
Reviewed by Mary Waalkes

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*We Shall Not Be Moved: The Desegregation of the University of Georgia* by Robert A. Pratt is a narrative of the battle to open the University of Georgia to black students. Pratt focuses on Horace Ward, who first tried and failed to get into the school, and Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes who successfully integrated the university. The book does a decent job of laying out the legal shenanigans employed by the university to keep the school segregated, and is similarly good at analyzing the various institutions and individuals, from the governor to various students, who obstructed Hunter and Holmes in their pursuit of education. The book is flawed by an uneven structure, leaving the reader with questions as to whether it is primarily about desegregating UGA, or about Hunter and Holmes, or about Ward.

Pratt states in his introduction that he intends the book to deal with the desegregation of the University of Georgia and also to highlight Horace T. Ward's life and career. Ward’s early career was entwined with the desegregation effort, as Ward tried to enter the university in 1950. Pratt tells the story of the university's success in keeping Ward out of the school, although only after a prolonged court battle. The first three chapters in *We Shall Not Be Moved* deal with this issue, along with examining the opposition to integration by state legislators. Chapter 4 gets Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes through the legal process and into the school, where a riot on January 11, 1961, shortly after their arrival, indicated how tenuous their admittance was. Chapter 5 is appropriately titled “Tolerated, but Not Integrated,” relating the various ways by which students, faculty, and staff let Hunter and Holmes know that their presence at the university was begrudged. Chapter 6 catches up with Ward and briefly outlines his subsequent career, with attention especially paid to his efforts as a judge in a case involving the University of Georgia and faculty member Jan Kemp. The epilogue essentially gives the University of Georgia opportunities to atone for former misbehavior by bringing Ward, Hunter, and Holmes back at various times to speak or receive honors.

It is almost axiomatic that Civil Rights stories include the Klan and a modicum of violence, and this is certainly present in the book. Pratt exam-
ines a riot that occurred following a basketball game in which only the late, but effective, intervention by the police using tear gas kept the riot from becoming deadly. Pratt shows fairly conclusively that some university officials and state leaders hoped that the riot would do for UGA what a riot did for the University of Alabama in 1956 when Atherine Lucy tried to attend classes. The University of Alabama suspended Lucy, ostensibly for her safety and the safety of white students, and then expelled her when her lawyers lambasted the university. In the case of the University of Georgia, lawyers were able to get Hunter and Holmes reinstated in school following their suspension due to the riot, but the evidence Pratt provides shows how ruthlessly some whites tried to hold on to segregation.

The book will appeal to people who want to know more about legal cases in the Civil Rights era, and will appeal to academics curious as to how their colleagues in the South responded to integration. The latter picture is hardly a flattering one, yet this should not surprise anyone who knows just how tenuous life in academia can be. Still, it is all too easy to teach the Civil Rights era from an almost unwittingly self-righteous standpoint, as if we ourselves would never behave in such a craven or unkind manner as did some of the faculty at the University of Georgia. As Pratt indicates, many faculty members were ashamed of UGA’s actions, but were also afraid to put their careers on the line by supporting Hunter and Holmes. The pressure from the administration and from state legislators helps underline how ubiquitously oppressive racism was in the South.

*We Shall Not Be Moved* is a readable narrative, that while it does not compare with books such as John Dittmer’s *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* in analytical depth, works well for the most part. There is a problem with the book’s structure, however, in that Pratt awkwardly includes nearly a full chapter on Horace Ward’s later career as a lawyer and jurist. Five pages in chapter 6 relate Ward’s handling of a trial that involved the university over athletic programs and academics. While interesting, the case has nothing to do with desegregating the University of Georgia. In the preface, Pratt says that the book will do two things, look at the desegregation of the university, and examine the life of Horace Ward. It does not work. The book feels as if a slender thesis was added onto in such a way that the seams are very much apparent. It might have been better to hold off on Ward’s story, beyond his efforts to desegregate UGA, especially as this story is more impressively told in Maurice C. Daniels *Horace T. Ward: Desegregation of the University of Georgia, Civil Rights Advocacy, and Jurisprudence*. Daniels takes on the Ward/Holmes/Hunter story as more of a legal history, and does a fine job as such. Daniels does not make as much of the riot, focusing mainly on actors in the legal dramas. However, Daniels does keep within the parameters of a manageable narrative, whereby his discussion of the Jan Kemp story makes sense. It does not make sense in Pratt’s slim volume, which purports by the title to be about the desegregation of UGA.

Instead, what Pratt might better have done was to delve into information on who came after Hunter and Holmes, and when and how the university made an ideological shift from reluctant, foot-dragging integration to welcoming blacks as students, faculty, and administrators. Certainly, no author wishes a reviewer to mention what might have gone into a book; however, in this case *We Shall Not Be Moved* is too brief, with chapter 6 and a very short epilogue emphasizing the brevity of Pratt’s primary story, the desegregation of the University of Georgia. It is time to go beyond portraying the first wave of civil rights pioneers and examine when real integration occurred. We know what happened when UGA desegregated under legal duress. When did racial equality become integral to the university’s mission, and how did that occur? For example, the federal government became a more active player in desegrega-
tion in the 1970s when the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare required southern states to come up with adequate desegregation plans. How did this affect the University of Georgia? A stronger institutional focus would have lengthened the manuscript while also adding appropriate ballast to the book's primary theme.

As it is, the text ends on a confused note. We are told on the book's cover that this is the "triumphant story" of Ward, Hunter, and Holmes, and in a sense it is. But we are also told that Hunter-Gault today is ambivalent about the degree of progress made or not made by the university, whose minority population is small. Pratt does not examine the extent to which the dream of integration has or has not been achieved, though Hunter-Gault's words clearly provide an opportunity for a cogent analysis of where the University of Georgia is today. This ambivalence is very much a part of the civil rights story, as eloquently expressed by John Dittmer in *Local People* and Charles Payne in *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, and could, if explored more fully, have added additional depth and richness to *We Shall Not Be Moved*.

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