Eisenhower," despite the General's earlier protest that he was did not want to be a candidate--for any party.[39]

In the end, the draft-Eisenhower movement fizzled, and a brief campaign to nominate Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas never reached the convention floor. Truman ultimately received the nomination with little actual opposition (although he was denied the usual unanimous nomination). The intra-party showdown therefore, centered on the Democratic party platform--specifically its civil rights plank.

Truman, recently awakened to the true extent of Southern ire over his civil rights stance, but having already committed himself too firmly to back down, argued for a very broad, general plank, similar to the one drafted in 1944.

37 Steven Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism, 1947-1985* (Oxford: University Press, 1987), 39.
38 Redding, *Inside the Democratic Party*, 138-39.
39 Garson, *The Democratic Party*, 269-71.

The Southern Democrats, if they could not have the civil rights plank excised altogether, demanded at least a change of wording so that it also stated that neither the Democratic party nor the federal government would "encroach upon the reserved powers of the state by the centralization of the government or otherwise." The ADA, in contrast, drafted an entirely new plank that included specific provisions for anti-poll tax and antilynching legislation, as well as the creation of a permanent FEPC.[40]

A prelude to the main "floor fight" that would make the history books occurred over the seating of the Mississippi delegation, which had previously resolved not to support the Democratic ticket if Truman was nominated and the civil rights program endorsed. George L. Vaughn, a black member of the credentials committee, attempted to present a minority report opposing their seating. Vaughn was shouted down and the Mississippi delegation was seated, following a voice vote. The following morning, however, after a long night of discussion and debate, Senator Hubert Humphrey, one of the drafters of the ADA plank, acted on his decision to push for the stronger civil rights plank, as well as a roll-call vote to get it passed, despite warnings from the administration spokesman that he would "split the party wide open."[41]

The party, by that time however, was already so badly fractured, that nothing short of complete retreat from civil rights would have brought the southern wing back into line. Following a morning of debate, lobbying, and presentation of various other civil rights planks, Humphrey launched into a rousing speech that included his now immortal call "for the Democratic party to get out of the shadow of states' rights and walk forthrightly in the bright sunshine of human rights." The eventual roll-call vote resulted in the passage of the ADA plank, 651 1/2 to 582 1/2. It also resulted in the walkout of the Alabama and Mississippi delegations (although none of the other southern states followed them out). As Time commented on its report on the convention, "The South had been kicked in the pants, turned around, and kicked in the stomach."[42]

40 Gillon, *Politics and Vision*, 47-48.
41 Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign*, 122-23.
42 Ibid., 125-26.

The South, however, had not lost all of its fight. Within weeks of the Democratic National Convention, many Southern Democrats, as promised, convened a States Rights' convention in Birmingham, nominating Strom Thurmond and Fielding Wright as "States Rights Democrats." Despite the unlikelihood of a "Dixiecrat" win, the southern Democrats banked their hopes on throwing the election into the House of Representatives, in which they presumed that they would have more leverage in selecting the next President.[43] One historian has argued, however, that even if the election had gone into the House, a Dewey or even a Truman victory was more likely than one for Thurmond.[44]

In the end, however, Truman's upset victory happened both despite and because of the three-way split in the Democratic party. The southern walkout in Philadelphia gave Truman new credibility with black voters and civil rights activists, and also freed him from nearly all obligation to please the South. Also, by the end of the campaign Wallace's candidacy had ceased to be a threat, owing largely to the taint of Communist support, which Wallace stubbornly refused to repudiate. Finally, the South, while not nearly as safe as Clifford had predicted, largely came through for Truman. Most Southern voters (and electors) as predicted, stuck with the national Democratic ticket, despite their objections to both Truman and civil rights, and Thurmond's candidacy succeeded only with the four states in which the Dixiecrats had managed to appropriate the Democratic party label--Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.[45]

The 1948 Presidential election had undeniably brought the Civil Rights issue to the political forefront. By the same token, black voters were now recognized as a "legitimate" constituency, which neither major party could afford to ignore. Although the transformation of the Democratic Party was far from complete (the last Dixiecrat gasp would be heard in 1968, from George Wallace), the signs were already clear that from then on, the Democratic party would never again be automatically allied with the American South. As southern historian George B. Tindall expressed it, "the region had finally moved out of the old Civil War-Reconstruction configuration in politics."[46] So, for that matter, had the party.

43 Sitkoff, "Harry Truman," 605.
44 Abels, *Out of the Jaws of Victory*, 214-15.
45 Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign*, 247.
46 Tindall, *The Disruption of the Solid South*, 38-46.

Constructing Community: The Meaning of Fairs, Court Days, and Royal Celebrations in Eighteenth-Century Virginia

Kristan Crawford

Kristan Crawford was a co-winner of the History Department's Lavern M. Hamand Graduate Writing Award. She presented this paper at the Phi Alpha Theta Lower Illinois Regional Conference at Illinois State University, where she received an award for Outstanding Use of Primary Documents. This paper is a shortened version of the first chapter of her M.A. thesis on community, public ritual, and popular disturbances in eighteenth century Virginia.

Eighteenth-century Virginia was an early modern European society. Community overshadowed individual interests. Low literacy and farming contributed to the predominance of an oral culture, in which face-to-face encounters and ritualistic actions provided the basis of communal solidarity.[1] As in England, Virginia's social hierarchy required each inhabitant to express either deference or condescension to each man or woman encountered within the society.[2] Prior to the imperial crisis, Virginia's county communities, although stratified, remained cohesive. This paper argues that before 1765, despite some tensions, the populace interacted in ways which reinforced the communal will and created a unified society.

Some historians prefer to emphasize the individual over the community. Edmund S. Morgan discusses how the atomistic nature of frontier Virginia contributed to the central American paradox, namely, how slavery and freedom coexisted in colonial Virginia, "the one supporting the other." Other historians

1 Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 125.
2 David Hackett Fischer noted how deference, or the "culture of subordination," was the "psychological cement" of the hierarchical system. He also discussed condescension: "To condescend in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was to treat an inferior with kindness, decency and respect." David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 384, 385-7; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 63.