AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Kim Elaine Washington for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education presented on October 30, 2008.
Title: The Legacy of Two African American Women in College Administration Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonnette Joye Hardiman: A Look Back to Go Forward

Abstract approved: ___________________________________________________
Larry D. Roper

The focus of this study was to examine the administrative legacy of two African American women administrators, Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonnette Joye Hardiman, who administrated The Evergreen State College-Tacoma, Washington (TESC-T) campus for more than three decades. TESC-T is nationally known for its community-based curriculum and pedagogy, high retention and graduation rates, with an emphasis on African Americans. I interviewed each woman individually and together to develop a rich understanding of their perspectives to the following questions: What was your vision for this college in the Pacific Northwest? What was the theoretical framework that guided their leadership? What were some of the defining factors and strategies used to help combat or tolerate issues of race, class, and sexism in the predominately-white administration, and what do you want your legacy to be? Thirteen evolutionary themes emerged from their interviews such as: find a need in your community and serve it; serve non-traditional students where they are; bring status and credibility with applause; work with people who look like me; inspired by a master teacher; create allies; maintain the vision and legacy; black woman soldiers doing guerilla warfare; being afraid of my own brilliance; external racism can be healed internally; and, it is our sacred duty to make sure that things get passed on.
The results of this study helped the author understand the reign of dominion over African American women in college administration as well as recognize the vantage point for all under-represented cultures from the margin. The lessons from this study gave the author the ability to recognize how Mimms’s original model developed for African American students can be used to serve and include all cultures and cultural communities in a way that extends beyond ethnicity. The model of inclusion demonstrates the existence of collaboration throughout the institution.
The Legacy of Two African American Women in College Administration:
Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonnette Joye Hardiman: A Look Back to Go Forward

by
Kim Elaine Washington

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It is with the greatest respect for the universe that I pay homage to not only those who came before me, but those who assisted me along the way. I would first like to thank the Creator who watched over me and guided my every step, especially when I did not have the strength on my own to proceed. The creator guided my spirit to make the right choices. To my mother and father Mary Marvenia Dickinson and Alfred Washington who gave me life. My mother is my greatest hero who believed in everything I have ever attempted. She would use this mantra to guide the paths of her seven children: “You are divinely inspired to do the right thing, at the right time for your highest and best good, and the good of all concerned.” These words are a testament to the divinity which continues to guide me through my life process. To my children LaKim, Jazmin, and grandson Avishay who made me laugh and encouraged me with merely their existence. To my daughter LaKia (may she rest in peace) who made me present an heir of strength I never thought possible (resilience). My brothers and sisters, Wanda, John, Joyce, Guy Jr., Elizabeth, and Delphi, who directly or indirectly provided incentives for me to stay centered and positive to blaze this trail. While I stand on their shoulders, the stars of my dissertation: Maxine B. Mimms and W. Joye Hardiman. They are the matriarchs of my college life and if not for them this work could not have been accomplished. To this end, my dissertation committee: Larry D. Roper, George Copa, Diana Marre, W. Joye Hardiman, and Lynne Houck who provided wisdom and made valuable contributions when they knew I needed it. I give thanks to Tacoma Community College who gave me the practical experience and encouraged me through anger to advance to the highest degree. There are many people who are not named who believed and supported my efforts throughout my college education. I am thankful for everyone who knew this was my purpose: Remember who you are.

APPROVED:

___________________________________________________________________
Major Professor, Representing Education

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Dean of the College of Education

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

___________________________________________________________________
Kim Elaine Washington
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my powerful children
LaKim Edward Darnell Washington, Jazmin Rene Washington
And
In peace
LaKia Rosine Washington
The Legacy of two African American Women in College Administration: Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonnette Joye Hardiman: A Look Back to Go Forward

For the first time in my adult lifetime, I am really proud of my country because it feels like hope is finally making a comeback... and not just because Barack[Obama] has done well, but because I think people are hungry for change. Michelle Obama

Chapter 1: Introduction

African American women in college administration hold a unique perspective from which to examine higher education; however their contribution to college development and change have often been marginalized and disregarded (Evans-Herring, 2003; Gray, 1997; Guy-Sheftall, 1986; Collins, 2002; 1990b; hooks, 1984; Rusher, 1996). It is essential for African American women to recognize the special vantage point our marginality gives us and make use of this perspective to understand the dominant racist, classist, and sexist condition as well as envision and create a counter-hegemony to take action (hooks, 2000). African American women may be one of the distinct groups of marginalized intellectuals whose standpoints promise to enrich contemporary sociological discourse (Collins, 2002). The force of this standpoint, like the above statement made by Michelle Obama to a Milwaukee, Wisconsin group on February 18, 2008, and later restated in Madison, Wisconsin is the gist of a growing body of literature over the past three decades that have examined how African American women leaders at predominantly white institutions of higher learning have endured a legacy of struggle to reject racist images and strive to create self-definition (Collins, 1998; Giddins, 1996; Issenberg, 2008; Lubiano, 1992; Moses, 1989; Parker, 2005; Rusher, 1996). From this position of resilience and persistence we have hope and are hungry for change, yet African American women
still strive for the courage, self-efficacy, and strength to take the reigns from our ancestors and not only to stand on their shoulders, but to build a continuum.

*Purpose of Study*

The purpose of this study was to understand how two African American women have excelled in college administrative leadership at a predominantly white institution in the Pacific Northwest as a demonstration of success, leadership, power, and action. This demonstrated effort lays the foundational structure to build further and create stronger student-centered college models that demonstrates cultural, social, and environmental inclusion for all students, faculty, and staff of color in order to enrich the community and strengthen the environment it serves. Dr. Maxine Buie Mimms and Dr. Wintonette Joye Hardiman were the primary focus of this study. Because of their collective strategies and leadership, they would not allow themselves to be dehumanized nor accept a premise of marginalization for themselves or their students. Instead, for the last three decades, they strived to build a college for African American students in an underrepresented urban community in Tacoma, Washington, that now serves all students in this community. The power of their respective voices, perseverance, and practical experiences serves as a demonstration and basis from which to build for the achievement of African American women in college administration. To build from where they have left off would not only include African Americans, but all cultural communities as integral parts of the design. To answer the call to action for students of color would enhance all student lives and enrich their cultural communities for generations to come.
Failing to tell this story perpetuates the injustice of withholding accolades for their collective achievement.

The work of these two women originated with Mimms overhearing a conversation between frustrated Black female community members regarding their lack of access to higher education. This discussion not only informed the study for a dissertation which addressed and devised an action plan for collegiate access and success for African Americans, but it led to the opening of a unique learning institution: The Evergreen State College-Tacoma. Already a faculty member at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, Mimms extended her classroom by teaching courses at her kitchen table in Tacoma, Washington, in order to reach underserved students. She considered it a one-room schoolhouse because students at all college levels were included. This informal learning structure gradually evolved to become a formal campus program of The Evergreen State College. In 2000, under Hardiman’s tenure, a new campus was built to further this effort; that campus encompassed an entire city block. At the time of this study, student enrollment was approximately 250 (including the Tacoma Community College-Bridge Program).

Mimms designed the college, trained Hardiman, and intentionally recruited faculty of color to work in the program. In the hiring and orientation of new faculty, they maintained the ideology that African American students must be able to see themselves in the curriculum, in the faculty, and as an integral part of the educational process (Table A 4). It further became imperative for Mimms to actively recruit and employ African American professionals such as local doctors, lawyers, scientists, and community leaders who served in the educational arena as educators and role models.
This joint effort actualized what social cognitive theorists recognized by observing others. Social cognitive theorists consider how humans think and how their thinking influences behavior and performance in the environment, suggesting by observing others people acquire knowledge, rules, skills, strategies, beliefs, and attitudes (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). Initially proposed by Bandura (1977) with significant related work by Latham, Locke, Schunk, and Zimmerman, social cognitive theorists viewed the relationship between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors as keys to human behavior and choice. Human learning occurs in a social environment: “Learning is largely an informational processing activity in which information about the structure of behavior and about environmental events is transformed into symbolic representations that serve as guides for action” (Bandura, 1994, p. 51). Consequently, “it is about how traditional systems of rewards and punishment, control and scrutiny, gives way to innovation, individual character, and the courage of convictions” which is “a process ordinary people use when bringing forth the best of themselves by making extraordinary things happen by liberating the leader within everyone” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. xxiii). It was the goal of Mimms and Hardiman to bring forth the best of themselves and their students during their daily lived experiences by as many means possible and necessary while at the college, but that ultimately success would be measured by the demonstration of their students earning college degrees (Table A. 3).

**Focus**

The focus of this study was to examine the thirty-year administrative legacy of two African American female administrators who collaboratively led The Evergreen
State College-Tacoma (TESC-T). Through their individual and collective strategies, TESC-T has become a nationally recognized model known for its powerful learning community, community-based curriculum and pedagogy, and high retention and graduation rates (TESC, 1998). The Evergreen State College-Tacoma has consistently focused its efforts on an underrepresented community, Hilltop (now Upper Tacoma) in Tacoma, Washington, for the benefit of African American students. From its inception and at the behest of the African American community, the college’s commitment has been to provide educational access, academic excellence, and equity to place-bound working adults and to serve as host to meet the Hilltop community’s needs through its geographic location, curriculum, and community service/social justice/public educational pedagogy and outreach programs. Hence, it reinforces the community and leads by example through the campus’s motto: “Enter to Learn, Depart to Serve.” At the time of this study and today there are no Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) in the Pacific Northwest. This college was the first in the region to define its mission with an emphasis on African American pedagogical delivery and history, with a focus on diverse faculty, adult achievement, and community success. In addition, it was my purpose to understand how to build onto and articulate how they eliminated myths and empowered African American women who are within institutions that keep many oppressed. It is my intent for this work to be used as a continuum to build onto the fundamental ideology that every person who wants an education deserves one in an inclusive and hospitable academic institution that honors their culture, served by individuals who understand their basic, environmental, and social needs. The model
Mimms developed is a blueprint for administrators, educators, and students who acknowledge the dynamics of cultural inclusion as a way to teach, recognize, and celebrate rituals of our ancestors. Being armed with research results to improve practice, teachers and other educators can become more effective professionals, and their effectiveness translates into better learning for all students within and across cultures (Merriam et al., 2001). My intention is to understand and contribute to the literature of successful stories of African American women who had the vision to design and liberate people from oppressive academic conditions.

Significance of the Study

Nationally and historically, students of color are enrolling in colleges and universities at higher rates, but they consistently lag far behind whites in obtaining degrees (American Council on Education, 2004). Providing access, unfortunately, does not always lead to academic success. In 2004, almost half of all undergraduates sought to attain a bachelor’s degree. However, only an estimated one-quarter of those students managed to achieve transfer to bachelor degree level programs (NCES, 2007). According to a report from the National Center for Education Statistics (2004), despite modest gains in recent years for students of color, the gap among college participation rates for white, African American, and Hispanic students has widened, and students of color continue to be severely under-represented on the nation’s college and university campuses. This disparity in national and local graduation rates has proven to keep students of color out of the administrative pools and leadership roles at predominately white institutions. Yet if we do not address inconsistencies in regard to disparity, do we perpetrate the condition as well as conditioning? The aim is
to expose the hidden, clarify the oblique, and articulate the possibilities. In 2005, The Evergreen State College-Tacoma (TESC-T) reported that 83 percent of students who entered the third-year cohort in fall quarter 2003 graduated in June 2005, and 78 percent of those were African American (Table A.1).

Improving practices for students of color in postsecondary education is critical and remains necessary because it has a rippling effect for the future growth of our society (Grubb, 1999; Laanan, 2001). Mimms recognized the need in the Pacific Northwest region and trained Hardiman to carry on the administrative mission to provide collegiate access to African American students; I am one of those students who bear witness to their stories. This study reports the narrative of how they achieved the goal of maintaining administrative practices for a two and four-year college campus in an urban community for African American students that can offer results for all students of color.

Research Questions

Given the purpose of this study, which focuses on two African American women in college administration, leadership, and building on to that structure, the questions were designed for them to scan their administrative lives in what seemed like a brief moment, but will last a life-time. The questions were:

1. **What was your vision for The Evergreen State College-Tacoma?**

   I sought to describe through the power of their respective voices and lived experiences their historical framework, which led to the design of TESC-T campus and, more importantly, to understand the administrative hurdles
they climbed to create a facility that catered to African American achievement at a predominantly white institution.

2. **What was the theoretical framework that guided your leadership?**

Each of these women administrators were raised in different parts of the country in different eras, and they both valued different theoretical paradigms. I wanted to understand and describe the principles and/or theories to which they ascribed and how they applied them to demonstrate collaborative voices and themes.

3. **What were some of the defining strategies used to help you understand, tolerate, and/or overcome issues of race, class, and sexism as African American college administrators?**

I was interested in understanding their truth of institutional racism and what remedies through social action helped them stay effective and competitive.

4. **What do you think your legacy should be?**

I wanted to understand and describe the meaning of their existence at this institution. Moreover, what did they plan to leave as a testament of their intent and struggle? They spent more than three decades building this institution using the guiding principles developed as a demonstration of African American achievement in college leadership and as a guide for current and future African American leaders who want to build a college and/or university in their own community.
Summary of Study

Despite the margin, African American women in college administration have worked diligently to combat, not tolerate, racist images and dispel myths that have played an integral role in the hindrance of their success since establishing careers at predominantly white institutions (Collins, 2002; hooks, 1989; Moses, 1989). However, while minorities continue to grow in numbers, they remain underrepresented in higher education administration. If students of color are not graduating in proportion to enrollment, the pipeline for administrators or college educated people of color becomes devoid. People can realize their potential if they dispel their illusions and join collectively to change society (Collins, 1990b). People are also constrained by material conditions, cultural context, and historical conditions in which they find themselves. The diversity among Black women’s experiences in encountering this reality produced varied expressions of social action (Parker, 2003). Parker (2005) notes, “Intellectually any woman and any black person must prove that she or he is not dumb, and this applies doubly to black women who are assumed not to be producing important work” (p. 10). Collins (1990a) asserts that “African American women intellectuals have found themselves in outsider-within positions in many academic endeavors. According to Harding (1987), the “outsider-within” perspective holds: “Outsiders within the dominant culture are assumed to be able to provide a more complex, less distorting social perspective than is possible from the point of view of the insider or more privileged group members” [whites] and “as long as Black women’s subordination within intersecting oppression persists, response to that oppression will remain needed” (p. 15).
The majority of research on African American women in predominantly white colleges is directed toward improving retention of students and faculty, with less emphasis on African American women in senior levels of administration (Bush, 1999; Dixon, 2005; Harris, 1993; Herrings-Evans 2003). Even more studies captured the status of faculty members and students in two- and four-year traditionally white and historically Black colleges and universities using qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (Ates, 2003; Sanders, 2004; Townsend-Johnson, 2006).

Academicians’ (Carby, 1987; Collins, 2002; Evans-Herring, 2003; hooks, 1989; Lubiano, 1992; Parker, 2005; Townsend-Johnson, 2006) agreed that the onus was on African American women leaders to create knowledge and maintain college environments and community partnerships that encourage the development of multi-faceted learning forums for all students, but particularly for students of color.

How Mimms and Hardiman aligned to create a model that enabled students to succeed was perceived as invaluable for the growing population of students of color on college campuses during the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s. These African American women administratively created and maintained a college culture that catered to provide different learning forums for students of color deemed necessary to ensure the acquisition of a myriad of tools and training essential to the development of the community. This study assisted me in understanding and developing awareness of my role in administration and insight according to the factors that determined academic success and failure for African American women in college administration and academia, which has significant implications for institutional practices and policies. The implications of this study will unfold how to build on to the existing structure
that was designed to fortify African American students to a model that includes all cultures impacting a community. This work is also to build onto for future researchers, practitioners, colleges, and communities to address the achievement and attainment gaps for students of color by examining a successful college campus designed, conducted, and maintained by not only African American women, but to serve all people in their community.
Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature and Research

The literature review informs the reader that, despite the wealth of data which may be explained by other researchers at other institutions, each institution must ascertain for itself the particular attributes of its own situation (Creswell, 2002). The intent is not to provide a conclusive analysis, but rather a conceptual historical framework and national data informing what has shaped the current position of African American women’s experiences today.

Several databases were used to gather information for this section of the dissertation. I searched the online database using ERIC (EBSCOhost), ERIC (Firstsearch), Google, Dissertation Abstracts, ProQuest, Academic Search Premier, Info Trac, Black Issues, Journals of Blacks in Higher Education, Expanded Academic, Literary Index, Social Science Research Network, Ethnic News, Contemporary Literacy Criticism, Library Summit, and World Cat. A combination of key words, such as African American women in college administration and leadership; Black women in higher education; African American/Black women in the academy; women of color in college administration; models designed by African American/Black women in predominantly white colleges and universities; students of color access, retention, and graduation rates. This search led me to understand the humble beginnings of African American women in college administration in a historical framework and the time it took for them to attain degrees in comparison to African American men. I focused on articles, books, publications, dissertations, and related material specifically related to African American women in college
administration. Therefore, my primary focus was on scholars in education investigating African American women in college administration.

*Organization of the Literature*

The starting point for African American women is far behind Black men and White women, thus marginalized from the vantage point of educational opportunities. What does exist is research that often situates the disparity and mal-distribution of education for African American women even when compared to African American men. The literature in this study focuses on four major areas that were relevant to understanding the condition of African American women in college administration:

1. A historical overview of African American education and practices;
2. African American women in college administration;
3. The history of documented African American graduates from white institutions;
4. Access, retention, and graduation rates of students of color.

The literature review begins with an historical overview in order to situate the reader in the context of this study. The introduction of each section includes an explanation and rationale for how that section contributes to the study. A definition of terms related to the study are identified below and well defined in the literature. They are included to provide clarification of the use of terminology in this study.

*Definition of Terms*

African American, Black, and Negro: These synonymous terms are used in this study and will be used interchangeably to identify citizens or residents in North America born of African descent with history that included servitude. “Black is tied to slavery,
terror, and discrimination as it is also tied to a culture and past that are generative, free, and prosperous” (Madison, 2005, p. 542). Descriptors of this cultural group continued to evolve, taking on new meaning according to social and political impact in North America and among this group of people. Given to African slaves, the term “Negro” takes its meaning literally from the Spanish language identifying the color of “Black.” The term remained prominent until the 1950s when civil rights protestors and leaders promoted “Black pride” and “Black consciousness.” “Black” was later replaced with the ameliorative term “African American” that has since evolved to be the most widely accepted.

**Black Feminist/ Womanist Perspective:** These terms are used in this study to describe African American women’s experiences as described by Black women. It assumes that Black women possess a unique standpoint gained from their experiences, that there are certain commonalities shared by Black women as a group, and that the diversity of class, age, and sexual orientation shaping Black women’s individual lives has resulted in different expressions of those common themes. Thus, the role of the perspective is to produce facts and theories about Black women’s experiences that will clarify Black women’s standpoint for Black women (Collins 1998; Guy-Sheftall, 1986). The term “Black feminist” is also used to describe selected African American women who possess some version of a feminist consciousness (hooks, 1984; Smith, 1987; White, 1985). The term “womanist” talks back to feminism with a new demand and new perspectives. Womanist are concerned about the well-being of the entire Black community, male, female, adults, and children.
**Caucasian, European, and White:** These were considered synonymous terms used in this study to refer to an ethnic group of European descent. Specifically, this research used the term Caucasian as a term of consistency in relationship to “African American” as an ethnic grouping, as well as for purposes of identifying a racial and cultural background of that group of people who made their migration from European nations to the Americas in the early 15th and 16th centuries. The term “white” is used for consistency in demographic reporting and was what I utilized in those instances.

**Minority:** This term as used in this study refers in general to all other non-white ethnic groups. It is used synonymously with the phrase “people of color.”

**People of Color, Race, Ethnicity:** These were considered synonymous terms when used in this study with Hispanic or Latino origin as a separate category based on the U.S. census race categories. All of the race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified:

- **Hispanic**— A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

- **Asian/Pacific Islander**— A person having origins in any of the peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. This includes people from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, India, and Vietnam. Pacific Islander is a person having origins in the Pacific Islands, including Hawaii and Samoa.

- **American Indian/Alaska Native**— A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- **More than one race or/other**— A person having origins in more than one race or in a race not listed above (NCES, 2007).

**Historical Overview**

In order to better understand the factors that led to African American achievement, it is first useful to look back at their humble beginnings to unearth the development of access to the educational arena. The purpose of this section is to provide a review of the literature that captured the position in history that organizes the discourse of Black women and education and provides a formidable lens which supports the foundation of this study. The historical overview provides the foundation for my first and second question in this study because it shapes the time of positioning and conditioning.

In the early 19th century, American Southern states did not admit African American children to its free public schools. Slaves who tried to write their names were often beaten. Courageous educators, Black and white, held secret classes. Facilitating literacy among slaves threatened the institution of slavery. Whites discouraged all literary activities that might enable African Americans to organize. Although slaves were not emancipated until 1865, the situation was better in the North where the first African Free School opened in New York City in 1787. This school and six others in the city began receiving public funding in 1824. In 1831, a Commonwealth of Virginia law made it illegal for any African American, whether enslaved or free, to learn to read and/or participate in meetings for the purpose of educating African Americans (Walvin, 1983; Thomas, 1997). When people refused to obey the law, some were arrested, convicted, and imprisoned (Walvin, 1983; Thomas,
1997). In addition, in 1834, Connecticut passed a law prohibiting a free education for Negroes. The *National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education* reported that by 1848 it was against the law for free Blacks to send their children north to be educated, but many African Americans remained determined to teach themselves and others to read and write (Walvin, 1983).

Even when African Americans were allowed to read and write, the predominant laws of the nation prohibited them from being educated with white society because of legalized segregation. American segregation persisted, even when challenged in the courts, giving rise to the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy vs. Ferguson* that declared “separate but equal” was allowable in public facilities. Yet despite continued legislation and national opposition toward Negroes’ education, literacy flourished, particularly in the 1920-1930s when literacy rates dramatically improved for Negroes.

In the mid-20th century, African American lawyer Thurgood Marshall, who went on to become the first African American Supreme Court Justice, successfully defended that separate was not equal in the landmark decision *Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka Kansas* that overturned the court’s previous 1896 decision. The legacy of slavery and the institutionalized racism it spawned, even with the court’s mandate to desegregate “with all deliberate speed,” foiled different strategies to achieve full integration. In response to *Brown*, large numbers of whites removed their children from public schools and placed them in private schools, leaving the public schools for those with limited options.
In many situations, Negroes served as “headmasters” at segregated schools and continued to educate effectively with the support and assistance of benevolent whites (Walvin, 1983): “African American women were introduced to education by white families who were very dependent on opportunities provided for Black men and white women during this era” (Rusher, 1996). Woodson (1933) contends the educational system perpetrated the effects of internal cultural self-destruction. In his critically acclaimed *Mis-Education of The Negro*, he writes, the “educated Negroes had the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools, Negroes were taught to admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin, and the Teuton (of Germanic or Celtic origin, who lived in Jutland until 100 B.C.) and to despise the African” (p.1). The cause was deeply rooted in years of oppression and separatist behavior and from dissatisfaction with a society allegedly suffering from mal-distributed education, educational opportunities, and affluence (Franklin 1989; hooks, 1989).

**Summary**

The strength and limitations of the research that was reviewed described a resilient people who have overcome a constituency that allowed and enforced the psychosis of the institution of slavery. This is where the story begins and relevant to this study because historically the literature places African American people at the bottom of society’s educational ladder with regard to access (Black women are farther behind). Some African Americans claim when they initially received educational opportunities in white institutions it promoted an allegiance to white America, which inevitably turned Blacks against each other therefore thwarting any cultural unity.
This is important because when Black women strike out to achieve despite the repercussions they may encounter in predominantly white institutions, it places their achievements at the center of the analysis to build upon dismantling racist images, as well as reinforcing individual strength, which can come from inside their own thoughts to create self-definition. The first research question in this study asks the participants to describe their historical beginnings at the college to understand why building the college was important to the community and why it was important to them to begin in Tacoma. The second asks what theoretical framework led to that leadership, yet in order to understand this context; one must understand their own past to reflect on what is important for the future.

_African American Women in College Administration_

This section of the literature review is to understand the conditioning of African American women’s experiences in college administration at predominantly white institutions. The purpose of this section was developed to situate their academic lives and provide a lens within an institution designed for the benefit of white males and females (Moses, 1989; Rushe, 1996). This section provides a structural backdrop to help understand the third question of this study which sets the tone for the final question of legacy. Blacks in higher education, according to Addie Butler (1977) in the book _Distinctive Black Colleges_, were originally installed to support white administrators who exhibited patriarchal leadership: “The missionary zeal and condescending idealism inherent in racial uplift fueled this approach when Negros moved into offices in their institutions; they carried on the paternalistic tradition of administration proffered by their predecessors” (p. 117). Butler noted some of the
first presidents appointed to Negro colleges were white, appointed by whites, or represented the choice of the white community. After 100-150 years of the existence of white and historically Black colleges and universities, fewer than ten percent have African American female chief academic officers or presidents (Butler, 1977; NCAHE, 2005).

History of Documented African American Graduates from White Colleges

Despite these early successes of outstanding teachers and scholars, the progress of Black women in higher ranks and university faculty has been painfully slow (Etter-Lewis, 1997). This section helps to visualize a timeline and situate the framework of African-American women who attended, graduated, and now work within predominantly white institutions in the United States. Oberlin College admitted its first female student in 1837, more than 200 years after Harvard founded the first college for men in 1636 (Fletcher, 1943; Rusher, 1996). African American women have been longtime participants in higher education on all levels, from the first Black woman to graduate from an American college to the first Black woman to earn a Ph.D.

Mary Jane Patterson was the first Black woman to receive a Bachelor’s degree in the United States in 1862 from Oberlin College, 25 years after the college opened its doors and 39 years after Alexander Lucius Twilight, a Black man, received the first bachelor’s degree from Middlebury College in Vermont in 1823 (Fletcher, 1943). African American men have, in some cases, a 30 or more year advantage in attending predominantly white colleges than African American women. In 1876, Edward Bouchet received the first Ph.D. from Yale University, and W.E.B Dubois
was the first Black man to graduate from Harvard University in 1895 (Dubois, 1903; Yale, 2002). In 1921, 44 years after the first African American man graduated, three Ph.D.s were awarded to the first Black women:

- Eva Beatrice Dykes – Radcliffe University
- Georgiana Simpson – University of Chicago
- Sadie Tanner Mossell – Alexander University of Pennsylvania (University of Pennsylvania, 2007)

Yale (2002) reported in 1926 that Otelia Cromwell was the first Black woman to receive a Ph.D. in English. According to the Journal of Negro Education between 1926 and 1942, there were 333 Ph.D.s awarded to Black men and women (Lindsay, 1994). In 1981, Jewel Plumber Cobb became the first African American woman president of a west coast university. Until very recently, women were a minority of all Blacks holding academic posts at U.S. community colleges and universities. However, the fact that Black women now earn more than 60 percent of all doctorates awarded to Blacks is clearly having a positive effect on the percentages of Black women holding academic posts (Reynolds, 2002; Schiller, 2006). According to the National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education (2005), there are over three million people in the United States employed in degree-granting institutions. Seventy-two percent represent whites (non-Hispanic), while only 28 percent represent people of color. Of the people of color, Black women represent the largest population of employed people of color (62 percent) in this population. Yet “about 17 percent of executive, managerial, and administrative staff were minorities in 2003, compared to about 31 percent of non-professional staff” (p. 1). Data obtained from the U.S.
Department of Education in the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* indicated that in 2003 there were 17,228 African Americans holding full-time positions in higher education, and that Blacks made up 9.7 percent of full-time administration at colleges and universities nationwide (Shiller, 2006). Of 17,228 Black administrators employed, 10,264 (62 percent) were women. In 1993, Blacks represented 8.9 percent of full-time administrators in U.S. higher education, an increase of 0.8 percent in 10 years. If we narrow the scope to college and university presidents, in 2005, there were 211 Blacks employed in these positions. Of the 211, 67 or 31.8 percent were women. However, if we eliminate the 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, we find only five percent of Black presidents stationed at predominantly white institutions:

Of faculty represented in this sample, six percent were Black, five percent Asian, four percent Hispanic, and 0.5 percent Native American. About 17 percent of executive, managerial, and administrative staff was minorities in 2003, compared to about 31 percent of the non-professional staff. The proportion of minority staff at public 4-year colleges (22 percent) was similar to the proportion at private 4-year colleges (21 percent). (NCES, 2007, p. 9).

Throughout the nineteenth century and for much of the twentieth, persistent school segregation and racial custom precluded African Americans from having access, making greater inroads into teaching, and/or administrative posts at predominantly white colleges and universities (Etter-Lewis, 1997; Schiller, 2006). The issue of educational access for African Americans in the United States was decided more than 54 years ago, on May 17, 1954, when the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that the “separate but equal” doctrine adopted in *Plessy v. Ferguson* could not continue in public education.
Separate was not equal. Equal protection, as provided in the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, is inclusive of public education. Title VII of the 1964 U.S. Civil Rights Act outlawed employment discrimination based on race, gender, and other defined attributes (Rusher, 1996). In 1965, “Affirmative Action” was established by Executive Order 11246 “to oversee the hiring and promotion practices of federal contracts with specific regard to Blacks” (p. 2). Title IX, Equal Opportunity in Education of the Educational Amendment of 1972, was named after Patsy T. Mink, a Japanese Congresswoman in Hawaii’s second district, who wrote legislation as an outgrowth of the adversities she faced in obtaining a degree. The law states that no person in the United States be excluded from participation, be denied, or subject to discrimination under any federally funded educational program or activity on the basis of sex. Yet, today in higher education, we still struggle in applying the law and creating opportunities that optimize access and student retention to graduation (Duranczyk, Higbee, & Lundell, 2004). Policies put into place to correct the imbalance of administrative positions often encounter scrutiny or are at odds with the university’s unofficial political practices that serve the needs of the privileged few and maintain the social construct of faculty and administrators instead of serving the needs of students and society’s future (Gray, 1997; Moses, 1989; Valverde, 2003).

Moses (1989) attributed the negative reactions to unrecognized policies such as affirmative action to perceptions and stereotypes of African American women and men as being less qualified, and noted the cold climates directed toward African American women, who were treated with disrespect at both historically Black and white institutions. Moses’ (1989) seminal study examined the climate for Black
women in all areas of college life in an effort to “help institutions be more supportive and aware of the need of Black women students, faculty members, and administrators” (p. 1). The emphasis focused on all functions from admission to curriculum policies and research to social life. Moses provided more than 100 recommendations to all academic institutions that sought to understand how to provide more opportunities as a way of communicating from the voice of the Black community.

Mimms’ (1996) study focused on four African American female presidents and discussed demographic characteristics (age, family, history, education) to point out how little is known about the developing experience and personalities of African American women as presidents and administrators in higher education (Jones, 1992). The purpose of the fore-mentioned study was to examine personal attributes, organizational factors which enhance or impede advancement, and the legal institutional mandates and additional variables that contribute to the career success of African American women. This qualitative study examined how African American women have advanced and captured the perceptions and meanings they attach to their work histories. The result was that African American women’s advancement in higher education administration was dependent on the degree to which their personal attributes matched organizational characteristics and needs (p. 370). The literature shows that in spite of demographic changes, “African American women are not advancing to executive positions at the rate comparable to their population’s increase” (Mimms, 1996, p. 113).
Ates (2003) sought to clarify two aspects of college leadership, style and use of power, for one group of African American presidents. Sixty-one African American administrators were asked to participate in a questionnaire and 39 responded. Two self-reporting instruments were used: Leader Effectiveness Adaptability Description (LEAD) and Power Perception Profile. The study focused on the presidents’ own perception of power and it assumed that all participants would respond honestly to the instrument. Both instruments were based on ipsative measurement techniques, which refer to measurements based on the strength and weakness of an individual, and included both male and female participants (McLean & Chissom, 1986). The results assumed these leaders relied on expert and informational power to a greater extent, which suggested that the participants expected people to follow their leadership because it made sense, concluding, “successful leadership is the ability to influence the values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of others by working with and through them to accomplish the college’s mission and purpose” (p. 11). Further research using qualitative methods would be useful to understand the essence of why this particular leadership style appears to be more dominating than other leadership behaviors.

Black feminist academics argue that they still struggle to get recognition and the respect they deserve (Collins, 1998a; hooks, 1989, 2000; Parker, 2005; Schiller, 2006). The historical grounding of the African American women executives’ leadership approach is based on the idea that Black women’s experiences in systems of raced, gendered, and classed power relationships in American institutions provide a particular angle of vision from which to forge new understandings about leadership (Parker, 2005).
Parker’s (2005) field study examined the leadership of 15 African American women executives, their subordinates, co-workers, and their immediate supervisors. Parker’s interest in organizational leadership included “historical accounts of African American women’s experiences in work context and community organizing” (p. xix). Data was collected through life history interviews and three separate interview protocols were developed. Parker’s intent was to understand organizational leadership from the perspective of people who struggle against race, gender, and class oppression. Parker used a critical feminist perspective to note “by placing African American women at the center of analysis, this research challenged the hegemonic discourses that limit African American women’s access to the meaning-making process of leadership theory” (p. 92).

Meaning-centered approaches shift the focus from structural functionalist views towards a process of leadership through meaningful interaction, which can facilitate social change and emancipation (Collins, 1997). Parker notes, “Meaning centered approaches reveal leadership as a symbolic, interactive process through which meaning is created” (p. 23). Parker sought out to position African American women at the center of the analysis that takes both race and gender into account for “positioning of cultural experiences into the center of organizational leadership” (p. 98).

Parker (2005) found:

- Centering previously muted and marginalized voices illuminates underlying processes of domination, exclusion, and containment in leadership theory development and organizational practices (p. 89)
- Reclaiming cultural traditions provides an opportunity to reclaim traditions that have gone unacknowledged and devalued
Situating the leadership approaches of contemporary African American women into historical perspective confirms the organic character of leadership knowledge production and at the same time points to the challenges of continuing traditions of leadership in a social world that is increasingly revealed as fragmented and disconnected (p. 90).

Demonstrating the importance of placing marginalized groups at the center of the analysis to disrupt the silences that devalue their contribution to knowledge production (p. 91).

Hooks (1984) argued: “we are not condemned to the margins”—it should be a radical starting point where transformation begins. It begins with a sense of struggle, where there is a visible acknowledgement of the union of theory and practice and from the margins, “a transformation occurs that releases the oppressive systematic nature and resilience abounds” (p. 34).

Evans-Herrings (2003) examined the life experience of Mary Elizabeth Branch, who was one the first Black presidents of a historically Black college after Mary McLeod Bethune-Cookman (she was president of Bethune-Cookman College).

Evans-Herring’s historical research methodology used a critical feminist perspective that focused on how race interplays with gender and shapes one’s experiences. The purpose of her study was to use the theory of “intersectionality” as a theoretical framework through which to rethink society’s categorical approach to equality—racial and ethnic groups in one category and women in another in order to explore ways in which intersectional discrimination has historically, both marginalized and “reentered” the experience of Blacks (p. 13): “What better way to explore the ebb and flow of history but to look, specifically, at the life stories of notable individuals who fuel the American dream” (p. 1). Data was collected through oral history interviews, library data, and archival artifacts through primary and secondary sources (p. 17). The
findings of this study indicated how investigations of female leaders could shed light on the specific workings of race and gender, but scholarship about such interconnections is noticeably limited.

Mimms (1977) argued, “Black people have so much power, but they don’t understand it” (Interview, 2007). First, they need to understand some fundamental principles about their own existence (Abstract). In her dissertation, she developed five basic themes that permeated her research on the education of African American students:

- The need to understand the psychological impact of their own history that causes them to observe themselves and internalize the blame for which they were not historically responsible,
- The need to understand the people they are afraid of – something of their history and psyche,
- The need to develop group identification as they begin to internalize the blame so they can effectively use their own political clout,
- The need to recognize the limitations of a B.A. degree; that is, earning a B.A. degree without understanding the content of the curriculum is dangerous, and earning a B.A. is no guarantee of intellectual growth; and,
- The need to recognize that within their own community there are people who think like Plato, paint like Picasso, and meditate like Buddha” (Mimms, 1977, Abstract).

Through this case study came a curriculum, now a universal plan, built around a sequence of five pedagogical phases, which gradually introduced unfamiliar academic skill elements, environmental elements, and content elements to adult African Americans enrolled in an interdisciplinary undergraduate liberal arts program. When creating this program that now encompasses a college campus, Mimms was convinced that a deliberate repackaging of the pedagogy of the liberal
arts curriculum was necessary to meet the specific needs of African American adults. The effort of the innovative pedagogy became the prime element in the program’s success.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to understand how two African American women have excelled in college administration and leadership at a predominately white institution in the Pacific Northwest as a demonstration of success, power, and leadership. The summary of this section of the literature review captures, not only what I learned from the literature, but how it applies to the studies research questions. The literature affirmed the existence of African American women in high-level administrative positions, but not always in an encouraging light. Scholars noted that African American women experienced problems in obtaining promotions and tenure at predominantly white institutions, and furthermore that attrition was high for this population (Bennis, 1989; Berkner, He, Mason, & Wheless, 2007; Bower, 1996; Townsend-Johnson, 2006). Researchers claimed that African American leaders had been disproportionately given administrative responsibilities but no equivalent power to influence policy decisions in their organizations (Ates, 2003). Ates (2003) argued that “they do not have the power” (p. 7), which Bennis and Nanus (1985) indicated is “the basic energy to initiate and sustain action translating intention into reality, the quality without which leaders cannot lead” (p. 15). Concomitantly, Black academicians argued that they continued to struggle to achieve the recognition and respect they deserved (Schiller, 2006). Yet hooks (1984) cautioned us to understand that “Black intellectuals must proceed with the understanding that we are not
condemned to the margins. The way we work and what we do can determine whether or not what we produce will be meaningful to a wider audience, one that includes all classes of Black people” (p. 5).

Historically, the documented journey for African American women in higher education at predominantly white institutions begins long after Black men were attending. The literature reviewed reinforced that the state of affairs for African American women in college administration can be fraught with challenges. Relevant research reviewed for this study was either subject to alternative interpretations or published in a way that makes it difficult to evaluate its validity. Articles published were short or not complimentary of successful models designed by African American women in urban communities. The articles allowed into publication cast a cloud of resistance, struggle, and marginalization for people of color in Western culture, reinforcing the endless fight for justice and equality. The literature is growing but does not highlight positive work that is consistently done in urban communities by people of color. At the same time, colleges cannot wait for definitive evidence before acting; they should move forward with the understanding that questions remain about the effectiveness of retaining and graduating students of color and how to improve in the context of a constantly changing environment.

Access, Retention, and Graduation Rates

This section of the literature focuses on national data on enrollment and achievement for students of color and the lack of movement for African American women within college administration. The purpose is to again understand the unique disproportionate standpoint behind the advantage or disadvantage of degree
attainment. The rationale for this section is to understand that degree attainment is demanded for administrative position and without trained students in the pipeline, obtaining administrative positions within a college setting is virtually impossible.

Nationally and historically, students of color enroll in college at higher rates, but they consistently lag far behind whites in obtaining degrees (American Council on Education, 2004; Berkner, He, Mason & Wheeless, 2007; Tinto, 2002). Providing access, unfortunately, does not always lead to success. Almost half of all community college students sought to attain a Bachelor’s degree, yet only an estimated one-quarter of those students managed to achieve transfer to bachelor’s degree level programs. Retention and graduation rates for students of color have long been a challenging issue in colleges and universities across the country. Though student of color enrollments have risen, equality, retention, and graduation rates significantly lag behind those for white students (Berkner, He, Mason, & Wheeless, 2007; Harvey, 2003). “Evidence suggests that Black students who attend predominantly white colleges and universities experience significantly greater levels of social isolation, alienation, personal dissatisfaction, and overt racism than their counterparts at historically Black institutions” (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 462).

A U.S. Department of Education National Center for Educational Statistics: The Condition of Education report (2004) indicates that between 1976 and 2000, the proportion of American college students from minority groups nearly doubled, increasing from 15 to 28 percent. A study from the Community College Research Center (2004) reveals, for example:
- Only half of African Americans and Latino ninth-graders graduate from high school within four years compared to 79 percent of Asian-Americans, and 72 percent of whites.

- 60 percent of students at public institution fail to graduate within five years, and 50 percent of these students leave during their freshmen year.

- By their late 20s, more than one-third of whites have at least a bachelor’s degree, but only 18 percent of African Americans and 10 percent of Hispanics have attained a degree.

- More than 65 percent of white high school graduates in 2000 continued on to college compared with 56 percent of African Americans and 49 percent of Hispanics. (Pathways to College Network, 2004)

A recent report conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES): *Undergraduate Education: Past and Projected Undergraduate Enrollments* (2002-2013) indicated that:

Of those students who were enrolled in 2003 at a public two-year institution with the intention of completing a bachelor’s degree, only 18 percent had attained a certificate or associates degree by 2006 and 70 percent were still enrolled. Among the beginning (2003) high school students, 83 percent had not attained a degree and were still enrolled, 4 percent had attained a degree or certificate in June 2006. (Berkner, et al. 2007, p. 3).

Another study conducted by the NCES found that of all students who enrolled in community colleges in 1995-1996, only 35 percent attained a certificate or degree within six years. This (2005) report, *Achieving the Dream*, is part of a broad initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education. The initiative was designed to increase retention, completion, and success for low-income students, students of color, first-generation college students, and other underserved groups at colleges.

The report begins with a discussion of enrollment and completion data for community colleges, which provide important access to postsecondary education for
a widely varied range of students. It works with 27 community colleges in five states. The data showed that low-income, minority, and other underserved students are “overrepresented at those colleges, and they completed degrees and certificates at relatively low rates” (p. 58). Each observation represented an institution; however, the outcome variable is the result of the behavior of a cohort of students at the institution. The dependent variable was the percentage of a cohort of first-time, full-time students who completed a certificate or degree program in three years. By definition, the framework implies a regression format. Using grouped information has clear limitations: the method explains institutional characteristics associated with completion rates, while the behavior of each individual in each cohort is not explicitly taken into account. The method assumes that each cohort member is affected by the same characteristics in a similar way.

The core strategy of the Achieving the Dream initiative is the use of data and analysis to identify and remove barriers for increasing student success. There is a widespread college movement in the United States that claims colleges must be more data-driven and “shift from a culture of anecdote to a culture of evidence” (p. 61). While many programs are identified as “best practices,” this report has argued that a rigorous look at the underlying research yielded less than definitive conclusions: “A search for lessons for community college practitioners is thwarted by an overwhelming emphasis on four-year colleges and serious methodological difficulties in conducting studies that would provide useful information” (p. 59). Practitioners should be aware that many questions remain about the design and effectiveness of common innovations and programs (Bailey, Jenkins & Leinback, 2005).
Tinto (1987), noted historically for his work on student retention, explained how internal and external forces affect student retention, especially in commuter and urban open-enrollment institutions. For most institutions, those forces are central to the question of development of institution-specific policies for student retention:

Student departure is more a function of what goes on within the institution following entry than of what may have occurred beforehand. Its occurrence and patterning on campus is more a reflection of the attributes of a given body of students within a particular educational and social setting made up of varying social and intellectual communities than it is of any broadly defined societal force which shapes the activities of the institution. (p. 228)

Tinto turned his attention to learning communities and collaborative learning in 1990 when he became one of the principal researchers for a federally funded program at Pennsylvania State University. With two of his graduate students, Goodsell-Love and Russo, he conducted a comparative analysis and identified two experiences that supported student success – supportive peer groups, and shared learning-study that result in involvement, learning, and persistence (Meiklejohn, 1932; Tinto, Goodsell-Love & Russo, 1993; Schutz, 1967). Tinto (1998) noted that the combination of faculty and students, student affairs, and a trained counselor combined to enhance student retention: “The very structure of the program promotes collaboration between academic and student affairs sides of the house” (p. 7). Tinto’s research clearly demonstrated learning community effectiveness with extensive quantitative and qualitative detail, confirming that students in learning communities persist in school and learn more. It also affirmed the positive contribution of group collaboration and peer evaluation where each person will not only learn from each but given the opportunity to teach each other which is termed each one, teach one.
In summary, providing access, unfortunately, does not always lead to success. Almost half of all undergraduates sought to attain a bachelor’s degree, yet only an estimated one-quarter of those students managed to achieve transfer to bachelor’s degree level programs. Efforts to develop the next generation of college leaders are showing promise, but there is still concern that not enough minorities have the education, experience, and training for these positions. Understanding essential factors that determine success and failure for African American women in college administration was paramount to this study and has significant implications for administrators to inform institutional practices and policies for colleges and universities.

Summary of the Literature Review

Despite modest gains in recent years for students of color, the gap among college participation rates for white, African American, and Hispanic students has widened and students of color continue to be severely under-represented in the nation’s college and university campuses. The purpose of these studies was to provide information to guide decision making in a particular context, strengthen programs, and stimulate improvement using qualitative and quantitative methods, with both externally and internally developed protocols. Most of the studies found that assessment reports often did not represent much information about the input – the student. Fewer reports discussed whether African American women were the intended audience in terms of academic preparation or ethnic identity, or whether they were students who were likely to be successful if they intentionally chose to go into administration. These studies also found that although most reports provided
some information about the intentions and perceptions, fewer described models with particular curriculum, pedagogy, or classroom assessment strategies established to meet the goals. Fewer described program investments of faculty and staff development, capital expenditures, or other types of program support. Nearly all of the reports indicated that more work was needed and well-received. Yet at this point, research has not identified which practices make a significant difference in demonstrated learning. I have been critical of the quantity and quality of research on the effects of institutional practices on college graduation and completion rates. The literature provided a foundational underpinning for the research questions formulated by this study to address:

Research Question 1: What was your vision for The Evergreen State College-Tacoma?

The historical framework for developing the college and the obstacles that helped or prevented their success is consistent with the literature in its attempt to show the disparity between Black women’s experiences with both race and gender oppression result in needs and problems distinct from white women and Black men; Black women must struggle for equality both as women and as African Americans (Guy-Sheftall, 1986). Individual experiences, knowledge, and communication behaviors are largely shaped by the social groups to which one belongs.

Research Question 2: What was the theoretical framework that guided your leadership?

The women in this study value different theoretical paradigms and applied them differently to obtain the same results. They were both from different
generations, and from different parts of the country, yet understood collective action. Standpoint theory, developed by Harding (1993), claims “all knowledge attempts are socially situated and that some of these objective social locations are better than others for knowledge projects” (p. 56). Collins’ work (1990b) “grounds her articulation of Black women’s standpoint in material circumstances and political situation” (p. 244). This requires “an alternative epistemology whose criteria for substantiated knowledge and methodological adequacy will be compatible with the experiences of Black women” (O’Leary & Mitchell, 1990, p. 62). Feminist theorists explore connections between socially located standpoints and postmodernism (Collins, 1990a, 1998; Haraway, 1997; Harding, 1993, 1997; Hartsock, 1987; Smith, 1987). They argue that women as a group occupy a distinct position and potential standpoint in culture, because: “under the sexual division of labor ensconced in patriarchy, women have been systematically exploited, oppressed, excluded, devalued, and dominated” (O’Brien Hallstein, 2000, p. 5).

Research Question 3: What were some of the defining strategies used to help you understand, tolerate, and/or overcome issues of race, class, and sexism as African American college administrators?

Racism exists in America and truth and wisdom about its institutionalism and strategies used to overcome marginalization is necessary to understand for self-preservation within the institution. Exposing the truth about racism seeks to change the world while the researcher and reality interact and shape one another: “Reality is individually constructed and shaped by social, cultural, and economic forces to
critique and transform social relations and to uncover myths, reveal hidden truths and help people change the world for themselves” (Neuman, 2003, p. 81).

Research Question 4: What do you think your legacy should be?

The literature holds fast in its presentation of the paucity of studies that exist which recognizes achievements of African American women within predominately white institutions. Legacy is more than a special privilege accorded to the first-born. It is a philosophy that is passed from one generation to the other with the intention of making the world better. For African American women who have achieved and now have the responsibility within the institution, legacy becomes paramount and the force that positions us to stand upon for passing the immaterial torch of success to future generations. This study provides a solid rationale for an ethnographic case study that will provide insight into the factors that have led to the success of The Evergreen State College-Tacoma campus in order to continue building institutions that will recognize and include a larger representation of students of color.
Chapter 3: Research Design

The purpose of this study was to understand how two African American women have excelled in college administrative leadership at a predominantly white institution in the Pacific Northwest as a demonstration of success, leadership, and power. The intent is to understand college administration through the voices and perspectives of two African American women who have administratively led The Evergreen State College-Tacoma for 30 years.

This chapter presents the philosophical approach and methodology used in this study. This section also includes an overview of use of case study with a rationale, the limitations of qualitative research, and my personal disclosure statement. The data collection includes: collection procedures, study participants, analysis of the study, strategies to ensure soundness, and protection of human subjects.

The first step was to draft a protocol for approval by the university Institutional Review Board (IRB). The protocol determined and outlined in the IRB guide, were carefully followed in this study. This included Mimms’s and Hardiman’s signed consent and their ability to decline participation at any point in the study. They were provided and signed a Statement of Informed Consent as outlined by the Oregon State University IRB handbook. I limited the study to two African American women in college administration rather than expand it to include faculty and students. This bounding of the study was consistent with a qualitative case study design as described by Creswell (2002), Stake (1995), and Yin, (1994). I also bounded the cases by time (1972-2002) and concentration was placed on (Mimms and Hardiman) as two
separate cases. A bounded system means that the case is separated in terms of time, space, or physical boundaries and is undertaken because the researcher wants to know more about that particular social interpretation: “Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied” (Stake, 1995, p. 443). Through the development and management of this campus location, Mimms, has shown, how her application of social action for herself and Black students was crucial, but an unrecognized requirement for the normal conduct of the college. Hardiman’s ability to learn from and transform to maintain the structure of Mimms’ legacy has sustained this college. Together Mimms and Hardiman’s intention was to create and sustain a learning institution with meaning for African American students. Through social action they were able to mobilize, not only the TESC-Tacoma campus, but the under-represented community they served. Social action is the philosophical underpinning and will set the tone for the use of case study. The literature on African American women in leadership in college administration is limited. The need to investigate and understand from the perspectives of African American women in college administration will be the impetus of this study.

Philosophical Approach

Interpretive social science beginnings can be traced back to Max Weber (1864-1920) and German philosopher, Wilhem Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey (1883) argued that there were two fundamentally different types of sciences: “abstract and an empathetic understanding of the everyday lived experience of people in specific historical settings” (Neuman, 2003, p. 75). The interpretive approach attempts to explain the course and effects of the action. Action that is directly associated with
meaning by and for the participants. Interpretive social science suggests that society is not an independent system created by the relationship of external factors to humans, but instead, social reality possesses: “an intrinsic meaning structure that is constituted and sustained through the routine interpretive activities of its individual members” (Carr & Kemmis, 1986 p. 84). Interpretive research studies meaningful action and social action, not just external or observable behavior. For example, Neuman (2003) argues that social action is an activity with a deeper purpose or meaning. He posits, “Social action is the action to which people attach a subjective meaning to the outcome; it is activity with a purpose or intent” (p. 76).

It was Mimms’ intent to build a campus for African American students in the community the lived and worked and Hardiman’s action of maintaining the institution to serve the community. This science is also related to hermeneutics, which literally means making the obscure plain, and/or in a theological framework, it is the study of the general principles of Biblical interpretation (Brice, 2005; Neuman, 2003). The list of interpretive sciences also includes constructionism, ethno-methodology, cognitive, idealist, phenomenological, subjectivist, and qualitative sociology. Guba and Lincoln (1989) contend that the choice of research method should fit the assumption and disposition of the phenomenon under examination.

Qualitative Case Study

A case study was used as a methodology to conduct this research because it will help me understand what can be learned about this case through the voices and perspectives of those who experienced it. The use of a case study through the interpretive philosophical “approach concentrates on experiential knowledge of the
case and close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contents” (Stake, 1995 p. 444). Case study researchers focus on an in-depth concentration and exploration of the case. Yin (1994) found four common compliments of case study:

1). “to bring knowledge to bear upon the phenomena;
2). to round up all relevant data;
3). to examine rival interpretation, and;
4). to ponder and probe the degree to which findings have implications elsewhere” (Stake, 1995 p. 460).

Stake (2000) identifies three important features of case study:

1). to identify the simplicity or complexity;
2).to examine the case as a bounded system to focus on one specific thing; and
3). to develop a certain order and coherence or meaning by creating what Lincoln and Guba’s (1989) termed patterned theory.

Pattern theory or meaning refers to what develops in the course of qualitative studies. Pattern theory refers to the inter-connectedness of concepts and relationships, uses of metaphors and analogies which consist of a system of ideas that make sense. “Pattern theory forms a mutually reinforcing and closed system by specifying a sequence of phases or by linking parts or themes to create a holistic picture (Newman, 1991).

In order to proceed, Guba and Lincoln (1989) posit that the researcher must be able to give a clear explanation of the problem or condition, a thorough description of the context or setting, and the process observed. Merriam (2002) ascertained that “qualitative case studies share with other forms of qualitative research the search for
meaning and understanding, the researcher as the primary instrument of data
collection and analysis, and inductive investigative strategy, and the end product
being richly descriptive” (pp. 178-179). The selections are done purposefully, has
working parts; it is purposive; it often has a self; and the case is a system. Underlying
assumptions caution us that our readers are not to come to understand some abstract
construct or generic phenomenon; it is not theory building, or that it represents other
cases. A case study is necessary and takes place because the researcher wants a better
understanding of the interpretative social science that is present in this case. Both
Mimms and Hardiman were concerned with their own cultural community within an
institution that was not designed to benefit them. The focus was on the mechanism
that sustained and guided their conduct.

*Rationale for Methodology*

A case study was important because both women administrated TESC-T with
a cultural perspective for three decades. Highlighting the lives of these individuals
through a case study will provide a perspective of accounts that are often
marginalized and discounted in this society. Their attempt to address a national crisis
for African American students as well as build a college in a distressed urban
community is a model for all colleges who are concerned with student of color
achievement. Their work is the foundational blueprint that recognized the need and
lack of access in the Black community, yet as colleges grow and/or build, the
infrastructure must consider and include all students of color and marginalized
communities as integral components.
**Limitations of Interpretive Approach**

There are always limitations in any research that focuses on a particular population of cultures and/or groups. Creswell (2002) suggests there are limitations for the method of data collection inherent in any qualitative research. These limitations have to do with story distortions and authenticity. These distortions deal with complexities and controversies that characterize the quality of qualitative research enterprise related to Black women (Olesen, 2005). “The limitations, distortions, and superficially of these accounts created growing unrest and demand for more detail… and as a result laid the foundation for long-term participation field work” (Thomas, 1993, p. 11). Stake (2005) and other scholars have identified “a major contradiction between scientific positivistic research, which requires objectivity, detachment; and gender-based interviewing, which requires openness, emotional engagement, and the development of a potentially long term relationship between the interviewer and the subject” (p. 643). The interplay of race, class, and gender also plays a crucial role in shaping women’s oppression: “It is difficult, if not impossible, to produce more than a partial story of women’s lives in oppressive context, postmodern feminist regard to truth as destructive or illusion” (Hawkesworth, 1989, p. 549). Black women’s experiences with both race and gender oppression result in needs and problems distinct from white women and Black men, and Black women must struggle for equality both as women and as African Americans (Guy-Sheftall, 1986). The term “Black womanist” and “Black feminist” are also used to describe selected African American women who possess some version of Black consciousness (hooks, 1984; Smith, 1987; White, 1985). Therefore,
as an African American woman conducting this study, it is important for the reader to understand my political and social position as a woman of color and the inter-play and inter-relatedness of cultural knowledge that will affect my own reality and interpretations.

**Personal Disclosure Statement**

My association with the participants’ lives spans over two decades. I first attended The Evergreen State College-Tacoma as an undergraduate student with both Mimms and Hardiman as instructors. I later worked under both participants as a work-study student, and later as a Student Coordinator. I worked with Mimms and Hardiman as a protégé and traveled to conferences across American understanding the *Association of Classical African Studies* (ASCAC). In 1994, I began working for Tacoma Community College and, as a part of my duties, I provided Student Service to TESC-Tacoma-campus that housed TCC’s Bridge Program. At the time of this study, I had coordinated the Bridge program in partnership at Evergreen–Tacoma location since 2001. My current position, housed within the TESC-Tacoma campus, allowed me to work directly with the administrators (until June, 2007) as colleagues and now lifelong friends.

To this point, against the odds, I, too, persevered and continue to work in the trenches of academia developing mechanisms to support students of color. Being an integral part of this research has helped me understand my responsibility to the culture of administration and the world as a practitioner in the field of postsecondary education. I hope this work will contribute to a national dialogue to understand and
change the internal and external views of self-marginalization that exists for African American women administrators, faculty, staff, and all students of color within predominantly white institutions today. It is hoped that this research will add to the paucity of literature about African American woman in college leadership and for all educators who value the success of students of color.

For my own survival in academia, it was important for me to look back and forth to find living African American women who have succeeded. There are many powerful Black women on the planet, but very few who would put their careers and lives on the line in order to move an underrepresented community to academic success. Through this study, I hope to tell the story of two black women who came to serve African American students in a distressed urban community and collectively built an institution of higher learning that continues to educate, create futures, and renew lives for all students. I wanted to understand success through the eyes of two African American college administrators who changed the thrust of educational pedagogy in Tacoma, Washington. Their accomplishments were not only important for my personal growth, but also for my philosophical growth. I stand on the shoulders of these women and the Black educators who came before them.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Consistent with case study, the data were gathered from field notes, college documents (which included college catalogs, enrollment information, accreditation reports and reviews, historical archives, program reviews, class schedules and curriculum design, personal portfolios, audio and visual documents), and correspondence and interviews with Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonette Joye
Hardiman. I followed Creswell’s (2002) procedures by reading through the data to develop an overall understanding of it; described the cases in detail to establish a context for it; and, developed themes about the cases followed by a reflective analysis. I studied historical college catalogs and syllabi I received while attending the college from 1991-1993. The interviews and compared group discussions were recorded and transcribed for the study’s dialogical data: “This form of data collection acknowledges that the participants’ are not fixed objects, but are socially constructed in the interview situation, negotiated through interaction with the researcher and the researcher’s interests” (Hyland, 2005 p. 185).

Data Analysis Procedures

The process for analyzing the data was multi-faceted and complex. Yin (1998) suggests that every investigation should have an analytical strategy for analysis. The general testing of analytical statements are an integral and important part of the analysis. After extensive observation of the institution, college documents, and interaction with the participants, I examined video and audio material related to the participants and their role in college administration. Procedures also included interviewing, coding, data management, and interpretation. Stake (1995) favors coding data and identifying issues more clearly at the analysis stage: “What details of life the researchers are not able to see for themselves is obtained by interviewing people who did see them or by finding documents recording them”(p. 453).

Regardless of the purpose and design, the analysis phase can be seen as having four related components to include: defining the analysis, organizing and classifying the data, making connections and sense of the data, and communicating the results. The
analysis and write up, according to Stake (1995) requires integrated and holistic comprehension of the case to determine the complexity of what is to be studied and what will be learned to enhance educational achievement for, not only African American women in the field of administration but all those who want to know and enhance the learning of all cultural communities.

Study Participants

Maxine Buie Mimms and Wintonette Joye Hardiman were the only two African American women to design, administrate, and sustain TESC-T for the last three decades (1972-2007). Artee Young, Ph.D., was given the directorship in July of 2007 but was not included because she had no administrative tenure at the time of this study. Collectively, Mimms and Hardiman sustained and occupied the only administrative positions in this college by design. They were asked to participate in this study because from their standpoint, they have effected a sustainable environment (learning community) that contains itself, affects the community in which it exists, and continues to exist today.

How does a state institution create, honor, maintain, and support an environment of under-represented students and a body of cultural knowledge (pedagogy) which includes best practices and culturally inclusive education for students of color at off-campus sites? My understanding of interpretative research and my interest in this case is part of my life’s work and can be understood in the context of empowerment and inquiry.
Three interviews were conducted; video- and audio-recorded with transcripts were written for each. I checked for accuracy of the study by using a procedure called triangulation among data sources and taking the study back to the participants for review (Creswell, 2002; LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993; Stake, 1995). Both participants were interviewed individually, and then the cases were compared in a reflective open-ended conversation: This step helped clarify details and incidents they experienced separately, as well as together. I conducted the oral interviews at the home of Hardiman for ease, comfort, and convenience. The interviews were video- and audio-taped, transcribed, and coded to capture related and emerging themes: The purpose of this stage was to ensure their answers as well as authenticate the experience as espoused by the participants in the study and reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation. I coded the data from each interview and created individual themes that were given equal value. I evaluated and analyzed data from the oral interviews, college documents, and field notes to define practices related to this college community. The typewritten transcripts were delivered back to the participants for accuracy, a process called member checking (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Once seeing their answers on tape and in written form, they both were fascinated at their candid abruptness and provided changes that were appropriate for public viewing.

The review was serendipitous because both women came back together on the same day and compared their answers with each others which became food for a deeper discussion, again reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation. I took the participants’ explanations from the interviews and coded them to create themes which
were again taken back to the participants for accuracy to use in this study. Mimms changed the harsh words she used and Hardiman made additions to include defining memories that haunted her. Yet, she felt these moments were necessary to document and include for growth as a college administrator.

*Protection of Human Subjects*

This study and research design was approved by the Oregon State University Institutional Research Board (IRB) July, 2007 and again on July, 2008. A protocol was drafted for approval by the university Institutional Review Board (IRB). The protocol determined and outlined in the IRB guide provided the perimeters for the participants to follow. They were provided and signed a Statement of Informed Consent as outlined by the OSU IRB handbook. This step insured their participation as well as their ability to decline participation at any point in the study. They were each given the interview questions prior to the study and dates for the oral interviews of July 17-July 19, 2007.
Chapter 4: Results

In this chapter the results of the data analysis is presented and examined. It begins with the data collected and the nature of the case to place the reader figuratively in the setting. A historical description of the college and participants were given in thick descriptions to describe the setting in relation to the participants’ academic lives and careers. I used their exact words as quotes to emphasize the emic, etic, and negotiated data. Emic data—supplied by the participants. After each question and answer I supplied the etic data—researcher’s interpretation and later developed themes from the data that the participants, and I later negotiated—participant and researcher agreed to use in study as a way of respecting the participants and data provided.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected from personal accounts, field notes, and professional portfolios, personal interviews with participants, historical data, news articles, books, and college documents (accreditation reports and campus reviews). The Evergreen State College-Tacoma campus location was chosen because of its unique position in the urban community of Tacoma, Washington, and it is the home of the only state college which was founded and administered by African American women. The participants were selected and recruited because they, at the time of this study, were the only two African American women who served at any length as college administrators at The Evergreen State College for the Tacoma campus. The data collection began with a reflection on the historical data which included college documents dating back to 1972 and personal accounts from the participants. The first
interview was one-on-one and the second included both participants. The interviews were video-and audio-taped. The interviews were transcribed and I utilized the emic data to identify essential themes expressed by the participants explained at the end of this chapter. I also attempted to interpret the text and to move the language to a more universal level of abstraction while at the same time remaining faithful to the participants’ experiences. The thematic analysis, any interpretation of the text, and any quotations used in the study were returned to the participants for review. Each participant was given the opportunity to delete any text they were uncomfortable with appearing in the written report of the study. Mimms changed harsh words that she used because of the passion felt at the time of the questions. Hardiman changed large portions of the taped interview about her harsh treatment to focus on a more positive end. Each of them watched themselves on video to note their mannerisms. They laughed at their candidness and swore me to secrecy before the changes were made.

*The Nature of the Case*

This section will provide a detailed description of the nature of the case using a historical chronology of the college in its physical setting and the participants’ stories. Nationally and historically, students of color enroll in college at higher rates, but consistently lag far behind whites in obtaining degrees, and only an estimated one-quarter of those students managed to attain degrees in a bachelor’s degree level programs (American Council on Education, 2004; Berkner, He, Mason, Wheeless, 2007; Tinto, 2002). According to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, in 2005, TESC-T reported 83 percent of students who entered the cohort in fall quarter 2003 graduated in June 2005; 78 percent represented students of color.
TESC-T reported the highest retention and graduation rates for students of color in the state of Washington. TESC-T has been in existence for over 30 years, under the administration of African American women for the last three decades, yet there is very little literature, and not any published academic journals or reports to date about how they achieved success.

The story originated with an idea and a dissertation topic/study around the kitchen table of Maxine Mimms in 1970. In 1972, classes were held in Mimms’ home, with the assistance of colleague Betsy Diffendal (a TESC-Olympia faculty who was white and lived next door). Five years later, in 1975, enrollment grew to 10 students and classes moved to a community center. In 1980, enrollment soared to 80 students and the school relocated again to a local building approximately the size of one-quarter of a city block. Enrollment and retention continued to grow over the next few years (Table A 2). Students of color were retained while sustaining the program’s community involvement. Today, quarterly and annual full-time enrollment is at 200, and a new campus built in 2000 takes up a complete city block (Table A 5).

**Chronological History of The Evergreen State College-Tacoma Program**

According to college documents, The Evergreen State College was chartered in 1967 by the Washington State legislature and began college classes in 1971 in Olympia, Washington with a mandate to serve undergraduate students. Mimms served as a faculty for that institution. Several women in Tacoma’s Hilltop community, looking for a public institution that would allow them to finish a degree and still work, approached Mimms for guidance (TESC-T, 1998). Mimms took this community concern seriously and through a dissertation she developed and funded an
educational program in her home, around her kitchen table, in Tacoma’s central Hilltop neighborhood to serve place-bound working African American adult students. From 1972 to 1976, Mimms and Betsy Diffendal shared educational plans and held classes in each other’s homes.

Between 1975 and 1981, enrollment grew and the classes were held in the following locations:

- Tacoma Urban League 1975-1978
- The Puyallup Tribal Center 1978-1979
- Tacoma Community House 1979-1980
- The Colored Women’s Clubhouse 1980
- Tacoma OIC Building 1981

In 1982, when the *Council for Post-Secondary Education* approved Tacoma’s campus as an official off-campus site for juniors and seniors seeking to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree, the Tacoma campus moved to its 12th and K Street location, which was its permanent home for the next 18 years.

Hardiman accepted a teaching position in Olympia and moved to Washington in 1975. She began teaching for the Tacoma campus in 1979. In 1985, in partnership with The Evergreen State College, Tacoma Community College (TCC) instituted a lower-division, two-year Bridge Program that served students who wanted to enroll into the TESC-T upper-division program but did not have the requisite 90 credits needed to enter the program. The Bridge program became an ethnic feeder to Evergreen – Tacoma’s upper-division program. Both institutions continue to collaborate to serve as a four-year college for students of color.
As you walk up to The Evergreen State College-Tacoma campus doors (see Figure 1) you are immediately attracted to the colors and symbols on the campus Ndebele wall painting (see Figure 2). In the summer of 2001, Hardiman co-wrote and received a Paul Allen Foundation grant to make the building a teaching tool from the outside in.
Three Ndebele artists from South Africa lived in the Hilltop community for a month – teaching, sharing their influences, demonstrating their techniques, and showing students, staff, faculty, youth, and community members how they can most effectively communicate their own aspirations and values through symbol. The Ndebele Wallpainting Project is dedicated to inclusivity and to the diverse cultural groups that contributed symbols reflecting the values we all hold in common.

(TESC-T, 2002)

The Ndebele wall painting (see Figure 2) is symbolic because African women are the designers and teachers of the artistic forms that are such striking Ndebele cultural markers and are similar to the campus administrators, who were the architects’ for this model and delivered knowledge. In this culture and college, women have an outlet for the expression of their experience of the world, of their aspirations, and of their identity as individuals, and as members of a group. TESC-T building structure is an anthropomorphic design formatted on the blueprint of the Temple Library Universities in ancient Kemet (Egypt). Once inside, the 32,649-square-foot campus, a large picture of Mimms, books, and images adorn the walls along with signage: “Welcome to the Evergreen State College-Tacoma campus: Enter to Learn, Depart to Serve.” There is a sense of warmth and familiarity once a visitor is greeted by the front counter staff.

Hardiman states:

As you approach the commons area you walk into the womb of the campus and we have Lyceum as a ritual of the heart, while the faculty offices are aligned as arms wrapped around the heart represents the ever-presence of the nurturance of the environment.

(Interview, 2007)

You can almost hear a faint sound of an African drum beating in the mist as you approach the Sankofa bird located on the awning in the auditorium (see Figure 3).
The Sankofa bird is a Ghanian symbol that literally represents the “go back and fetch it” principle. The Evergreen State College-Tacoma adopted this bird as a symbol that you must acknowledge and understand your past in order to reclaim the future. The mission (see Figure 4) presents an inclusive, holistic, interdisciplinary approach to education with the intent of focusing on collaborative learning cross-culturally to affect one’s own life and sustain one’s own communities.

The mission of the Evergreen State College–Tacoma Campus is to prepare students through interdisciplinary, collaborative, team-taught community-based academic programs to serve their communities, the state, the nation and the world.

This mission is accomplished through instructional, inter-institutional, intergenerational and community partnerships that place value and emphasis on educating the student while meeting the needs of our host communities.

The campus’s academic process encourages a spirit of open inquiry, so that students emerge equipped with cutting edge knowledge, literacies and skills relevant to their chosen professions and to the changing demographics of today’s world (TESC-T, 1989).

The design of the program was strategic in its construction of faculty and alignment of staff (see Appendix Table A1). The presence of faculty of color is in direct correlation with student enrollment, which was also an important ingredient to
the success of students of color. More important is the high retention and graduation rates of students of color at this institution. According to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, over 85 percent of students who enrolled in this program have graduated (see Table A2).

TESC-T is recognized as a “Learning Communities” model according to the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education based on the pedagogical design of Evergreen’s Olympia campus. Each year the program’s objectives are to integrate aspects of community development to include Leadership, Transition, and Sustainability Studies into its theme. The academic year is divided into quarters, arranged in a sequence that enhances skill development along with learning in the thematic area. Three quarters’ curriculum is designed to facilitate projects that culminate at the end of each academic year into useful tools for the development and sustainability of the community. The first quarter focuses on content and theory by identifying themes, educational premises, and paradigms to develop questions to be explored. As a continuum, the second quarter is devoted to research for understanding and developing variables used to examine the questions. The emphasis of the third quarter is used to answer the research question by designing and producing for evaluation “small do-able acts” that can promote community wellness and sustainability (TESC-T, 2005). TESC-T has held on to the liberal arts curriculum design by offering collaborative interdisciplinary programs.
Study Participants:

The following is a brief history of Mimms and Hardiman:

Maxine Buie Mimms (see Figure 5), daughter of Benson and Isabella Buie and mother of Ted, Toni, and Kenneth, was born in Newport News, Virginia. She received her B.A. from Virginia Union University, her M.A. from Wayne State, and her Ph.D. from the Union Institute. Dr. Mimms founded The Evergreen State College-Tacoma (TESC-T), which began in her home in 1972. She is Faculty Emeritus at TESC and founder of The Maxine Buie Mimms Academy, which embraces and educates students who have been expelled from the K-12 education system in Tacoma. During the 1970s, she was Assistant to the Director of the Women’s Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor.

According to Essence magazine (Murphy-Milano, 1997), “Mimms is a feisty and outspoken academic whose unorthodox style has often ruffled feathers in the placid Pacific Northwest. Yet her provocative educational philosophy has also
produced results.” Mimms, unafraid, argues that access to higher education must be demystified “so you can teach,” and state governments must make college accessible to all its citizens. The Tacoma News Tribune reports, “Maxine Mimms, a respected educator who founded the Tacoma branch of The Evergreen State College, again spearheaded the creation of another program in Tacoma’s Hilltop neighborhood” The Maxine Buie Mimms Academy (August 12, 2007).

Mimms is concerned about the many youth suspended or expelled from Tacoma public schools, especially at a time when state graduation requirements are increasing and schools with low test scores face federal sanctions. Each year, hundreds of the district’s 17,000 middle and high school students receive short-term suspensions of up to 10 days. Scores of students receive longer suspensions. Yet, few programs exist in the South Sound to serve suspended or expelled youth. The students typically stay home or roam the streets, falling further behind in their studies – becoming more at risk of earning another suspension when they return to school. “We are a place where students come to get academics refined and see their brilliance exposed. Every one of these children is brilliant,” Mimms said.

When asked about how she accomplished the TESC-Tacoma campus legacy, she stated:

Legacy is about guerilla warfare when you are talking about Black leadership. Until somebody comes out ready to fight and ready to speak outside of the box and take the consequences of the whip; take the consequences of the whip publicly. They will say, I’m whipping you and you say But this ain’t nothing but a bunch of welts. I can keloid and I can go, Oh my goodness, you can go on about your business. Until you can find that person that follows in that sequence, forget Black leadership. We need guerrillas out there to deal with the racism and the politics of sexism to be successful. Unless you have
someone that can do the guerilla warfare for the community and use her ability to force the community to be recognized, then forget Black leadership. You will see when and where I enter… but unless you are doing guerilla warfare… it is the HOW I enter. Unless you can incubate on the how you will always be purchased. (Interview, 2007)

Figure 6. Wintonette Joye Hardiman

Wintonette Joye Hardiman (see Figure 6), mother of Salmh, born to “Flash” and Thelma Hardiman in Buffalo, New York, received her B.A. from State University of Buffalo, New York. She received her Ph.D. from the Union Institute, and is a founding member of Ancestral Arts Works, Inc. Dr. Hardiman was the Executive Director of TESC-T from 1989-2007. She is a charter member and an International Executive Board Member of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations. Hardiman is a Fulbright Scholar and alumna of the Harvard University Management Development Program. She conducted extensive field research in Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Ghana, Kenya, the Yucatan, and Trinidad on the African contribution to world civilization using literary and popular culture analysis as her
methodology. The results of Hardiman’s research on Ancient Egyptian literature and worldview has been published and referenced in both scholarly works and popular forums. She has spoken on *Ancient Wisdoms, Contemporary Solutions; The Trials and Triumphs of Spiritual Warriorship; The Multi-Faceted Role of Women of African Descent from Ancient to Contemporary Times*; and *You Can’t Kill the Culture, Dialogues in the African Creative Continuum* to a variety of national and international academic, community, civic, and fraternal audiences. She has also served as a consultant to the Tacoma Art Museum and the Seattle Art Museum.

Hardiman is artistic by nature and she adorns herself in African garb, her hair in *Sistalocks*. Once in earshot, you can feel her spirit, energy, and passion for life, which astounds and amazes you. In an article written in *The Observer* (May 26, 1994), Hardiman stated: “We all have the power to change our lives in a way that will change the world,” which speaks to her visionary understanding and perspective of excellence that has powered her leadership. Hardiman is a master storyteller and was the artistic director of three improvisational theaters for over 13 years before coming to the Northwest. Since coming to the Northwest she has worked with the P.W. Black Artist Network: Paul Robeson Community Theatre, and has been featured on PBS in a documentary called *A Soul Comes Home*, and produced an award winning video named *The Yard People*. Hardiman has been an active member in Washington State’s Higher Education institutional, curriculum, and pedagogical reform efforts. She was a core facilitator and faculty for the Washington Center for Improvement in Undergraduate Education’s Community College Minority Student Success Project, the Ford Foundation Cultural Pluralism Summer Institute, and the National Learning
Communities Dissemination Institute. She has worked both regionally and nationally with boards, districts, colleges, administrators, faculty, students, and staff in numerous areas of professional development. She has been a core facilitator, fellow, and resource faculty for the Washington State Community College Minority Student Success Project, the Washington Center/ Ford Foundation Cultural Pluralism Summer Institutes, and the PEW Foundation Learning Communities Dissemination Project.
Chapter Results

The purpose of this section is to examine the answers to the research questions posed in the study. As noted above, I recorded all of the specific words and phrases used by Mimms and Hardiman, and later created themes based on the answers in order to look for deeper meanings. The contents of the study are the material of the participants’ lives and their reflections about how they have experienced college administration. The data collected in both interviews were extensive and the videos the participants viewed were filled with emotion and energy. Yet the contents allowed in this document for the readers from the interviews are written after hours of field work and careful consideration with respect to the participants and the institution they directed. They both made poignant remarks to the following questions:

Individual Interviews

1. **What was your vision for this college in the Pacific Northwest?**

Mimms:

- My vision was more of an idea to implement something in the Pacific Northwest that would bring status and credibility to a group of people who needed to be applauded through self-discovery.

- Every bone in me would resist. My soul was crying and sad because I was not able to work with people whose skin color looked like mine. As a middle-class African American woman, southern bred, bringing my skills and my body to a European model that I was going to work and giving all of my energy to find I couldn’t do it.

- It was an action.

After overhearing Black women talk about the condition of education attainment and/or the lack of access to higher education in the local Black community
restaurant, Browne’s Bar and Grill, Maxine Mimms answered the call to serve those whose lives did not fit into the traditional college time frame or structure. Mimms began working with two students around her kitchen table, using her own resources. Mimms would begin teaching in Tacoma at 5:00 a.m., later going to work in Olympia until 5:00 p.m. daily. She met students wherever they were to accommodate their work schedules, and enrollment grew. Mimms found a need and fulfilled it in the urban community she served. For example, if a student needed help understanding policy issues which required extensive knowledge in this subject area, Mimms went to the student’s place of employment with every book about policy and would not leave until they were both satisfied the education was happening – what Mimms termed “a learning continuum.” Mimms states:

- I would let them, whatever was in their homes, magazines, books, even if they wanted to travel; I would turn all of it into a curriculum.

- The model must include people in the learning process. Until there is a vision, and unless they [students] have some ownership to their own style of learning, it becomes complicated for African American people.

- My focus was strictly on African Americans, and this did not set well with others, but was perfectly alright with me.

Mimms also wanted students to have faculty who represented the population they served, so she carefully hired and aligned faculty and staff of color to ensure success. When she could not find a faculty of color, she would use a Caucasian and call her/him a placeholder until a faculty of color could be found. Clearly, sacrifices were made to accommodate this level of delivering education to a population of people who were not being served by the colleges in their own community.
• I can go in the model and ask for white people to be placeholders until I grow my own but until somebody comes out ready to fight and ready to speak outside of the box and take the consequences of the whip.

Hardiman:

• When I met Maxine for the first time I was very attracted to her spirit and her energy. I wanted to be like her because I never had a Black teacher—she was a master teacher, an intellectual giant—and I wanted to be like her.

• I lived in Maxine’s house and was given opportunities to participate in many areas I would not have known. Maxine helped me come back to the other side because I was very white when I met her.

• I was her heir apparent.

• I came to Evergreen because one, I thought it would be a good learning experience; two, I’d been throwing the I Ching and getting the abyss, and when I asked if I should come to Evergreen the I Ching told me *it would behoove one to cross the great mountains*; and three, design a program for actors that would keep them from going crazy because everyone I know was crazy. What they needed was applause from the outside.

• Maxine said she wanted to train me to take the next step, so I went through training for the next 10 years and I became administrator in 1990.

• My training with Maxine was like a cauldron, I became like a Phoenix. For example, from the fire, from the ruins, you learn all of these things and emerge as a different person.

• I was at a point where I was dealing with to whom much is given, much is expected and I wanted to give back.

• I had four basic goals –
  1: To go from a building to a block;
  2: To build an infrastructure that was not dependent on personality;
To establish rituals, values, and circular structures that would promote excellence and maintain community focus;
4: Create a value-based environment that promotes scholarship, excellence, aesthetics, and community service.

I wanted to describe, through the power of their respective voices and lived experiences, the historical framework from Evergreen-Tacoma campus’s inception; more importantly, I wanted to understand the administrative hurdles they climbed to create a facility that catered to African American achievement in a predominantly white institution. Both women came to the college with two different goals. Mimms had a vision of design which included access, pedagogy, and curriculum, while Hardiman came to give back and maintain the principles and legacy. Of the administrative hurdles there were few because the program was funded exclusively by Mimms until 1984, when they received a budget line from the main campus and named an upper-division program. The power and leadership were completely controlled by Mimms until she designated Hardiman as director. Mimms had control of all operations of the college until the budget line was received in 1984 from The Evergreen State College main campus.

Mimms’ vision was to create a more just society de facto using her own resources for a number of years and making executive decisions with the power of principles she developed in order to educate an underrepresented population of Black learners. Mimms assessed each student’s needs (internally and externally) and developed a curriculum around their circumstances, job, and educational development. Mimms trained Hardiman in many ways in order to help her understand herself, her environment, and take back the community to deal with administration
through the art of guerrilla warfare. Mimms helped Hardiman through her Ph.D. process and fearlessly maintained the learning continuum and built on those principles to ensure scholarship, values, aesthetics, and rituals in this design that catered to African American achievement.

Hardiman admits she was assimilated when she arrived to Washington and was afraid of white people. One of the first interventions Mimms designed for Hardiman was exposure to her ancestral origins through Egyptian Literature. For the next ten years Hardiman went through intensive training sharing the home of Mimms for a period of time to complete her doctoral studies, and for the first time, Hardiman was exposed to and empowered by a fearless African American woman professional who faced adversity with a furious grace. This was attractive to Hardiman, and she grew hungry for more.

In 1984, when the program received a budget line, the formulation of a two-year, upper-division model was structured. They sought to make the institution a complete learning community campus when they invited the local community college in the vicinity to partner in a four-year college delivery to serve both colleges’ urban community. The college campus construction and design continued to develop and through the pedagogical principles of building the staff that included African American faculty as primary, and white faculty as placeholders was considered groundbreaking. To have the courage and propensity to use tools within students’ own environments to teach and work around, as well as using community involvement allows students to embrace their own culture and grow, always knowing they (students) had to give back and applaud.
The next question was as follows:

2. **What was the theoretical framework that guided your leadership?**

When Mimms arrived in Washington in 1953 with her husband Jacque, who worked at Boeing, she found Tacoma to be a very interesting transitional urban city and wanted to know more. Mimms wanted to know who lived here, how they were being educated, and what she could do, because it was her passion.

She often refers to her child-rearing and family as the greatest influence on her life. She speaks about her father, who had a tremendous influence on her entire life by dispelling myths. She talks about her father killing Santa Claus:

- My father never wanted us to be begging for toys at Christmas time. So my father shot and killed Santa Claus and my mother participated in it. He came into the house and said I got him. My father called my mother honey dear. And he said honey dear, I got him, and my mother and father cried because they’d killed Santa Claus. And I always thought children on that particular next day, which was Christmas, I always thought they had artificial Claus. A thing from an artificial white man who had brought them cheap and very inexpensive toys and we kept the secret. We were told to keep the secret. The man that those children were talking about on the rooftop was not the real Santa Claus—my daddy had actually killed him. I believed that, I believed that and I cried. We knew all the children all over the world were receiving cheap and artificial toys, but my daddy had killed the Real one, all the reindeer, Mrs. Claus, and everybody else that was involved.

**Mimms** reflects:

- My father and mother were just an extraordinary couple. [Her mother] was from North Carolina and he lived in a place called Hampton, NC. I learned about things like deeds and property. Everything I knew about the confidence of the public came from my father and everything I know about politics of the spirit came from my mother. The power of the spirit is to be honest and clear and have a sense of integrity...
As we were taping, Mimms stopped to reflect on what was important in the entire process of administration. She began to refocus and put things into perspective when she stated in a sidebar:

- I am 80 years old and I cannot allow every piece of information to impact or penetrate my spirit. You cannot hold onto every issue or think you can change the world. I do not allow negative swords to penetrate my spirit. Think about it today and move on.

- The world doesn’t need African American women to believe they must nurture and become nursemaids. This whole thing of the mammy, this whole thing of the breast; this whole thing of pulling out the third breast and nursing, this whole thing of nursing the whole world has to stop. I can nurture but I can also be brutally honest about myself and to myself. I love myself; therefore, I can and do love others.

- You cannot get hung up on small things because as soon as you move to the next place you will be replaced.

- I go from the urban community to the countryside because my life requires it and at the end of the day we need to let go because life is so important.

- Always know if you could impact one life a year and then another, your own, you will live forever.

- Leadership is about being able to follow. That’s how you continue to lead. Follow your spirit. If you can follow your spirit you can continue to lead.

- Your spirit speaks to you and takes care of you.

**Hardiman:**

- When I came here, I was white, but after accomplishing my goals, I see things in cycles, not beginnings, middles, and ends. I live my life in total MAATian philosophy.

- My leadership style comes from the ancestors, my home training, and my value system. It comes from watching my mother and father, who were very committed to the community. My father
taught about seeing the best in people, and knowing about environmental entries and exits.

- The greatest gift is being introduced to ancient Egyptian literature and scholarship.

- Maxine taught me that I didn’t have to be afraid of white people. She used to make me look at white people in their face because in the integrated north, I was taught to hide my brilliance, Emmitt Till, or we would be shot or lynched. So, part of it was being able to look at white people and not be afraid of them – not see them as powerful; in fact, not see them. So, I developed the skill of making them invisible. It was a lot easier to administrate. I would re-image the world. I am not going to exist in the western classic Judeo-Christian world because it is not hospitable to my soul.

Both of these women administrators came from different parts of the country – Mimms from the segregated south, and Hardiman from the integrated north – and each valued different theoretical paradigms. I sought to understand the influences and theories they prescribed to as foundational structures that guided their lives. Mimms was influenced very early in life by strong family ties and parents who always applauded her. She was allowed to speak up and speak back in family conversations, which her family had on a regular basis. Mimms likes to fantasize and she was an avid reader of the National Geographic magazine as a child. The strong influence of her family shaped and molded her position on policy. Hardiman’s transformation of cultural character morphed into a powerful symbolic representation of loyalty and resilience. Hardiman used proactive and reactive strategies to demonstrate resilience. Both women had a strong sense of themselves – Mimms’ reinforced by her spirit and Hardiman’s by her MAATian philosophy: The African American Path of Sankofa – that gave them the propensity to follow their own principles and conduct business in a manner that was accepted, and designed by them.
Hardiman’s recognition of MAATian philosophy: “embraces an ancient Kemetic deity who played a major role in the education, socialization, spiritualization, and governance for the people in the Nile Valley” (Gbonde, 1998, p. 15). MAAT represents the principle ethic and truth upon which Kemetic culture was built. MAAT is known to have magical powers and her nature is balance, the personification of truth, justice, and righteousness. MAAT and Sankofa are mutually supportive and beneficial. Sankofa, translated “go back and fetch it” is a recollection, remembrance, and rebuilding that takes place upon one’s return to her/his roots: “There is wisdom in learning from the past in order to build the future” (Gbonde, 1998, p. 154). MAAT represents principles of life, and Sankofa brings a balance to life that no other processes can give. MAAT finds its greatest expression among people who are willing to sacrifice for each other, commit to a common good, be responsible to each other, and hold each other accountable (Diop, 1983; DuBois, 1963; Hilliard, Williams, & Damali, 1987; Karenga, 1990). The foundation of healing the African soul is MAAT.

3. What were some of the defining strategies you used to help you understand, tolerate, and overcome issues of race, class, and sexism as an African American college administrator?

Mimms:

- I experienced racism. I was sued because my words were taken out of context and the college put me under investigation on several occasions.

Mimms often sidebars, reflecting back on staying centered on a healing nature. When she spoke of negative incidences, she often juxtaposed them with how to heal and
how to nurture self. For example, both found a group of white allies whom they trusted on whom they relied. **Mimms** states:

- I had a group of white women who covered my back when I wasn’t able to be present. That’s the key. How do you align yourself with those people that believe in what you are doing and build on those relationships, who they are still there today 30 and 40 years later. I still trust those same women. They would ask, “What about the Tacoma campus?” and I wasn’t even present because you can’t be in two places, so you must build relationships you can trust and share with your allies what you are doing in such a way that your allies could always be present in those places you cannot be present.

Hardiman reflected on how she also formed allies with white women to work with and around the administrative construct with Mimms. As she was being trained for administrative duties, the main campus was still a contention. Hardiman speaks about the strategy she employed to tolerate racist acts against her:

- Higher education and western organizational systems do a disservice to the next generation when they do not let them hear and know what the experiences of the past are.

- Make yourself powerful; don’t ask permission.

- Know when to hold them.

- In order to do something good you must step out of the box.

- Ism made you stay in the box (fear).

- The institution did not align; it was done by individual people.

- Form coalitions with people with like minds.

- Pick your battles.

**Hardiman** continues:

- I had a chance to operate from every single part of the college. I had a chance to look at everything.
I have been Maxined. Being Maxined meant nobody could get to you in terms of public embarrassment. Being humiliated by her helped me understand how to not die. When you both understand you are not going to die, you let time take care. So what. It was the best survival skills. There was nothing they could do to me that hadn’t been done.

I could do it because I had been given so many chances to do it before. I had responsibility but no accountability because that was Maxine’s responsibility. I was able to make mistakes and be free; when the universe said there was a readiness then the responsibility and accountability came.

I am interested in understanding their truth of institutional racism and what remedies through social action help them stay effective, competitive, and sustain.

Both Mimms and Hardiman spoke about harsh treatment from the internal and external forces within the college. Mimms considers white institutions racist because they were designed not to include but exclude, especially those that found serving the non-traditional population obscure or unnecessary. Hardiman knows that institutions do a disservice to students when they are not taught about their past. Hardiman noted being “Maxined,” which was her interpretation of being publicly humiliated by Mimms in front of audiences and unsuspecting colleagues. This is a defining point and example of the internal treatment of Hardiman, because being “Maxined” taught her how to handle public embarrassment with elegance and grace. This awakened a natural instinct within Hardiman to know and understand how to build resilience and to know how to survive in administration when no one could hurt you so much you could not recover.
Hardiman talks about being asked if her students knew how to read by a trustee of the college. She was also told that the money being used on her for professional development could be better used on a Xerox machine. Not only did she fight administration to attain the funds for training, she became the leader of her class at Harvard School of Management. Hardiman was also investigated (unfounded) concerning student community service projects in relation to course work and credit hours. Mimms recounted being sued and accused of being offensive. Mimms often sidebars, reflecting back on staying centered on a healing nature. When she spoke of negative incidences, she often juxtaposed them with how to heal and how to nurture self. Hardiman speaks about the strategies to tolerate racist acts against her within as well as outside her own culture. They both reflected on how they also formed allies with white women to work with and around the administrative construct. All of these experiences increased their awareness and opened doors where they both gained allies and life-long friends.

4. What is your legacy?

Mimms:

- One of the things, Kim, about the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Education is that you have to be very careful about allowing the definitions coloring the experience. I think in the previous discussion with us, you found that we were taught about legacy as children. It didn’t just come because we did something. Legacy was modeled; my mother presented legacy to me. I am the legacy of Benson and Isabella. I as middle-class African American woman who built an institution with the combination of the spirit, I think we’re classical ancient queens and I don’t think queens can do anything but leave a legacy, so I don’t want to get confined to a definition that constrains me. I just think I was born to leave a legacy. My mother left a legacy and I think when Black people produce children and children come out like
the two of us, and they give us their trust and say go in the world. Remember now, I’m from the segregated south – my parents said go into the world [clap, clap, clap] they applauded me. Oh good gosh, I say go into the world [clap, clap]. I applaud you and Joye. That’s the way I feel.

Hardiman:

- Not creating a legacy but continuing or maintaining a legacy. I grew up in a house where my grandparents’ pictures were on the wall, and I have a little book that traces our little family tree, I was always reminded of legacy. I was always told that I had to act right because I was a Hardiman. I didn’t know what a Hardiman was, but whatever it was I had to basically step up—you carried the name.

Mimms added:

- You always represented the race, you represented your family, and you represented your community.

Hardiman upheld:

- Wherever you went you went accepting the mantle. Taking it wasn’t a matter of choice. This is how you were raised, in terms of the perspective of the legacy. In terms of time, Maxine said she is from the segregated south and I’m from the integrated north, so that is an interesting combination about how things happen over a 37-year span, cause it was also about the migration.

Mimms:

- You are born that way! It was impossible it was humanly impossible for me not to select Joye to follow me. There would be no way I could dishonor my parents that way. I’m from the segregated south – they would have gotten up out of the graveyard. You find an intelligent middle class talented tenth to follow you… There’s no way, and people need to understand this. No way would I have ever found anybody else. The brain drain in the south during that period was heavy. But we went away, got those northern skills and those academic communities, and came back. That’s right, we came back – that’s what have been the real tears of American and its racist acts because they
didn’t think we were coming back into the community. Some people stayed, but most of us came back. Most of us built schools, on and on and on. So, it was impossible not to think that it would be Joye.

Hardiman stated:

- This is my intergenerational transfer of knowledge: my each one, teach one genre. One of the goals – and this was one of the hardest things for me to understand – was the notion of scholarship, by taking access and adding scholarship. I used to have this little litany in terms of 30 years. The first 15 years were about access and then I came in and added scholarship, excellence, and aesthetics. I have learned it’s not in the building, it’s in archives and it’s in a place that no matter what happens Queen Hatshepsut Temple is still standing in the village of the kings. It is in the generation; it is in the students; it is what we are supposed to do. We were claimed and anointed as subattees (teachers) masters, teachers within the West African tradition, so it is our sacred duty to make sure that things get passed on. You need to put it together, you see, what people don’t know is [Maxine] carried that program for 15 years out of her own pocketbook. It was Betsy Diffendal, in 1984, who said, let’s put in a budget line, but before that she carried that whole program. Which is another reason there is nothing for free and she understood that if you didn’t ask for nothing, which is particularly about the money, they don’t have any control over you. Once you move into their money then you’re into compliancy issue and internal audits. If you could just control and keep it undercover secret; do what you need to do and feed it yourself, don’t ask nobody for NOTHING until the baby is formed enough to sit and grow.

Mimms:

- You have to learn timing, and you have to learn incubation. You have to learn about money and control. I knew Joye had enough feeder experience, enough street politics to know the concept of the heart. It didn’t matter where, it didn’t matter how, it was going to get done and nobody was going to take it. Nobody. Because she was in the street. She was in the street with guerilla warfare. And I knew the person that needed to deal with the
urban condition and all of the politics of sexism, racism; we needed guerillas out there dealing with it, and it’s been successful. It’s about guerilla warfare, when you are talking about legacy and when you are talking about passing it on and when you are talking about Black leadership.

- Unless you have someone that can do guerrilla warfare and do it well and its ability of recognizance, you see it’s when and where I enter but you will do guerilla warfare to understand how I enter. And until we understand that as Black women that when and where I enter it may be good timing, somebody might give you a budget and say you enter here; somebody might do an audit and say this is where you enter, but girl, unless you can incubate on how I am entering, forget it. You’ll always be purchased.

- When and where I enter I can deal with it because I can go with the model and negotiation. I can go in with the model of scratching. I can go in the model and ask white people to be placeholders until I grow my own, but until somebody comes out ready to fight and ready to speak outside of the box and take the consequences of the whip. Take the consequences of the whip publicly and say: “I’m taking this whipping” and you say but this ain’t nothing but a bunch of welts I can keloid you bastard and I can go Oh my goodness you can go on about your business. Until you can find that person that follows in that sequence, forget Black leadership. What happened with us in terms of organizations, our churches, our Black collectives, until those men can understand, you can do when and where all you want to, but until you allow somebody else and back that somebody else in terms of guerilla warfare on how, the legacy will be cut off. You will lose the Urban League, you will lose the NAACP, you will lose everything of the concept. It is the nature of the guerrilla fight and the warfare that allows the leadership and the legacy to continue. And that becomes real, Kim, becomes real.

Hardiman:

- That’s brilliant –that’s brilliant; no, no, no, no, that’s brilliant.

Mimms:

- Until you can learn that in the Black community, until you can learn that there is no Freud, no Erikson, no name them all that can replace your daddy and mama and your grandmammy and your neighborhood. Until you can learn that there is not one
book, not one author, that has ever been written that can replace Flash, Thelma, Benson, and Isabella in terms of the how; because those were the people that applauded us and put us out there and gave us the spirit of the choices. And we need this guerrilla warfare to return to our communities. Because we are closing in, we got the white leaders out here pimping us, handing us a dollar here and a dollar here, purchasing, and we don’t allow the young ones and applaud them to do the guerrilla warfare. The guerilla theatre, you know who is doing guerilla theatre and taking back the community – white kids. And we are telling the Black child to be quiet. No, Joye was allowed to do it, therefore when she walks into Tacoma following me. Who is Joye? Well, she is a guerilla. She knows how to do guerrilla warfare and it’s frightening. She’s different than you, Maxine, well of course. I am the first generation and that’s the way it’s supposed to be. And you [Kim] are supposed to be more radical than she is. You can’t get this Ph.D., sit there and say, I have a Ph.D. from Oregon, who cares. What are you doing in terms of guerrilla stage number two? What are you building, what are you saying, what are you doing in the Bridge. Why are you still talking about the Bridge? Why aren’t you talking about a mountain, who the hell cares? Now it’s time for Kim to be talking about how I’m taking my children off the mountaintop not just a bridge. That’s the radical nature of who Kim is, and then Salmh [Hardiman’s daughter] look at Salmh, good gosh almighty. This is good stuff and the only building that we have that looks like any image of ownership is what she [Joye] put there on Sixth Avenue. That’s the only building, I want you to listen. This is Tacoma, Washington and the only building that we have that we can enter into and physically park our car and go to the bathroom is the building that Joye negotiated. That’s the only building, it doesn’t matter who’s taking over or whatever, it is the only building with handicapped parking and space for elderly people. Plenty of space, a toilet with toilet paper, a clean building – this is serious stuff. No rats running around, the only place, and she [Joye] said, I will make it beautiful and, I will allow you to come into this space and allow yourself for a few moments to sit on a couch and see the beauty. Joye did that. Joye did that, it wasn’t for me to do. Joye did that. Joye did that and that’s what I’m talking about.

- The fear that’s the danger in terms of Black leadership and women what is it we must pass is we must become fearless in terms of a how.

**Hardiman:**

- It goes back to that notion of obligation – we were obliged to show that it wasn’t true that Black woman could each one teach one, and support each other, and do it with love and not be lesbians. No, it was also another thing we were fighting at that time: homophobia and it was insidious. Maxine and I used to have long conversations about how Black women come together physically, spiritually, and intellectually, not gay. Don’t mistake your intellect for your sexuality.

- When you talked about invisibility, I said I didn’t see white people, and I said yes because I have been trained first by Maxine not to be afraid of white people. Then, based on my own scholarship, to conceptualize white people. But, another thing that I really learned from the combination of all them is how to be in it and not of it. This is the key if we are talking about the succession, if we are talking about the next generation.

**Mimms:**

- Everybody can build an institution – you just have to be bold enough to stand out there in your heart.

- Doing your Ph.D. can build the Kim college.

- Say yes to yourself.

- See beauty in all that is around you and if the law of attraction works, then you will attract what is beautiful.
**Hardiman:**

- Inclusivity, hospitality.
- Enter to Learn, Depart to Serve as a legacy.
- Each one, teach one.
- Three generations of graduates in style and elegance.
- Destruction of myths.
- Self determination – don’t let other people define your success.
- Staying positive.
- Honor the ancestors.

I sought to understand and describe the meaning of their existence at this institution. Moreover, what they plan to leave as a testament of their intent and struggle. They have spent more than three decades building this institution, guiding the principles of their success as a demonstration of African American achievement in college leadership and as a guide for current and future African American leaders who want to build a college in their own community.

The question of legacy of each was matter-of-fact. They both knew early on they were destined to do this work for African American people. Mimms through her dissertation, which turned into a model for colleges that worked to accommodate African Americans, prepared Hardiman to maintain, sustain, and carry on the legacy for African Americans. Hardiman, trained for many years under Mimms’ structure to maintain the integrity, yet each woman had different goals – Mimms encouraged access, design, pedagogy, and curriculum, while the impetus for Hardiman was to
maintain the principles and build on them to make a better, stronger, and more competent community of learners. Both had strong family bonds and parents who were college educated, which increased the expectations of their success.

Mimms, from the segregated South, and Hardiman, from the integrated North, acquired polarity and sought to claim a community and educate a population of underrepresented students with success. Mimms’ courage yielded life and balance to a community where education was not being provided. They both had experiences of marginalization and “isms,” which the literature reinforces. Yet Mimms used the language and art of guerrilla warfare to understand, train, and align the community to take progressive steps to evolve socially and politically. Mimms often counteracted the negative by reflecting on the power of healing and health.

Formulation of Themes

The findings did not just emerge, but they relied on direct evidence to reconstruct informants’ implicit knowledge regardless of whether I “counted the occurrence of themes, observed gestalts, factored variables, or constructed metaphors from the data inference will always be involved” (Hyland, 2005). I utilized the words and actions for naming essential features, segments, and codes to identify overlapping themes expressed by the participants to interpret the text and to move the conversation to a more universal level of abstraction while at the same time remain faithful to the participant’s experience. Coding refers to a way of getting from the messy and unstructured data into ideas about what is going on in the data (Morse & Richards, 2002). Coding is a process of looking for meaning. It is the actual activity
of breaking up and grouping data into categories that reflect major issues that have been identified in the data. From this data, themes were developed to create a broader lens to look at the culture at work. The theme becomes a broader lenses looking at manifestations of a culture at work. Themes are the general position declared, implied, or approved by the culture sharing group. Themes are transitive to determine meaning from what you are reading and what they really mean. Therefore in qualitative research data, analysis is a complex analytical process in which some form of classification or coding is involved to identify patterns of themes by looking for connections among the patterns and the context (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The case became a group with shared behavior, beliefs, and language that interact on a regular basis over a long period of time. These African American women represent a larger group adopting patterns of behaving thinking or talking.

The themes presented below should serve to deepen the understanding of this specific case and what can be learned.

*Mimms's interview themes:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bring status, and credibility: Applaud</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with people who looked like me – action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serve non-traditional students and met people where they were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a need in your community and served it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create allies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Build your own institution</td>
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*Bring status and credibility with applause*

Mimms came from environments with strong family support. She mentioned how her mother and father would applaud her for success and how this increased her ability to be productive, have a sense of encouragement, and know what was
expected. The applause was the impetus for achievement because it acknowledged and reinforced their success.

TESC-T practice is to recognize individuals with a practice called “Give Back.” This ritual is designed for lecturers and student presentations. Once a presentation is given, the audience first gives a standing ovation with applause. Then the audience gives positive feedback to the presenter as a token of the college’s appreciation and respect. The theme relates to the study because it explores and develops a cultural community that is connected and honored by their own heritage and curriculum designed to implement that distinct understanding with the capacity to pass it on.

*Work with people who look like me*

Mimms made the assertion that when she came to Washington it hurt her soul, and that even with all of her education and brilliance, she was in an environment with people who did not look like her. The pain of this inefficacy reached the very core of her soul and she knew that her purpose would not be realized if she could not connect with the people that represented her own culture.

TESC-T faculty design is directly related to the proportion of students they serve. There are eight faculty members; six of them are African American. Students who see themselves in the faculty have a better propensity of success because they have a greater sense of themselves seen through doctors, lawyers, and scientists who have attained degrees and model success on a regular basis.

*Find a need in the community and serve them*
Mimms, sitting in a restaurant in Tacoma, overheard a conversation between two women who were frustrated with the educational system because it could not accommodate their work schedules. Tacoma’s Hilltop community did not have an accessible location or accommodations for those students who were considered non-traditional. Mimms designed a program and curriculum in her home based on the times the students could come to class, and taught the courses they were interested in learning. For example: “I would let them study whatever was in their homes, magazines, books, even if they wanted to travel; I would turn all of it into a curriculum.”

Mimms would go to her students’ job sites and homes to make sure they were receiving the learning. She purchased books and borrowed supplies to ensure students were given every possible chance to succeed. She included family members in the learning process because she believed that the family was affected and needed to be included in the process. She worked with students with no skills as well as students who were high ranking officials and community leaders.

Create political allies

Both found white allies differently. Mimms found white women who believed in her dedication to an underserved population. Hardiman thought she was white, so for a very long time associated and married white people. By allowing white women and men to help from a distance ensures two schools of thought: First, there are people in this community who feel that all students and people have the right to an education and color should not preclude this opportunity; and second, the institutions we exist within must demonstrate that at least a percentage of the population is
represented. By creating allies of all colors administrators will be allowed to enhance our ability to serve a greater population of underserved students in urban communities, as well as have a place for different students to feel welcomed to prevent further injurious behavior from faculty who were not trained to educate students of color.

*Build your own institution*

The reality that historically the school system was not designed to accommodate students of color is a fair assumption according to graduation rates in national data. As early as grade school your state and local officials can now predict how to build jails by examination of the failure rates of children in grade three. Therefore if we continue to perpetrate a dysfunctional educational system, the status of this condition will continue to separate and disparate people from achieving college degrees and employment in college institutions. From the one-room school house radical education change can be made affordable, palatable, and interchangeable for the global community. Tenure would be abolished in order for innovation to be competitive and transitive. Faculty would not rest on their laurels but provide competitive and active involvement not only in their classroom, but in their own community, to see the effect of the education on the community environment. To promote continuous education and keep the educational community skilled on cutting edge educational practices and advances, as well as contribute to them.
Hardiman’s interview themes:

- Maintained the vision and legacy
- Inspired by a master teacher
- Being afraid of my own brilliance

**Maintained the vision**

One of Hardiman’s goals was to maintain Mimms’ vision, and in her own way she strove to achieve excellence and aesthetics. As a result the college grew and became a strong force in the community, competing with the University Washington in Tacoma. Mimms’ goal was to create a place for African American students who had no access to higher education in an under represented community in Tacoma. Mimms trained Hardiman, knowing it was her inherent duty to pass on the torch. Hardiman received the torch and because there are no historically Black colleges in the Pacific Northwest, created a campus where African American people could not only see themselves in the curriculum; they saw themselves on the walls around them, in the books, and on the podium. The campus displayed pictures of kings, queens, young adults and children of African descent leading, teaching, eating, listening, and celebrating each other. We saw success and knew we had to do the work, graduate, and lead. They both created a place where African Americans felt welcomed, honored, and applauded. They thought it was their duty to pass it on.

**Inspired by a master teacher and emerged as a Phoenix**

In the twenty-first century one of the greatest experiences for African American students in a predominantly white institution is being exposed to Black professors and administrators if they have not assimilated. By assimilate I mean incorporate, absorb, or transform behaviors of the dominate culture and rejecting your
own. Once that person of color recognize and honors your existence in a learning and working arena it makes the world come to life. Hardiman said she never had an African American teacher she respected. Once being in the presence of Mimms, Hardiman recognized she has been exposed to brilliance, a master teacher at its finest. She adored her masterful presence, the thundering sound of her voice, as well as her tenacity and courage. Hardiman wanted to absorb and transform while remaining faithful to her culture.

**Being afraid of my brilliance**

Hardiman grew up in an era where many Blacks were told not to show their intelligence or they would be punished or killed, it became subliminal. They termed the effect Emmitt Til. Emmitt Til was a fiesty Black man who was brutally beaten and killed for it. The Black community was stunned and wanted retaliation but instead Til’s mother during his funeral asked that the casket be opened to show the community his face which held the scars of the brutal attack to exhibit what will happen to their children if they pursued this way of life. This horrified some and inevitably many became scared, dumb down, or sadly hid their brilliance. Hardiman had to work through this fear with Mimms and Mimms forced her to practice looking at white people and not being afraid of them. Imagine that.

**Collective Interview**

After interviewing Mimms and Hardiman separately, both were asked to come back in a few days to reflect upon their individual conversations as well as their collective continuum and afterthoughts. At the second interview, each was elegantly dressed in African garb and sipped a glass of wine. They were very relaxed, unafraid,
cognizant, and complimentary of each other’s expertise. I asked them to reflect over

the last three decades.

**Hardiman:**

- What are the survival skills for the next generation of people – like Maxine said, you’ve got to be able to know your environment, you’ve got to be able to play it, but don’t get caught in it, it is not you. You are not an American, you are an African born in America; don’t get caught thinking you are American just cause you’re in with the white boy. Don’t think you’re white, that’s not how it works. You’re just not, so learn how to be in it. In it and not of it, is one of the major skills of guerrilla fighters.

- Listen to the community – the faculty and staff should reflect the student body. Listen to the students and recognize how they should fit into the curriculum.

- Structure – Black people have always learned in cohorts, the church, the barber shop, sitting around the kitchen table. Interdisciplinary – the curriculum akin to Jazz modality. Polyrhythmic with multiple ways of thinking; and Pedagogy.

- Experiential learning through community service to make the learning transformation. Active learning as well as service learning. Learning community is a very Black thing.

- I used to do these workshops. I would say, Your campus is like a house; what is at the front door? What happens when somebody comes in, are they greeted or is there a front door? Do they have to go to the back like they did all their lives?

**Mimms:**

- Visitors welcome – welcome, welcome, welcome, one and all welcome, welcome, welcome – big, short, fat, and tall [rituals from the Black church]. There is a visitor’s response and a person gets up and says I’m from so and so church. I bring you greetings and thank you for inviting me. This is just wonderful and you see it all the time. Unless you could understand the rituals of the Black church you will never be able to retain Black students, never. No institution will be able to retain them. There are all kinds of little wonderful secrets, there all kinds of calls and
responses – the give back – Baptist people get up and give back through testimonies. I just want to thank you and just go on. But it just a testimony and they dress up for give back, but unless you understand the rituals of the Black church you will never be able to retain.

**Mimms:**

- Freshmen stand in line to register like a bunch of animals getting ready to get milk. Have some couches and some things, have bottles of water, and have talking circles welcoming people. Joye did a thing on the Tacoma campus, it was the greatest thing I have ever seen in my life – it was the Roll Call, and tables were set up for all the students to come to campus and share with others who have graduated. It didn’t matter that the tables were empty but the people could say Ahh. A whole table had nothing but a bunch of dead people but there was a roll call. One of the students who had a stroke and couldn’t talk came from one of the first classes. She couldn’t talk but this was a place for her to come and remember her legacy. It was a roll call and the prettiest thing I’ve ever seen. You prepare for the people that are like you, who you have invited to come to your place to enjoy the experience that you designed. It is our sacred duty to make sure that things get passed on. When you deal with the Law of Attraction then they are all just brilliant. Brilliant in one way some people at a party will drink a certain wine – some people will drink merlot, some people will drink white wine, but you have all different kinds of bottles of wines. All kinds of varieties of cheeses. It blows me away – you have a variety of cheeses, a variety of meats, a vegetable, you will even have a party and you will even consider the vegetarians. Everybody, 90% of the people eat meat, but consideration for that one person that needs a vegetable plate. Isn’t that sensitive just to know that a university or college is about participating in a learning continuum that’s like a party.

**Mimms and Hardiman Collective themes:**

| Black women working together |
| Black women soldiers doing guerilla warfare |
| External racism can be healed internally- Transcendence of racism, sexism (isms) |
| It is our sacred duty to make sure that things get passed on |
**Black women working together**

Black women in institutions who reach out to each other in a dynamic that allows them to teach, train, and promote their own heritage allows them to honor the brilliance in themselves. It goes back to the notion of obligation, as noted by Hardiman. Black women could love, support, and teach each other in an environment that honors their existence. Black women could come together in a spirit of intellectual, physically, and spiritually without being gay. Mimms claims we are born that way. She knew early on that she had to find a successor. It is our inherent duty to make sure we pass the torch of continuance.

**Black women doing guerilla warfare**

Mimms considers herself a guerrilla warfare trainer. Guerrilla warfare is a Spanish term, representing a small body of fighters. Laquer (2003) notes “warfare has been fought throughout history by small people against invading or occupying armies (p. 382). Despite their small numbers, many guerillas have succeeded against more sophisticated forces by the strong motivation and belief in their own victory and proper use of the terrain. Guerillas rely directly on local civilization (communities) for logistic support while receiving high levels of active support from the local population. Guerillas are known to have a facility for precise and rapid analysis of situations and forehand thought about problems to be solved in the future.

**Healing external racism internally**

The notion of “isms” is uncomfortable but important as it relates to working with and for college institutions. Issues of the “ism” especially racism, are inherent in our environment, it is important to ask the questions of how to understand, recognize
and solve this socially driven milieu. And in spite of the environmental strain and the reflection of the isms noting tolerance but resilience must occur.

Mimms:

- The world doesn’t need African American women to believe they must nurture and become nursemaidens. This whole thing of the mammy, this whole thing of the breast; this whole thing of pulling out the third breast and nursing, this whole thing of nursing the whole world has to stop. I can nurture but I can also be brutally honest about myself and to myself. I love myself; therefore, I can and do love others.

_It is our sacred duty to make sure things get passed on_

The legacy is to create a vehicle to secure and share histories and stories of African American educators who have left an indelible impression on the lives of students, families, the community, and the world.

Mimms:

- When and where I enter I can deal with it because I can go with the model and negotiation. I can go in with the model of scratching. I can go in the model and ask white people to be placeholders until I grow my own, but until somebody comes out ready to fight and ready to speak outside of the box and take the consequences of the whip. Take the consequences of the whip publicly and say: I’m taking this whipping and you say but this ain’t nothing but a bunch of welts I can keloid you bastard and I can go. Oh my goodness you can go on about your business. Until you can find that person that follows in that sequence, forget Black leadership. What happened with us in terms of organizations, our churches, our Black collectives, until those men can understand, you can do when and where all you want to, but until you allow somebody else and back that somebody else in terms of guerilla warfare on how the legacy will be cut off. You will lose the Urban League, you will lose the NAACP, and you will lose everything of the concept. It is the nature of the guerilla fight and the warfare that allows the leadership and the legacy to continue. And that becomes real, Kim, becomes real.
Hardiman:

- What are the survival skills for the next generation of people – like Maxine said, you’ve got to be able to know you’re caught in it, it is not you. You are not an American, you are an African born in America; don’t get caught thinking you are American just cause you’re in with the white boy. Don’t think you’re white, that’s not how it works. You’re just not, so learn how to be in it. In it and not of it, is one of the major skills of guerrilla fighters.
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.  
*Margaret Mead*

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

The primary focus of this study was to examine the administrative leadership and legacy of two African American women who succeeded in college administration in order see where they have come to understand how I, as an African American administrator, must proceed. As stated in chapter one, I sought to describe the lived experiences from the participants’ historical perspectives for the TESC-T campus from its inception and, more importantly, to understand the administrative hurdles they climbed to create a facility that catered to African American achievement at a predominantly white institution. Chapter two’s literature review allowed me to use a historical lens to focus on the condition of, not only African American women, but the disparity of all students of color in addressing graduation rates or other challenges of students in the administrative pipeline. The case study used and examined in chapter three was an important methodology because Mimms and Hardiman spent more than three decades in this bounded system building a better institution using both women’s principles as demonstrations of African American achievement in college leadership. Case study research is not sampling research; that is a fact asserted by all the major researchers in the field, including Yin, Stake, Feagin and others with multi-perspectives. This means that the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also the voices of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them. However, selecting cases must be done so as to maximize
what can be learned in the period of time available for the study. As I expressed in chapter four, I felt it was important to document their exact words because of the passion and emotion expressed throughout their responses. I also wanted to describe, through the power of their respective voices and lived experiences, the historical framework for the TESC-T campus from its inception and capture the conundrum of administrative hurdles they climbed as tools and building blocks to create a facility that will cater to all cultures.

This section will allow me to use the results of this study and the literature’s relationship to it, to formulate a plan of action. This chapter also includes the significance of the study, limitations as well as lessons learned with implication for the future to promote the idea of the model of inclusion. The expectation is to make a difference for all students by advocating for recognition to those who have made a change in their own communities and for their own people by aiming higher to enlighten students to the possibility……the aim is to expose the hidden, clarify the oblique, and articulate the possibilities.

Framing the Literature

The literature affirms the existence of African American women in high-level administrative positions, yet the evidence is not clear about how their positions have provided them power or authority within the institution (Evans-Herring 2003; Townsend-Johnson, 2003; Roucheche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). The asymmetries of race and class gave rise to a series of images and stereotypes influenced by the universal archetypes of gender but qualitatively transformed by ideologies of race that
grew out of class relationships of slaves. Researchers claim attrition continues to be high for African American women in the Northwest, which comes with problems in obtaining promotions and tenure at predominantly white institutions (Bower, 1996; Townsend-Johnson, 2003; Valverde, 2003). Mimms funded TESC-T from her own pocket for the first ten years to insure her intention as she focused on access for African Americans in this community. The power of authority was not influenced by administrative protocol that did not reflect her intent. Doctoral dissertations, journal publications, and literary scholarship are growing in their examination of African American women in college administration and leadership at predominantly white institutions (Sanders, 2004; Taylor, Moore, MacGregor, & Lindblad, 2003). A vast majority of research recognized how race, class, and gender played into the shortfall or the lack of equivalent power to influence policy decision within their own organizations.

The strength in Parker’s (2005) work helped us situate the leadership approaches of contemporary African American women administrators into historical perspectives, which confirmed the organic character of leadership and at the same time unearthed the challenges. Parker’s (2005) work helped us understand that bringing marginalized groups to the center of the analysis disrupts the silences that devalue African American women’s contribution to knowledge production. By placing Mimms and Hardiman at the center of this study serves as an emancipative function giving voice, tradition of knowledge, and communication practices grounded in Black women’s experiences.
While Mimms’ reality was individually constructed and shaped by social, cultural, and economic forces to critique and transform social relations and to uncover myths, reveal hidden truths and the interplay of race to help people change the world for themselves (Neuman, 2003). Evans-Herrings (2003) and Bush (1999) sought to understand how race interplayed within the dynamics of the mission and goals of the college that shaped the experiences of African American administrators. They also found that the intersection of Black women who exhibited characteristics and values associated with the campus culture was affected by tokenism and showed characteristics of integrated biculturalism (Bush, 1999). Herring-Evans (2003) noted that when African American women aligned their characteristics with the intersection of the college’s mission, they were able to succeed. I agree when hooks (2000) cautions us to remember the notion of class, suggesting women must still face the intersection of class and race, because it is evident that Black women are still at the bottom of the institution’s economic totem pole. The dynamic of race intersecting with dominant culture values reminds us that education is increasingly reserved for certain people, while prisons continue to grow and are reserved for others (Davis, 1983). White administrators are comfortable maintaining the status quo because they fear that people ethnically different from them will change the way they experience and perceive life in the academy (Ates, 2003; Moses, 1989; Moses, 1993; Mumby, 2001). The scrutiny Black women face hinders their progress towards moving into top administrative positions and is based on the notion that African Americans are generally considered by white administrations and faculty as lacking in ability when it comes to taking on the responsibility of leading an educational institution.
Assimilated Blacks have adopted the Eurocentric ideology and view other African Americans through the same Westernized lens. Yet there is no evidence to support this perception.

African American leaders cannot lead without the power to unmask domination, which is the basic energy to initiate and sustain action translating intention into reality (Ates, 2003; Evan-Herring, 2003; Moses 1993). Colleges must move away from stereotypes that are responsible for hindering African Americans from assuming leadership positions to more neutrality in organizational communication and development. It remains important to recognize the struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates academia in Western culture and make a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desire. I would look further at identity and power relationships that are produced, maintained, and reproduced through the ongoing communicative practices (Collins, 1997; Deetz, 1992; Mumby, 2001). Epstein (1981) confirms the vital importance for every college to ensure that Black women administrators have a place in the organizational structure and be guaranteed a secure position in the normal exchange system of that pattern of power. I concur with Rusher (1996) that if African American women are to achieve, we must learn all we can and become active participants in this part of the institutional landscape. As Capra (1996) prompts us to understand, “the greatest challenge of our time is to create sustainable communities,” meaning social and cultural environments in which we can satisfy our needs and aspirations without diminishing the chances for future generations (p. 4).
Summary

The literature examined how African American women have overcome tremendous odds and persevered individually and collectively at predominantly white institutions. African American women’s historical relationship and lack of advancement in predominantly white colleges and universities and the subversion of negative ideologies are sources of discourse in the Black community. Most quantitative reports focused on the small percentages of African American women in positions of authority that lacked the qualitative measure and presented redundancy. As the United States became highly stratified, the hegemonic models of women had accentuated the distance between race and class. The literature and research does not document how models developed within predominantly white institutions have been successful for students of color in the Pacific Northwest. I found no other acknowledged models of African American women designing an academy in this region. In looking for data to support success, it was obvious that the documented literature reinforced negative images and inertia.

Significance

Statewide and nationally, one out of four people aged 18-24 does not have a high school diploma. Forty-seven percent of Latinos 25 and over do not have a high school diploma, and one in every three people aged 18-64 only have a high school diploma. Even with the world-class research and regional universities and colleges, we still have not come far enough and have not grasped the size and nature of educational challenges that face students of color. National and historical evidence maintains the existence and struggle with African American women obtaining
administrative positions in predominantly white colleges and universities, as well as the struggle to retain students of color until college completion. Despite the early successes of outstanding leaders, the progress has been painfully slow. Mimms recognized the need and proceeded to govern and educate students who were forgotten by the colleges in that community. Mimms looked for and trained Hardiman and those individuals whom she believed would carry on the principles she developed to effect change in this community. The pivotal point of this study was recognizing their ability to sustain successfully in administration and leadership and how we build for future generations. TESC-T campus reported that a majority of students who enter their campus will graduate because of the emphasis they put on students of color. TESC-T had the highest retention and graduation rates for African Americans in the state of Washington. TESC-T has been in existence for over 30 years and there is very little literature on its existence; however, there is a growing body of literature capturing and recognizing African American women in successful models of college leadership at predominantly white institutions. The American college as it exists has implications of a capitalist hold in this society with consequences of continued disparity. This disparity has proven to keep the administration pool for potential students of color—therefore leaders of color—out of leadership roles in predominantly white institutions. Yet if we cannot address this inconsistency do we disregard the disparity or continue to perpetrate the condition?

**Limitations**

Hawkesworth (1989) argues “It is difficult, if not impossible, to produce more than a partial story of Black women’s lives in an oppressive context….” (p. 549).
Black women’s experiences resulted in needs and problems distinct from white women and Black men, and Black women must struggle for equality and knowledge both as women and as African Americans (Guy-Sheftall, 1986). To ensure the soundness of my data, I shared publications and editorials about them, my field notes, and a disclosure statement to give them information about my own bias as well as the dissertation proposal introduction, the IRB consent form, and the interview questions. Two different interviews were conducted. Both sets of interviews were conducted in the home of Hardiman. Prior to the interview we discussed that we would be reflecting upon 30 years of administration and watched tapes of events such as scenes of them teaching, administering, and lecturing at graduation ceremonies. We also discussed some of the more critical and comical incidents that occurred in between to reflect upon as we began the interview. I discussed my intention with each and gave them both the opportunity to examine the historical documents retrieved for the study. Hardiman recounted events with tremendous memory, while Mimms’ audaciousness filled the room with energy. They were eager to know what the other said or wanted to say. The transcribed data was given back to the participants to ensure accuracy, a process called member-checking. A triangulation was done by using the written materials, documents, and video material as a reflection of the interviews. Both women compared and discussed each other’s answers in a group session for reflection and to ensure soundness of time and data.

In qualitative research, ethical responsibility and positionality are a sense of duty and commitment based on moral principles of human freedom, justice, well-being and compassion for the suffering of living beings. The researcher also takes us
beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status, and unsettles both neutrality and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control (Madison, 2005, p.5). The researcher engages in the art of fieldwork resisting domestication to move from “what is” to “what could be” (Carspecken & Apple 1992; Lincoln, 1995; Norblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004; Thomas, 1993). It means the researcher will contribute to the emancipatory knowledge and discourse of social justice using the voices and experiences of subjects whose stories are otherwise retrained and out of reach. The positionality of voices as represented by Fine, Weis, Weesen, & Wong (2000) is where the subjects themselves are the focus and their voices carry forward indigenous meanings and experiences that are in opposition to dominant discourse, practices and strategies. Positionality is important because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and bias just as we are denouncing the power structure that surrounds our subjects (Berger & Nanus, 1966).

Individual experiences, knowledge, and communication behaviors are largely shaped by the social group to which one belongs. Therefore, being armed with research results to improve practice, teachers and other educators become more effective professionals, and their effectiveness translates into better learning for all students (Creswell, 2002).
We are the keepers of our legacy. For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role ushering in a new era of peace”

President Barack Obama January 20, 2009, inauguration speech.

**Lessons Learned**

African American people who work with and remain in predominantly white and historically Black colleges and universities must understand and educate each other about the psychological impact and damage to their own history that takes place at institutions not originally designed for students of color. The researcher also takes us beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status, and unsettles both neutrality and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control (Madison, 2005, p. 5). The meaning embodies a dialogue with authority, class, and power as well as a demonstration of freedom of speech and social change by the actors that situated the context to their advantage. The meaning closely correlates with the destruction of Black men in the penal system versus student of color completion rates across the nation.

I described the principles and/or theories Mimms and Hardiman ascribed to and how they applied them to demonstrate their collaborative voices and themes. I was interested in understanding their truths about institutional racism and what remedies through social action helped them stay effective and competitive. Racism in American and in colleges and universities is no morbid phenomenon. More specifically, Blackness is a universal signifier of fear, danger, and threat across color
Moreover, I wanted to learn the meaning of their existence at this institution and what they planned to leave as a testament of their intent and struggle. Each of these administrators came from different eras and valued different theoretical paradigms, yet they both understood the obligation instilled in them by their heritage. What evolved was Mimms made Hardiman a spirited administrator who knew when to act on any level of power or humiliation with resilience. Hardiman did not find a successor and the current administration thwarted the recognition of past legacy by not recognizing or inviting her to teach or participate in activities on the Tacoma campus in her last year of employment. In 2007, the students of the Evergreen-Tacoma used student activities monies to purchase a picture of Hardiman to be mounted in the college hall alongside Mimms. At the time of this study, the picture had yet to be mounted. Hardiman maintained and carried on the original principles building a stronger physical structure that she hoped would maintain itself. Through the Ndebele wall painting, however, she left a more universal message that illuminates the necessary attention administrators must pay to all cultures and all forms of culture in the community they serve. Yet, if we are to build from here we must recognize its current subjective state and formulate an objective plan of action.

As stated in the literature review, the original themes (see below), Mimms introduced for African American students a powerful subjective analysis to develop a unique pedagogy. For example:

- The need to understand the psychological impact of their own history, which causes them to observe themselves and internalize the blame for which they were not historically responsible
• The need to understand the people they are afraid of – something of their history and psyche [sic]

• The need to develop group identification as they begin to internalize the blame so they can effectively use their political clout

• The need to recognize the limitations of a BA degree; that is, earning a B.A. degree without understanding the content of the curriculum is dangerous, and earning a B.A. is no guarantee of intellectual growth

• The need to recognize that within their own community there are people who think like Plato, paint like Picasso, and meditate like Buddha (Mimms, 1977, Abstract).

Mimms saw her students as subjects, excluding herself from the effects of her study. Yet if we are to build on an existing body of literature objectively, we would include ourselves and the entire community. The effect would have impact for all underrepresented cultures. For example:

**First:** The need to understand the psychological impact of our own history which causes us to observe ourselves and internalize the blame for which we were not historically responsible.

**Second:** The need to understand the people we are afraid of – something of these people’s history and psyche.

Western civilization values individualism and control over nature, over the physical environment, as well as over social relations. From this angle of knowing and understanding, the world has blind spots because it excludes, devalues, or ignores Black women, as well as other people of color. Many Black women in academia view the world filtered through a labyrinth of oppression of race and gender. African American women have historically lived in the shadow of the inherent racism that exists within our society today. Many are frustrated, not realizing why this system of
oppression has not been dismantled. The onus for the Black community is to recognize the damage and effects external racism cause when it has been internalized.

If we understand the external damage we can begin to eliminate the internalized blame we have for each other and our own society. African American women began their educational lives far after Black men and white women in predominantly white institutions and colleges. From this vantage point, African American women have made great strides in attainment of degrees, but they have not made advances in administrative positions within the colleges. When asked why African American women are not moving into advanced positions, most colleges indicate that people of color do not have the education, experience, or necessary credentials for administrative positions stated as the proposed requirements for hiring purposes.

Even where the constitutional standards are very strong, as for race discrimination, the courts usually strike down only discrimination found to be intentional. The federal standards, on the other hand, do not require a showing of intent to discriminate (Kaplin & Lee, 1995).

Third: The need to develop group identification as we begin to internalize the blame so we can effectively use our political clout.

Mimms’ and Hardiman’s individual and separate experiences, knowledge, and communication behaviors were largely shaped by the social groups to which they belong. Mimms’ vision was to create a better world within a community that was marginalized and forgotten. Hardiman moved in with Mimms and went through what she terms as “reprogramming” to understand and accept her own culture and its values. Hardiman recognized the brilliance within herself through the actions of
Mimms. Hardiman not only maintained Mimms’ dream, but she used the learning continuum to build on the notion of sustaining that vision and creating new goals to build on and carry on the legacy. Hardiman created a sustainable environment with the idea of building future generations going farther. They were both guided by principles which gave strength back to the students in an attempt to promote wellness and healing. But it did *more* – it gave a community applause.

**Fourth:** The need to recognize the limitations and assumptions of a degree, or a degree of any kind without understanding the content of the curriculum is dangerous, and a degree is no guarantee of intellectual growth.

**Fifth:** The need to recognize that within *our* own community there are people who think like Plato, paint like Picasso, and meditate like Buddha. (Mimms, 1977, Abstract)

As I reflect on my own career and where I have come from in order to go forward, truth and admission require careful analysis. How do I see myself, and therefore, how do I view others? If we follow what has been written we understand the position of internalizing hate for ourselves and our community because we can never be a people of privilege in the eyes of the dominant culture. How do we understand that before we can make a foundational structure, we must recognize and build upon the way that has been made through the sweat and punishment of other women and men of color who saw value not only in themselves but in others? Harris (1993) claims that we must seek out colleges that fit our ethical and moral values, as opposed to assimilating into the environment which many critics note. We are to look for those institutions that value objectives that we are seeking to achieve such as making issues that concern students of color a valuable part of the landscape. This
idea implores us to look in our own backyard, and ask ourselves what we can do to build on the blocks that have been created for our highest good. How do we find the unspoken leaders in urban communities who will work for the masses? They are not illuminated in the literature because we are not looking deep enough. We must look into our own mirrors, in our own community, and in our own lives to highlight and give honor to ourselves, the warriors, the soldiers of education in our own communities.

Subjectivism is a position from which they redefine the nature of authority. It is a position at which their views of the experts and expertise undergo radical change. The orientation to authority shifts from external to internal. Along with the discovery of personal authority arises a sense of voice—a small voice which a woman begins to attend rather than the long familiar external voices that have directed her life.

(Belenky, Clinchy, Golberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 68)

Implications for Future Research

This study brought to light some of the challenges institutions face in educating students of color. It inspired me to look at not only our existing systems of education, and administrators within predominantly white institutions, but to the little schoolhouse models taking place inside homes where one person dreams of reaching out to another person by recognizing his or her own privilege and deciding to make the world more beautiful by sacrificing him or herself for the sake of a community’s survival. It is important because African American women in higher education will not be recognized for their brilliance, strength, leadership, and wisdom until someone dares to document it. Yet, there are a million untold stories of those “small do-able acts” that turn into a victory for humankind. How we look deeper into communities that give service to underrepresented groups depends on where we look. More studies
must reflect how to sustain and grow college environments within these communities that honor ethnicity, heritage, and culture in the natural landscape of the institution, not just as a historically Black college but as a college which considers and includes the entire world.

*The Model of Cultural Inclusion*

I sought to understand the lives of these administrators by focusing on the value of my own worth in the predominantly white institution that I function within. After learning how Mimms and Hardiman handled the administrative storms to achieved success, we must now focus on the future of the institution. Obama states: “We are the keepers of our legacy.” How do administrators build on to and create an educational environment that not only considers students of color but all cultures not a historically Black college or model adapted from the dominant culture but a college or university that considers and insists on all cultural communities.

When The Evergreen State College-Tacoma was at its best performance, the foundational structure of the college promoted a high-quality higher education system that provided expanded opportunities in cultural and global education that drove greater economic prosperity, innovation, and opportunity. Re-creating or re-visiting a model that had the original structure developed for students, faculty, and staff to raise the interest and overall level of educational attainment among all ethnicities for the benefit of their own cultural communities will have a greater effect on the world. What does it mean for the community—The college would focus on community issues that are related to its cultural environment by surveying its needs and producing scholarly work that will enrich, enlighten, or expose.
What does it mean for students at the college— More students of color attaining degrees in a regional economy produce greater wages and will reduce recidivism by mobilizing our education and research resources to match talent with opportunity. Increasing completion rates for students of color will produce exponentially greater public return.

Societal benefit for the college— The gift of cultural higher education has the power to change the trajectory of families, communities, states, and nations. With an infusion of the cultural college when one student learns, many successive generations will benefit. More people of color must have the opportunity to receive postsecondary education and help themselves succeed.
Model of Inclusion

Figure 7
The model of inclusion values diversity, innovation, and flexibility teamed with the opportunity to present opportunities that are structured as “learning communities” with an integrated curriculum and collaborative culturally inclusive environment. The model’s institutional priorities to provide a culturally inclusive environment and insure sustainability are to demonstrate its effect throughout the college institutional structure as shown in (see Figure 7).

Components

- **Institution**: Develop a strong group of community representatives who represent the cultural blueprint of the city’s model and how it relates to the student population to understand the needs of their cultural communities. Every culture must be represented and included. The “no walls” anthropomorphic design of The Evergreen State College-Tacoma promoted transparency and sustained community connections by maintaining and always improving its coordination.

- **Pedagogy**: The use of teaching and strategies coupled with the institution and instructor’s philosophical belief in the student’s background knowledge and experience, personal situations, and environment by structuring the material around the needs of the student. Go where they are.

- **Curriculum**: Continuously strengthen its curriculum—by serving both student and societal needs; interrogate the curriculum each year with a stronger focus toward incorporating cultural value-laden issues on a rotating
basis with community involvement in order to maintain and improve community commitment in a unique undergraduate degree.

- **Students** - Managing enrollment growth while preserving the intimate environment of small class sizes, student-to-teacher ratios, and campus culture and traditions. After graduation and related community work, students are invited back to the campus as honored guests to share their service as a way of highlighting student achievement.

- **Faculty** - Maintain strong and consistent faculty and staff of color.

- **Staff** - Move Marginalized to the Center - What happens at the center determines what is valuable about them. Develop a Cultural Research Institute that manages employment and post-graduate work on a continuum.

- **Affirmation Center** - Acknowledge self to understand what is important as tools needed to keep you efficient and productive. A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. They set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. They heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. They quickly recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable. They approach threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal
accomplishments, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability to depression

(Bandura, 1994)

Conclusion

The value in recognizing educators who work toward excellence for underserved communities acts as a landmark for future generations. It leaves a legacy for all administrators, community leaders, educational institutions and, more importantly, future African American women administrators. Qualitative researchers are interested in social change as it occurs in relation to social struggle. Collectively, Mimms transformed Hardiman to sustain the TESC-T campus by nourishing her soul, which gave strength, knowledge, and power to the entire community they served. Mimms had the vision and Hardiman sustained and developed goals through an archetype of aesthetics and scholarship translating into organizational development that reinforces heritage for future generations and serves as a guide for any aspect of a college career. This work is important because it not only adds to the literature by recognizing the undocumented success of Black women administrators fearlessly assisting underrepresented communities at a predominantly white college, but it also gives us an opportunity to grow from here and imagine a better world through a college that recognizes the value of culture as an integral part of the fabric of the college community. It has the premise of a more just society, not only of all people having equal access to the good life, but also for people to be culturally, economically, and politically in control of their own lives.
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## APPENDICES

### Table A 1. TESC-Tacoma Student Demographics

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<td><strong>Average Age</strong></td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<td><strong>Full-time (12 or more credits)</strong></td>
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<td>170</td>
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<td>191</td>
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<td>173</td>
<td>155</td>
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The above table represents the demographics of TESC-Tacoma students enrolled in fall quarter from 1992-2006.
Table A 2. TESC-T Credit Hours

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<td>5-8 credits</td>
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<td>TOTAL Student Headcount</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>157*</td>
<td>195*</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>173</td>
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<td>154</td>
<td>203</td>
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<td>% at 16 or more credits</td>
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<td>97.3%</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
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<td>94.1%</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Fall 1994 included 60 graduate students at 16 credits each; Fall 1995 included 61 graduate students at 16 credits each.
** Fall 2003 is the first quarter that students began registering for each module of the Tacoma curriculum separately.

Table A 2. This table represents student history of enrollment (+16 cr.) from 1992-2006.
Table A 3. TESC-T Enrollment and degree attainment History

This table represents Tacoma Fall-to-Fall Enrollment, Retention, and degrees conferred history.

Table A 4. TESC-Tacoma Faculty Demographics.

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Table A 4 represents the faculty and staff ratio designed in direct proportion to student enrollment.
Table A 5. TESC-Tacoma Quarterly and Annual Average FTE

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<th>Academic Year</th>
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<th>Winter FTE</th>
<th>Spring FTE</th>
<th>Annual Average Quarterly FTE</th>
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<td>123.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
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<td>118.6</td>
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<td>122.0</td>
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<td>119.6</td>
<td>137.4</td>
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<td>1995-96</td>
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<td>222.1</td>
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<td>1997-98</td>
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<td>173.1</td>
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<td>1998-99</td>
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<td>152.1</td>
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Notes: FTE is based on 10th day enrollment in programs, courses, contracts, and internships. State-run enrollment excluded.

Table A 5. This table represents the quarterly FTE which is based on 10th day enrollment tracking.