

**ACCEPTANCE TO EXPEDIENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF ELLEN G. WHITE'S¹ AND ARTHUR G. DANIELLS'S
COUNSEL FOR RACE RELATIONS**

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Abstract

This article offers a comparative analysis of Ellen G. White's and Arthur G. Daniells's positions concerning race relations. Through a careful survey of White's writings—especially *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 199–226 and *The Southern Work*—I argue that she never supported separationism. I hypothesize that Adventist separationism gained precedence through Daniells's selective compilation of White's counsels in his 1906 response to the People's Church. My findings unpack White's beliefs in spiritual leadership and ministry. She called for workers able to simultaneously accommodate culture and undermine prejudice internally through the gospel. Her vision necessitated the adjustment of methods on a local level, and thus she opposed official race-based policies. Daniells's eagerness to settle racial tensions led to a push for racial separation. He would interpret White's "no policy" stance as justification for instituting a separationist policy in DC and ultimately wherever racial tensions existed. Effectively, Daniells created a hermeneutical method for aligning administrative initiatives with the writings of White and was critical in solidifying segregation within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Keywords: Ellen G. White, Arthur G. Daniells, Interpretation, Racism, Integration

Introduction

The dominant question after the Civil War considered the role the newly freed slave would have within the society of the United States. In the North, a myriad of voices emerged: some promoting full equality and others seeking

¹ From the editors: All the references to the works of Ellen G. White are abbreviated, some of them in the text between parenthesis, following the standard abbreviations found in the website of the Ellen G. White Estate – www.whiteestate.org/books/abbrlist/.

more expedient solutions to jump-start the Southern economy. In the South, the temporary occupation of Union soldiers, the seizure of lands, and the removal of local leadership left many longing for the past. Efforts to reconcile the North and the South became the primary focus after Lincoln's assassination. By 1877, the Southern elites had successfully gotten back their power and land. More importantly, they had established new ways to control the freedman with a combination of Lost Cause propaganda and legislative Black Codes.² By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States had reorganized in a way that ensured white dominance and Black disenfranchisement.³ Any abolitionist hope for full equality among Black and white people failed to capture the social consciousness of the United States.

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a combined impetus for religious freedom and temperance came naturally out of a strong political alignment with abolitionism.⁴ The fight for religious liberty emphasized constitutionally protected freedoms. And the Adventist lobby in support of temperance more

² The Lost Cause is a Southern historical narrative about the Civil War. For this reconstruction, the war over slavery got reduced to a battle for state rights and the perpetrators of the Confederate rebellion were recast as heroes. From this milieu, Southerners sought to maintain their slave economy through legislative action known as Black Codes. These laws restricted the free movement and voting rights of Black people. Breaking these laws could lead to imprisonment, forced labor, and in extreme instances death.

³ My choice of capitalization between "white" and "Black" is intentional. The use of the word "white" seeks to homogenize a diversity of Western cultures primarily for legal purposes; it is not an ethnic distinction. On the other hand, the use of the word "Black" represents the African diaspora in the United States, a people group once enslaved and now free. The lack of clear lineage or heritage justifies the use of "Black" as a denotation of ethnicity (and estrangement). I use African American and Black interchangeably throughout this paper.

⁴ Kevin M. Burton, "The Seventh-day Adventist Pioneers and Their Protest Against Systemic Racism," NAD Ministerial Association, 18 June 2020, <https://www.nadministerial.com/stories/2020/6/18/the-seventh-day-adventist-pioneers-and-their-protest-against-systemic-racism>; Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000), 20, 95; Calvin B. Rock, *Protest and Progress: Black Seventh-day Adventist Leadership and the Push for Parity* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2018), 1–10; Jonathan A. Thompson, ed., *The Enduring Legacy of Ellen G. White and Social Justice* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2017); Louis B. Reynolds, *We Have Tomorrow: The Story of American Seventh-day Adventists with an African Heritage* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1984), 29–84; Delbert W. Baker, "The Dynamics of Communication and African-American Progress in the Seventh-day Adventist Organization: A Historical Descriptive Analysis" (PhD diss., Howard University, 1992), 33–43.

forcefully challenged the norms of society.⁵ Eventually—when the dual crises of the Civil War and the failed First Reconstruction resulted in unresolved racial tensions—the conception of acceptable activism narrowed and began to contradict their abolitionist ideals.⁶ This contradiction produced two fundamentally different positions: a historic yet dwindling call for integration and a preference for racial separation.

Throughout the church's history, there has been strong support for equality between racial groups. For co-founder, Ellen G. White (EGW), racial separation contradicted Scripture and her own prophetic experiences. Her advocacy for African American outreach became central to her ministry from 1891 until her passing in 1915. For many, her counsels set forth a doctrine of acceptance and a strategy for inclusion and integration between groups. But there also emerged a group of Seventh-day Adventist members and leaders who saw racial separation as a societal necessity. To bring in new members from the South, an abolitionist message of social equality would never work. And they found within EGW's own words support for their belief that the gospel work should proceed separately along racial lines. To accommodate a white constituency, administrators and pastors would begin to filter EGW's writings to justify their preference for racial separation. In short, the ability to coordinate authoritative counsels with social norms allowed the Seventh-day Adventist Church to transition from abolitionism to segregation.

Methodology and Problem

To understand this transition from abolitionism to segregation, it is important to first distinguish separation from segregation. Separation refers to the ways that groups—racial or cultural—tend toward their own group.⁷

⁵ Douglas Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic: The Public Involvement of a Major Apocalyptic Movement* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2001).

⁶ Baker demonstrates the range of perspectives within the church ("Dynamics of Communication," 40–43); cf. Rock, *Protest and Progress*, 3, 5.

⁷ Cf. Rock, who reflects on the fact that national integration policies have been mostly unsuccessful in promoting the blending of different cultural groups (*Protest and Progress*, 167–169). "Desegregation functions as a superior strategy for Black social progress, because it envisions the right of participation without suggesting the inevitability of physical, cultural, or personal merger" (168). Rock sees the failure of integration due to forced assimilation or homogenization (such as bussing) and argues that desegregation is a more effective means for achieving a willingly integrated society. To this conversation, I would add the critical proposals of Michael O. Emerson and George Yancey, *Transcending Racial Barriers: Toward a Mutual Obligation Approach* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011). Their research offers a more comprehensive understanding of integration models and offers a productive way for institutions to think about racial unity. But these observations do not take into consideration the 2020 Census, which notes that "the Multiracial population

Segregation deals with explicit or implicit exclusionary policies that penalize interracial socialization. To this end, we do find varying levels of separationist stances in the writings of EGW,⁸ but as this paper will clarify, not once in her writings do we find the notion that racial separation was a normative state. That is, she believed that our ability to love and tolerate one another was an earthly representation of heaven.⁹ Also, the practice of segregation was in a nascent phase during EGW's life. In this sense, the transition from abolitionism to segregation—as this paper will argue—was not a product of her writing. Rather, separationist and eventually segregationist ideals reflected the church's lived experiences and practices, which informed their readings of EGW.

The ideological shift for Adventism began around the 1890s, when growing support for separationist policy came up against EGW and those in favor of racial equality. In March of 1891, EGW spoke before the General Conference, the highest administrative body in the hierarchy of the Seventh-day Adventist church organization. Her speech, "Our Duty to the Colored People," laid out a path toward complete integration of the church (*SWk*, 9–17). Unfortunately, her later counsels seem to pull back from such calls as racial prejudice grew more violent.¹⁰ This shift is significant because both sides relied on the writings of EGW to promote or resist racial separation. That both sides actively cited her counsel suggests a level of ambiguity from

was measured at 9 million people in 2010 and is now 33.8 million people in 2020, a 276% increase." See United States Census Bureau, "2020 Census Statistics Highlight Local Population Changes and Nation's Racial and Ethnic Diversity," 12 August 2021, <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/population-changes-nations-diversity.html>. These findings may support Rock's claim of the success of desegregation, but this data may also represent a growing mutual acceptance between once disparate racial groups.

⁸ For instance, EGW saw interracial marriage as an extreme view for her time (*SWk*, 15).

⁹ "Men may have both hereditary and cultivated prejudices, but when the love of Jesus fills the heart, and they become one with Christ, they will have the same spirit that He had. If a colored brother sits by their side, they will not be offended or despise him. They are journeying to the same heaven, and will be seated at the same table to eat bread in the kingdom of God. If Jesus is abiding in our hearts we cannot despise the colored man who has the same Saviour abiding in his heart. When these unchristian prejudices are broken down, more earnest effort will be put forth to do missionary work among the colored race" (*SWk*, 14).

¹⁰ For a more comprehensive survey of her views, see Benjamin Baker, ed., "Counsels on Blacks: A Comprehensive Compilation of Ellen G. White's Statements on Black People," February 2021, 118–471, https://d34387f8-b80b-4319-a5ee-4b34617a2bab.filesusr.com/ugd/dc5cd6_712e6e418cac412a9c6e48cb5a32946d.pdf.

the church's co-founder and prophet.¹¹ Currently, the dominant historical position sees her separationist counsels as a temporary stopgap until "a better way" emerged.¹² But the historian Douglas Morgan emphasizes "Among the Colored People," written by EGW in 1909, as a major contributor to the confusion concerning her position on race relations.¹³ Morgan rightly notes how her contemporaries viewed this text as a direct contradiction to her prior calls for integrated worship spaces.

I am convinced that Morgan's assessment is correct concerning how Adventists have understood EGW's counsels concerning race. This means it is insufficient to simply point to EGW's hope for "a better way" when *the way* may consist of further separationist policy. What I seek to do in this paper is to counter the historical assumption that EGW supported racial separation or created the justifications for segregation. To do this, I will compare EGW's writings with a response letter to the People's Church, an all-Black fellowship,¹⁴ in Washington, DC, by General Conference President Arthur

¹¹ E. A. Sutherland—who served as President of Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) before accepting the call to educate in the South—recorded a rumor that highlights how many in the South were interpreting EGW's words: "I have been informed several times that some recent testimonies have come to different ones considering the importance of the colored work. One statement has been quoted something like this: – That the proper way to work for the colored people is to go first to the white folks and get them interested to help the colored people around them. I do not remember any such testimony in my possession" (Letter from E. A. Sutherland to EGW, [Berrien Springs, MI: Center for Adventist Research, Andrews University, 18 December 1908].). Cf. Douglas Morgan on the treatment of a DC pastor pushing for separating the churches based on race (*Lewis C. Sheafe: Apostle to Black America* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2010], 251–252, 261–264).

¹² Ronald D. Graybill's work represents a position that would become the normative argument for Adventist historians. He writes, it was "Ellen White's conviction that extreme caution must be exercised in order to prevent the closing of the Negro work entirely in the South. She hoped that it would be only a matter of time until the Lord 'shows us a better way'" (*E. G. White and Church Race Relations* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1970], 117). However, Calvin Rock observes that "unfortunately the church for decades reacted to this statement given as common-sense caution against actions that would jeopardize gospel proclamation, as if it were perpetual principle. The 'better way' became synonymous with the Second Advent" (*Protest and Progress*, 24).

¹³ Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 385–391; *9T*, 199–226.

¹⁴ The issue of racism and segregation became an increasing problem in the early years of the century. Daniells saw that the answer to prejudice among white church members would necessitate the creation of white and Black churches. The People's Church was formed in 1903 to serve this end, and the powerful preacher/evangelist Lewis C. Sheafe was installed there. From all extant records, Daniells and Sheafe were of one accord concerning the separation of these churches. Understandably, Sheafe

G. Daniells and his Executive Committee in 1906.¹⁵ This work represents a necessary piece of the puzzle required to undo a historical misunderstanding of EGW that has contributed toward separationist and segregationist policies within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the first part of this paper, I address perceived contradictions between EGW's 1909 counsels and statements written in the 1890s. Analysis of these passages suggests her counsels remained principally consistent, with some pragmatic adjustments due to Jim Crow. I will first read her 1909 counsels alongside an 1895 meeting she cites directly (*SWk*, 72–78). Through this analysis, I will provide a more thorough refutation of any claim that her writings intentionally guided separationist policies in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

If my proposed hermeneutical adjustment holds against scrutiny, then Daniells's letter to the People's Church represents a direct contradiction to the intent behind EGW's counsels.¹⁶ The second section analyzes Daniells's response to the People's Church in 1906. His letter, written with the approval of the General Conference Executive Committee, establishes the unofficial separation policy for the church. In his response, Daniells provided a selective reading of EGW's writings—some of which the People's Church would not have ready access to. And it is this compilation that illuminates a growing consensus for racial separation in the church as well as the church's interpretive lens for justifying this shift.

If EGW did not prefer separationism, the onus for perpetuating racial separation during this period fell solely on Adventist leadership. This is not to suggest that the general constituency did not favor racial separation as well. But it should be recognized that the church relied on the leadership to publish EGW's writings. Thus, any authorial justification in favor of cultural norms came from the top. Also, given the growing tendency to view EGW as verbally inspired, a separationist reading would be received as an infallible affirmation for separation and ultimately segregation.¹⁷ Let us now look closely at some selected readings from EGW.

and the People's Church would see the lack of financial, educational, or health-care aid as inconsistent with the original intent of their agreement.

¹⁵ Benjamin McArthur, *A. G. Daniells: Shaper of Twentieth-Century Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2015), 80–214. As the longest standing president in the history of the General Conference, Daniells gained prominence through his administrative prowess along with his strong relationship with the Whites. Because of his close associations with the prophet and her family, he (in effect) would take on the spiritual mantle after EGW's passing.

¹⁶ Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 389. Not enough has been done to fully analyze the impact of editorial contributions in the writing process. This paper is limited in scope, but hopefully future studies will perform a deeper textual study of White's controversial documents such as "Among the Color People" (*9T*, 199–226).

¹⁷ Historically, compilations have been how interest groups within the church could convey their hermeneutical lens on the writings of EGW. This practice of compiling and even explaining her writings has provided several unique and often

Ellen G. White

Ellen G. White stood before church leaders at the General Conference Session in 1891 to urge the church to send missionaries to the South (*SWk*, 9–18). Prior to this, little time and few resources went to the deep South or to growing an African American membership.¹⁸ Even worse, after the end of the Civil War, racism began to take a firmer hold in the church, which EGW personally witnessed among Adventist members in St. Louis in 1887 (*SWk*, 11).¹⁹ Such experiences went against the message she spent her life promoting. In her 1891 speech, she made it clear that racism and separationist beliefs did not belong in the church. With her call for greater efforts in the South, she emphasized the need for unity between Blacks and whites.

Ellen G. White began to apply the principles espoused in 1891 to promote mission in the South. But as time progressed, her vision for integration met the stark reality of violent racism. The rise of Jim Crow necessitated nuanced approaches to doing work in the South. Below I have selected statements from her pen that attempt to deal with these problems.²⁰

To Integrate or Not to Integrate

You have no license from God to exclude the colored people from your places of worship. — *SWk*, 15 (1891)

In regard to white and colored people worshiping in the same building, this

contradictory positions. However, the administrative use of compilations has been the most effective, partly due to familial connections to EGW, and also because they have historically been the gatekeepers to her archived writings. Slowly, with some editorial curation, her correspondence and unpublished writings have been published, along with several helpful online databases and archives (e.g., <https://egwwritings.org>; <https://www.adventistarchives.org>), making it possible for the public to look at her writings comprehensively. What emerges are clear discrepancies between administrative and lay use of her writings; more importantly, we can begin to map out the fundamental differences between EGW's position and that of the administration and laity.

¹⁸ Baker, "Dynamics of Communication," 278. But of considerable note, see Trevor O'Reggio, "The Father of Black Adventism: Charles M. Kinney," *JATS* 25 (2014): 116–131.

¹⁹ O'Reggio, "Father of Black Adventism," 121–123.

²⁰ The term "color line" would eventually be replaced with the more familiar term "segregation." During this time though, it is important to remember that both white and Black people thought that separate but equal accommodations would succeed—a position likely influenced by the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling of 1896, although the zeitgeist around *Plessy* was primarily negative. Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890–2000* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001), 14; Michael J. Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 16–28.

cannot be followed as a general custom with profit to either party. — *9T*, 206 (1909)

The way I have cited EGW represents a typical reading within Adventism. It also represents a historical and present challenge for Black Seventh-day Adventists. The very person who advocated so eloquently on our behalf, by 1909, seemed to stand against the fight for equality. But EGW did not see a contradiction with her past statements and does not offer any clarifications that indicate a change in her thinking.²¹ Did EGW simply choose to ignore her changing views about race? Or did she truly believe that her views are in harmony? She offered a framework for answering these questions. In *Testimonies to the Church*, volume 9, page 206, she referred to some of her counsels written from Australia in 1895, found in *The Southern Work*, pages 66–78.²² I will use these passages to form my interpretative lens for understanding her nuanced positions around race relations.

In 1891, EGW spoke exclusively to an all-white Northern leadership with almost no active presence in the South. Local perspective permitting, statements like “God makes no distinction between the North and the South” and “they [African Americans] will not by any means be excluded from the gathering of the white people” clearly express universal standards for the entire church to follow (*SWk*, 13, 16). This universality is maintained in an 1895 leadership meeting in Australia (*SWk*, 66–78). In this meeting, EGW laid out strategies to counter Southern attempts to perpetuate Black servitude. For her, prejudice fell into the realm of divine warfare (*SWk*, 67–68, 76), and therefore, laborers needed to be subtle and innovative (*SWk*, 77). For this reason, she denounced any effort by fallible humans to construct lines of separation, hasty proclamations of Adventist doctrine (*SWk*, 70), or the speedy implementation of integration between groups (*SWk*, 20, 22). A greater harmony between Blacks and whites would come but only by “cautiously, presenting the truth by degrees, as the hearers can bear it” (*SWk*, 71).

EGW saw the need for different missional tactics in the South. “Among the colored people they will have to labor in different lines from those followed in the North” (*SWk*, 67). The tendency for Black and white Southern ministers to oppose Seventh-day Adventist teachings—especially regarding Sabbath observance—made Adventist outreach challenging (*SWk*, 67).²³

²¹ E.g., “Whatever may be the nationality or color, whatever may be the social condition, the missionary of God will look upon all men as the purchase of the blood of Christ and will understand that there is no caste with God” (*SWk*, 31).

²² To date, I have not seen a complete comparative analysis of these texts.

²³ Observing the Sabbath in the South would mean the loss of one day of work and in an agrarian economy that could prove disastrous. For this reason, missionaries had begun to encourage converts to catch up their work on Sundays, which led to arrests and harassment. See Ronald D. Graybill, *Mission to Black America: The True*

To prevent unnecessary confrontations, she urged missionaries to use extreme caution when introducing the Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. Instead of focusing on the particulars of Adventism, she promoted education through Bible readings (*SWk*, 68) along with medical work (*SWk*, 70, 73).²⁴ Through literacy and health care, Adventists could better negate Southern disenfranchisement and racism, as well as prejudice against Adventism.

Ellen G. White understood that Southern whites feared the loss of Black labor in the fields and opposed—oftentimes violently—most forms of education or social uplift (*SWk*, 67). She also recognized the attempt to rewrite history by whites who “are determined to make it appear that the blacks were better off in slavery than since they were set free” (*SWk*, 83). EGW offered two solutions to these problems: the training of Black leaders, educators, and medical workers (*SWk*, 75), and the promotion of industrial education (*SWk*, 84, 92). For EGW, the Oakwood School became a critical component for realizing her vision.²⁵ Not only did she advocate for its founding in 1896, but she also actively promoted the school the rest of her life through the donation of book proceeds as well as through fundraising.

Despite a concrete model for education and social uplift, when it came to integration, EGW considered it a “difficult problem to solve” (*Ms* 77, 2 August 1903, paragraph 1). While trumpeting God’s ideal for completely integrated worship spaces, perhaps she underestimated how pervasive racism would become within the church. As the twentieth century dawned, the Seventh-day Adventist Church experienced impressive African American growth.²⁶ But with

Story of Edson White and the Riverboat Morning Star (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1971), 74–78; Reynolds, *We Have Tomorrow*, 85–107; Josh Dobson, “Adventists Arrested for Sabbath-Breaking?” Gainesville Seventh-day Adventist Church, <https://gainesvillega.adventistchurch.org/media/revival/arrested-for-sabbath-breaking>.

²⁴ “As the truth is brought to bear upon the minds of both colored and white people, as souls are thoroughly converted, they will become new men and women in Christ Jesus” (*SWk*, 22). Cf. Baker, “Dynamics of Communication,” 177–261.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 85; Graybill, *White and Church Race*, 44–52. One way EGW modeled Black support was through personal donations, along with constant solicitations for the Oakwood Industrial School. Benjamin J. Baker (ed.), *A Place Called Oakwood, Inspired Counsel: A Comprehensive Compilation of Ellen G. White Statements on the Oakwood Educational Institution* (Huntsville, AL: Oakwood College, 2007), 7–9, 25.

²⁶ By 1885, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had a membership of about 50 African Americans. In 1892, R. M. Kilgore reported no change (See Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, 4 vols. [Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1962], 2:185, 343, in Baker, “Dynamics of Communication,” 77n82, 278)—although membership in North America had increased from 18,702 to 33,778 (see Baker [ed.], “Timeline of Black Adventist History: 1865–1899,” in <https://www.blacksdahistory.org/black-adventist-timeline-1865-1899>). See also *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, 1885, 38; *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, 1904, 10,

Jim Crow in full swing and increased Southern pressures to sustain separation, EGW recognized the waning support for integration. In a private letter, she admitted that publicly promoting integration would lead to greater barriers in the work.²⁷ She blamed a lackluster approach by Adventists to reach the South along with a growing consensus among members to create a “color line” policy.²⁸ EGW’s opposition to both positions represented a nuanced and careful approach to race relations, as it can be seen in the following,

But who will press the question of entire exclusion? Both white and colored people have the same Creator, and are saved by the redeeming grace of the same Saviour. . . The Lord has not made two heavens, one for white people and one for the colored people. There is but one heaven for the saved (*4MR*, 33).

For her, the problem was not a lack of policy but rather a lack of commitment to Jesus. Ellen G. White, while acknowledging the elusiveness of complete inclusion, rejected any policy in favor of complete separation.²⁹

available at <https://www.adventistyearbook.org>. By 1909, Black membership was around 900 (Baker, “Timeline of Black Adventist History: 1900–1945,” in <https://www.blackdahistory.org/black-adventist-timeline-1900-1944>), with a total North American membership of 60,807 (*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, 1910, 10). It is quite likely that the official membership tally is inaccurate. It is also possible that the fallout with Sheafe in 1906 led to a reduction in the Black membership for 1910. Nevertheless, the numbers show a strong growth, which is all the more impressive considering the limited support and access afforded them.

²⁷ “There is too much at stake for human judgment to be followed in this matter. If the Conference should say that no difference is to be recognized and no separation is to be made in church relationship between the white people and the colored people, our work with both races would be greatly hindered. If it should be recommended and generally practiced in all our Washington churches, that white and black believers assemble in the same house of worship, and be seated promiscuously in the building, many evils would be the result. Many would say that this should not be, and must not be” (Lt 304 from EGW to Churches in Washington, D.C., 19 October 1908, in *4MR*, 32).

²⁸ E.g., “One of the difficulties attending the work is that many of the white people living where the colored people are numerous are not willing that special efforts should be put forth to uplift them” (*9T*, 204).

²⁹ “Men have thought it necessary to plan in such a way as to meet the prejudice of the white people; and a wall of separation in religious worship has been built up between the colored people and the white people. The white people have declared themselves willing that the colored people should be converted. They have no objection to this... yet they were not willing to sit side by the side of their colored brethren and sing and pray and bear witness to the truth which they had in common.... The image of Christ might be stamped upon the soul, but it still would be necessary to have a separate church and a separate service.... Is not this prejudice against the colored people on the part of

The threat of violence against African Americans and their sympathizers made it next to impossible to safely integrate worship spaces in the South without serious reprisals from surrounding communities. To continue Black education, health care, and bringing people to the knowledge of Jesus's love, she would ultimately accept the need for separate worship spaces. Temporary separation meant nothing compared to the spreading of a gospel that would undermine racism altogether.

The Breaking Down of Prejudice

If Jesus is abiding in our hearts we cannot despise the colored man who has the same Saviour abiding in his heart. — *SWk*, 14 (1891)

He who is closely connected with Christ is lifted above the prejudice of color or caste. — *9T*, 209 (1909)

Central to EGW's ministry came the conviction that when a person came to Jesus, they became a new creation (*SWk*, 22). The snare of racism and prejudice could be destroyed by a correct presentation of the gospel: all hatred and malice would cease.³⁰ EGW's 1895 counsels outlined the necessity for sending workers who saw every person as their equal. This internal focus was to guide workers amid a culture of hate and neglect. Only missionaries with a "self-sacrificing spirit" were to enter the South if they were to navigate the difficulties there (*SWk*, 17). By setting up industrial schools, and by providing health care and training for local communities, the inevitable result of any faithful adherent would be to forego their prejudice and hate. "Those who claim to be Christians have a work to do in teaching them [African Americans] to read and to follow various trades and engage in different business enterprises.... If they had an opportunity to develop, they would stand upon an equality with the whites" (*SWk*, 44).³¹

When EGW advised, in 1909, that issues of equality should not be urged on white people, she asserted this with a conviction that implementation of racial policy should be avoided: "If we move quietly and judiciously, laboring in the way that God has marked out both white and colored people will

the white people similar to that which was cherished by the Jews against the Gentiles?... Christ worked throughout His life to break down this prejudice" (*SWk*, 19–20).

³⁰ "The Walls of sectarianism and caste and race will fall down when the true missionary spirit enters the hearts of men" (*SWk*, 55).

³¹ She also wrote, "Let them visit the sick and the poor, ministering to their wants, and they will find favorable opportunities to open the Scriptures to individuals and to families" (*SWk*, 70). "As a means of overcoming prejudice and gaining access to minds, medical missionary work must be done, not in one or two places only, but in many places where the truth has not yet been proclaimed" (*9T*, 211).

be benefited by our labors” (9*T*, 214–215).³² True success could only come with workers able to operate within oppressive structures without becoming changed by them.³³ Within this lens, converts to the Seventh-day Adventist Church would stay separate, but internally white and Black converts would have no prejudice or hatred that would hinder full integration. Participating in political discussions could shut the door to the only pathway for complete integration. Therefore, she urged for faithful and quiet work that attracted all parties to Jesus. At a certain time, a tipping point would appear—where people would be guided by God to turn away from prejudice—and the Seventh-day Adventist Church would then be able to express publicly the unity it practiced privately.³⁴

Spirit Guided Leadership

The Lord will give wisdom to all who ask Him, but let those who are to work difficult and peculiar fields study Christ’s methods. —*SWk*, 76 (1895)

Receive the Holy Spirit before you submit your plans for dealing with the color line. — *Ms 77*, 2 August (1903)

This brief historical analysis of EGW’s perspective showcases her belief that a true understanding of Jesus could negate the evil invention of racism and prejudice. Because of this pressing need, she encouraged culturally accommodating forms of education and health care to introduce Southern Blacks and whites to Scripture and, ultimately, Jesus. Seeing great risk in adopting any of the ideas articulated in her time, she also urged that no official policies be constructed to either separate or integrate any congregation until direct spiritual guidance illuminated the process (*Ms 77*, 2 August 1903; *SWk*, 11, 13, 68; 9*T*, 209, 213, 216). In the meantime, the church would operate within the prevailing culture, quietly subverting it, until a better way opened up before them. The church was to operate internally on an equal basis but externally along the lines of culture until the time came when their racial harmony

³² See also Graybill, *White and Church Race*, 70–87.

³³ White, after quoting 1 Cor 9:20–23, stated, “We know that the apostle did not sacrifice one jot or principle. He did not allow himself to be led away by the sophistry and maxims of men.... This was the manner of his working—adapting his methods to win souls. Had he been abrupt and unskillful in handling the Word, he would not have reached either Jew or Gentile” (*SWk*, 76–77). That there was to be an internal perspective different from external practices is further indicated at the end of this letter, where EGW requested, “I would not advise that this be published in our papers, but let the workers have it in leaflets, and let them keep their own counsels” (*SWk*, 78).

³⁴ White predicted, “When the Holy Spirit is poured out, there will be a triumph of humanity over prejudice in seeking the salvation of the souls of human beings. God will control minds. Human hearts will love as Christ loved. And the color line will be regarded by many very differently from the way in which it is now regarded” (9*T*, 209).

could be expressed publicly. With this expectation of an inevitable divine intervention for the country, she saw separation as a short-term problem, not a long-term solution.

For Southern leadership, her position was seen as an opening for administrators to adopt stricter separationist policies. The rationale behind their actions did not align with the spirit of EGW's counsel—especially when we understand that her rejection of official policy based on race was meant to promote the infiltration of Adventist workers into the South. But despite EGW's opposition to exclusionary policies, her pragmatic calls for separate worship spaces gave administrators what they needed to support separationism. In a bureaucratic flourish, leaders like Daniells used her “no policy” stance to justify unequal distribution of funds and access to facilities.³⁵ When Daniells was elected General Conference President in 1901, pressured by his mentor R. M. Kilgore, pastors, and fellow administrators, he became convinced that separation was the best and quickest solution to address the problem of the color line.³⁶

Arthur G. Daniells and the People's Church

Entering the twentieth century, the Seventh-day Adventist Church went through a process of reorganization—a process necessitated by growth both in the United States and around the world. With this growth came urgent needs for infrastructure and resources, but the General Conference found itself unable to meet every financial need. The guidance of Daniells brought the church back into solvency, resulting in exponential growth worldwide for both the health and education sectors of the church.³⁷ Unfortunately, in the United States—despite continued growth in Black membership—most infrastructure and subsequent funding was off-limits for African Americans. These disparities came to the forefront in 1906 with the People's Church, an all-Black fellowship, in Washington, DC.³⁸ After seeing multiple white-

³⁵ Lt 314 from EGW to Arthur G. Daniells, 23 September 1907, quoted in Baker, *Place Called Oakwood*, 49–50. In this letter, EGW implored Daniells to be mindful of efforts to divert funds from the Southern field. She often spoke up about the continued disparate support between white and Black institutions (see *SWk*, 88–89).

³⁶ Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 187–189.

³⁷ McArthur, *A. G. Daniells*, 255–286.

³⁸ By 1902, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists moved their administrative offices from Battle Creek (MI) to Takoma Park (MD), just north of the District of Columbia. The issue of racism and segregation became an apparent problem, and Daniells saw that the answer to prejudice among white church members would necessitate the creation of white and Black churches (see Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 188–192, who references a private letter that articulates Daniells's plan for separating Black and white people with the hope of also providing adequate resources

only structures being erected around them while at the same time receiving zero support from the District of Columbia Committee or the General Conference, the People's Church reached out to the General Conference to ascertain when and where they too would have access to Adventist resources.³⁹ Daniells's 1906 response to their petition served as the official General Conference answer.

An Unofficial "Official" Policy

We have desired to confer with you in a brotherly spirit relative to this vexed question, and set before you principles which should govern us in dealing with this matter. This we have done the best way we have known how, and we trust you will receive our efforts in the spirit in which they are made. —Arthur G. Daniells (1906)⁴⁰

The 1906 General Conference response to the People's Church consisted of eleven pages, including the submission of the two-page People's Church petition into the committee record. The People's Church petition submitted on February 26 requested a response by March 15, but as the deadline approached—with no immediate response from Daniells or his office—Lewis C. Sheafe, the church's pastor, pressed the issue.⁴¹ Two meetings occurred

for both). The People's Church was formed in 1903 to serve this end, and the powerful preacher/evangelist Lewis C. Sheafe was installed there. From all extant records, Daniells and Sheafe were of one accord concerning the separation of these churches. Understandably, Sheafe and the People's Church would see the lack of financial, educational, or health-care aid as inconsistent with the original intent of their agreement.

³⁹ I have found that at least \$300,000 was raised between the sanitariums, schools, and two white churches. Theofield G. Weis documents the monies raised by the Review and Herald in 1904 and in 1906–1907 ("Hail Washington: The Story of a College," manuscript draft [Takoma Park, MD: Washington Adventist University, 1946], Appendix A, C) although it should be noted that after 1907, a \$500,000 fundraiser began for missions, to which the Southern field (a term synonymous with but not limited to African American outreach) would have received a small portion (E.g., Arthur G. Daniells, and G. B. Thompson, "Eighty-Second Meeting of the General Conference Committee," in *Minutes of the General Conference Committee* 137 [Washington, DC: General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, 14 April 1906], <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Minutes/GCC/GCC1906.pdf> which shows 5 percent of October donations going "to the development of the work among the colored people of Washington, D.C."). Cf. Morgan, who highlights the explosive growth of Sheafe's People's Church compared to the all-white church that received maximum financial support from the General Conference (*Lewis C. Sheafe*, 280–288).

⁴⁰ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (Washington, DC: General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, 28 May 1906), 11.

⁴¹ In my exploration of the presidential letters at the General Conference Archives, I discovered that Daniells actively responded to letters, and his correspondence

between Daniells and the People's Church on April 1 and 22 but without any firm commitments from leadership.⁴² After these meetings—and more administrative delays—Daniells eventually offered a formal response on May 28, 1906. For the People's Church, the central issue in their petition revolved around equal access to facilities.⁴³ But Daniells perceived this letter as a direct attack on his preference for racial separation, and he shifted the focus of the request to defend his views, thus minimizing the request for equal access.⁴⁴

Daniells understood EGW's 1891 warning against creating color line policies as justification for church administrators and pastors to freely deal with this issue as they saw fit (*SWk*, 15).⁴⁵ Referencing the mission of the

is voluminous compared to his predecessors. Typically, Daniells would send a wire notifying the reception of correspondence and a rough timeline of when a response would be issued. Extant records show that even though Daniells traveled extensively, he also maintained constant communications. The lack of a timely response in this regard demonstrates either the hesitancy to tackle the People's Church/Sheafe issue or a lack of urgency in addressing this matter.

⁴² Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 296–297.

⁴³ “First, that the time in which we live, and the message we have to give, demand that we shall not waste our time in squabbles over the color question; but that we devote our energies to the salvation of both races. Second, that no effort be made to bring about an equality of the races, nor join the popular cry of elevating the colored man. Third, that we advise separate meetings of the races in those parts of the country where it causes offense for them to mix. Fourth, that in separating the races for meeting purposes, we shall not leave the colored people to themselves, nor neglect friendly counsel and cooperation in church management” (Letter from Arthur G. Daniells to Hampton W. Cottrell, [21 January 1902, Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research] cited in Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 190). It is important to recognize that while this agreement declares an inherent equality between racial groups, and even a willingness to allow for some representation by African Americans, there are no definitive declarations concerning the use and/or funding of separate institutions.

⁴⁴ “While your letter makes inquiry regarding educational and medical missionary training advantages, we understand that the race question is the real question at issue” (In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, [28 May 1906], 3–4).

⁴⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, 4. Her reflections deal with an 1889 question concerning those who sought to institute for the church a color line policy—namely, the institution of Southern separation policies nationwide. In her private letters, EGW voiced some concerns, referring to the report of R. M. Kilgore, supervisor of District 2 (i.e., the Southern region), who promoted the setting of a color line policy for the church. To read the Southern response and extracts from Kilgore's letter, see Baker, “Dynamics of Communication,” 78n46, 277. EGW responded negatively to allowing the Southern culture to circumvent a consistent Adventist message. In response she wrote, “It has become habit to pass laws that do not always bear the signature of heaven. The question of the color line should not have been made a business for the [General] Conference to settle” (*Ms* 6, 4 November 1889, paragraph 9).

church to “every nation, kindred, tongue, and people,” he asserted that it would be “inconsistent and foolish” to create a policy that would benefit one group over the other.⁴⁶ He perceived policies in favor of equal access as offering favoritism to Black Adventists over other minority groups. For Daniells and the committee, the request for access equated to attempts to “frighten us and press us to their terms.”⁴⁷

The committee argued that the presence of “error and superstition” among the people meant that access to new facilities could not be delivered equally alongside the gospel. Doing so would risk jeopardizing the work of salvation.⁴⁸ Central to their justification was the uniqueness of the mission of the church—in which, for them, the question of “equality of the races” did not qualify. Instead, they categorized equality pejoratively alongside “socialism, civic reform, and modern humanitarianism.”⁴⁹ Having minimized the request for access to focus on the larger issue of racial equality, Daniells proceeded to offer three arguments to justify why local Black Adventists could not access infrastructure and training. First, he emphasized the primacy of proclaiming the Third Angel’s message. Second, he compared the authority of the People’s Church with that of Jesus, Moses, and Paul. And third, Daniells presented a compilation of EGW’s writings to codify his position on the color line. I have chosen to summarize some initial problems that emerge out of his first two arguments. Indeed, there is much work to be done in analyzing Daniells’s use of logic and Scripture. But—for our purposes here—more space is devoted to analyzing his EGW compilation. Highlighting Daniells’s hermeneutics alongside those of EGW will solidify the subtle but significant differences between the two.

Daniells’s First Two Arguments

How utterly inconsistent and foolish it would be for us to take a position toward any class of people for whom we are making such efforts, that would deprive them of any of the advantages and blessings of the gospel. —Arthur G. Daniells (1906)⁵⁰

⁴⁶ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (28 May 1906), 5.

⁴⁷ Letter from Arthur G. Daniells to Willie White, 30 May 1906, quoted in Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 299. Daniells’s argument ignored the fact that the problem of disparate conditions between the white and Black constituency went beyond issues of general equality between Blacks and other minority groups.

⁴⁸ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (28 May 1906), 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 5–6. It stands as strange that Daniells would have included in this list “modern humanitarianism,” especially regarding the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s strong position concerning health. This is a topic worth deeper analysis that I cannot offer here.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

Daniells's overarching concern for reaching as many people as possible prompted him to minimize the call for access. In his estimation, the promotion of Black welfare undermined the overall mission to spread the gospel. In his first argument, Daniells insisted that the Third Angel's message held within it everything needed and that every other "consideration should be subordinated," including requests for equal access.⁵¹ "We may well esteem it a privilege to set all such questions aside, if by so doing we can the more effectively impart the message to men."⁵² The perceived and real risks of destabilizing Adventism were significant during this period.⁵³ Separation, therefore, served as an expedient solution, but without "separate but equal" alternatives, this decision effectively removed opportunities for local Black constituents. Daniells could not offer a definitive solution to remedy this problem. Instead, he could only recognize "they have come far short" of providing resources to minorities and that "we have done the best we can"⁵⁴—a hard pill to swallow amid substantial contributions to white-only structures around DC.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵³ See McArthur, *A. G. Daniells*, 169–214. Of significant note for Adventists is the controversy between John Harvey Kellogg and church leadership (Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers*, 259–272). Suspicions were increased due to communications between Sheafe and Kellogg (Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 304–307). In short, the Kellogg crisis is a typical lens through which this period is discussed, both historically and theologically. The intersection of crises, for me, offers one of the clearest pictures of administrative authority. Daniells simply did not understand Black equity as coordinate to the political rift between the evangelistic and health institutions of the church.

⁵⁴ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (28 May 1906), 9.

⁵⁵ It is important to recognize that, in Washington DC, there were institutions that offered education and health care to white and Black citizens. L. E. Froom documents willing support from George Washington University, but also notes that Howard University "is for both sexes, and admits both races. This school is considered very good indeed by some white students with whom we have conversed, one of whom attends this school" ("Advantages of Medical Colleges in Washington D.C., and Baltimore MD," [misc. folder, Washington Adventist University Weiss Library], 2). It is clear that Adventist training schools would train both men and women, but there is no indication that they would train African Americans, since there is no Black students or missionaries mentioned in their published roster. See "Washington Foreign Mission Seminary: Announcement for 1910–1911," (misc. folder, Washington Adventist University Weiss Library), 45–47. Although there seems to have been some promotion of other ethnicities such as "Cuban," as mention in a letter from M. A. Kern to E. R. Palmer on May 11th, 1914 (Folder W 149, Washington Missionary College, General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research) and "Jew" in another letter from M. A. Kern to E. R. Palmer on July 16th, 1913 (*ibid.*), I found nothing

In the second argument, Daniells asserted that keeping silent on issues of access coordinated with the humility of Jesus, Moses, and Paul. These biblical figures willingly subordinated their lofty positions for the sake of the ministry: a model the People's Church would do best to follow. They all willingly denied themselves for the sake of proclaiming the message of salvation. For instance, Jesus became flesh, Moses refused the position of Pharaoh to lead the Hebrew slaves to freedom, and Paul became all things to all people.⁵⁶ By making these analogies, Daniells inflated the functional equality that came from being a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Instead of considering the People's Church's request for access as a petition for equity, Daniells used the priesthood of all believers paradigm to argue that Sheafe and associates wanted to place themselves over Daniells and other Adventist members.⁵⁷ It is also important to note that Daniells's allusions to Scripture directly contradicted the typical reading within Black communities of faith who more readily associated themselves with the Hebrew people freed by the mighty hand of God.⁵⁸ From this perspective, the leaders of the church are the more logical analogs to Jesus, Moses, and Paul. It would therefore fall upon the leadership to provide for the people of God, not the other way around. Ultimately, when Daniells asserted equal standing before God, the People's Church could not help but recognize the unequal status they had within the Church.

Daniells's two arguments present an idyllic picture of mutual submission while ignoring the obvious disparities between the members and the administration. Daniells's inability to equate biblical leadership with that of his office makes his logic difficult to grasp, but it was nevertheless the reasoning he used to divert the conversation from access to issues of race. Daniells's third argument relied on the counsel of EGW and served as an attempt to align his reasoning with that of her authority.

indicating their admission. Adventists had an awareness of institutions that accommodated Black and white people, which means that the General Conference and the District had the option to build around these models. Their choice to accommodate white-only spaces, therefore, serves as an expedient that in practice undermined the General Conference's claim that equal access was not an option.

⁵⁶ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (28 May 1906), 6.

⁵⁷ "We accept what the Bible and the Testimonies teach regarding the brotherhood of men and the Fatherhood of God" (ibid.).

⁵⁸ E.g., Cheryl J. Sanders, "Introduction: 'In the World, but Not of It,'" in *Readings in African American Church Music and Worship*, ed. James Abbingon (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001): 1:99–114.

The Segregation Compilation

We believe that the following cautions given by the Spirit of prophecy are of great value in the consideration of the question with which we are dealing, and that they should be carefully heeded. —Arthur G. Daniells (1906)⁵⁹

To give maximum authority to a doctrine of separation, Daniells offered a compilation of EGW statements. He compiled eight quotations placed in no chronological order and with no consideration for the original context. Every new citation is indented, but some inverted commas are missing and without any references to the location of these quotes, the collection reads as one continuous thought.⁶⁰ Most of these citations come from a small pamphlet titled *The Southern Work*, which did not receive wide distribution. Other citations came from personal correspondence not available to the general membership at the time.⁶¹ Given the relationships between the leadership and EGW, the People's Church had every reason to assume that Daniells presented a consistent view of her counsels. It is therefore likely they saw this compilation as authoritative and in agreement with the position of Daniells and the General Conference.

Space does not permit a complete analysis between Daniells's selection and the original letters from EGW. Nevertheless, the divergent interpretations between Daniells and EGW can be illustrated from his use of her 1895 counsels. Daniells excerpted two passages, and they appear one after the other in the People's Church response:

Not a word should be spoken to create prejudice, for if by any careless or impulsive speech to the colored people in regard to the whites any prejudice is created in their minds against the whites, or in the minds of the whites against them, the spirit of the enemy will work in the children of disobedience. Thus an opposition will be aroused which will hinder the work of the message, and will endanger the lives of the workers and of believers.

We have no right to do anything that will obstruct the light which is shining from heaven; yet by a wrong course of action we may imperil the work, and

⁵⁹ In: *Minutes of Meetings of the General Conference Committee*, (28 May 1906), 6–7.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 7. The end of the second paragraph and the beginning of the third paragraph are without quotation marks. This could have been read as either a brand new quote or a continuation of the second quote.

⁶¹ Here is the order of EGW's citations in Daniells's compilation with a brief description: *SWk*, 84 (5 June 1899 – on the southerners intolerance to the Seventh-day Adventist's doctrines); *IMR*, 77 (1903, paragraph 2 – on the Holy Spirit power needed to deal with Black Americans); *Ms* 77, 2 August 1903, paragraph 3 – on moving rapidly with the gospel work/submit to Holy Spirit for guidance on color line); *SWk*, 68, 71 (20 November 1895 – Caution in promoting the Sabbath); *SWk*, 92 (21 June 1899 – Against Northern colonization in the Southern field); *SWk*, 96, 95 (27 April 1899 – Warnings of dangerous mission work in deep South).

close this door which God has opened for the entrance of the truth (from White, Ms 22a, 1895, 7–8, quoted in *SWk*, 68, 71).

As I have highlighted above, EGW consistently called for caution and care in Southern missions to better infiltrate and indoctrinate. A careful work meant external accommodations to culture with an internal initiative to spread the knowledge of Jesus and break the chains of racism. Daniells excluded this context from his compilation. These two quotations leave out many important details and context and thus flatten EGW's concerns for inclusive gospel outreach to fears of white reprisal.

The two passages above are taken from *The Southern Work*, pages 68 and 71. What comes before and between these two citations is significant. First, Daniells began quoting *The Southern Work*, page 68, mid-paragraph, and omitted the first few sentences:

From the light that I have received, I see that if we would get the truth before the Southern people, we must not encourage the colored people to work on Sunday. There must be a clear understanding regarding this, but it need not be published. You must teach these people as you would teach children.

In context, prejudice emerged not because of calls for access but from Northern missionaries teaching Southerners to work on Sunday. Likewise, Daniells omitted the next sentence from *The Southern Work* which helpfully summarizes EGW's primary concern: "The final issue on the Sabbath question has not yet come, and by imprudent actions we may bring on a crisis before the time" (71). Daniells used these passages to support his arguments around race relations, but contextually, they had very little to do with race and more to do with missional methods. The Black and white Southerners did not appreciate the teachings of Adventism—especially the Sabbath—and her counsels were meant to be a corrective for careless workers who were putting Black—but also white—converts in danger. Fundamentally, EGW understood the intention of Southern whites to perpetuate the exploitation of Black labor. Thus, any perceived attack on production would be met with extreme resistance and violence. But nothing is said concerning the need to limit Black access to infrastructure, especially in the border states, where local prejudices did not always lead to violence.

The space between the two citations also removes EGW's clear counsel that explicitly called on discerning leadership to create productive strategies for inclusion.

There are many ways of reaching all classes, both white and black. We are to interest them in the life of Christ from His childhood up to manhood, and through His life of ministry to the cross. We cannot work in all localities in the same way. We must let the Holy Spirit guide, for men and women cannot convince others of the wrong traits of character. While laboring to introduce the truth, we must accommodate ourselves

as much as possible to the field and the circumstances of those for whom we labor (*SWk*, 68).

EGW recognized the need for nuance and diversity in approaches, and therefore, she did not want official policies around issues of race. Furthermore, in the above passage, she clearly expressed the need for divine guidance. For EGW, given that one solution did not fit all situations, divine guidance and humility were required for spiritual workers. In DC, there were already institutions, both public and private, that accommodated both white and Black people. To say then that complete exclusion was the only option for Adventists here is simply not true. For Daniells, what worked in the Deep South, could work anywhere racism existed: a position that would lead to a church-wide global practice of separation and segregation. Daniells's approach stands wholly insufficient for accomplishing EGW's nuanced vision for gospel outreach in difficult territories, nor does it take advantage of the precedent for multiracial services in DC during that time.⁶²

Daniells's decision to apply a geographically limited and missionally contextualized counsel in a universal sense is consistent in every instance he cites EGW in his response to the People's Church. EGW's call for diverse responses and nuance is omitted by Daniells in favor of creating a flattened perspective around white fear. This white fear, in Daniells's compilation, when removed from the Southern concern of production, conveyed the notion that the mere presence of Black people could promote persecution. Thus, strict policies against interracial socialization were necessary to promote stability and the gospel—a strange interpretation that would guide church policy for decades. By missing the central focus of her position—to protect Southern Blacks from overzealous missionaries from the North—Daniells narrowed his view to explicit mentions of the color line, thus ignoring her larger vision of a fully inclusive Spirit-led movement.

It is possible that the People's Church had copies of *The Southern Work* and were thus familiar with the context that Daniells avoided. But they would not have been aware of the direct counsel from EGW to the leadership which stated, "Receive the Holy Spirit before you submit your plans for dealing with the color line" (Ms 77, 2 August 1903, paragraph 3)⁶³ This counsel was received by Daniells in 1903 and yet did not prevent him from eventually

⁶² This was especially true in the public sector where opportunities for Black people began to dwindle significantly under President Wilson, who implemented segregated federal buildings in 1913. But it is important to note the presence of several colleges and hospitals that educated and cared for Black and white people around DC. See Constance McLaughlin Green, *The Secret City: A History of Race Relations in the Nation's Capital* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 155–183.

⁶³ It is important to know that although administration and laity alike pointed to EGW's writings to justify their actions, Daniells never received a commendation from her pen concerning any separation policy.

pursuing his separationist agenda first envisioned during a 1902 conference in Nashville.⁶⁴ The pressures to assuage a prejudiced constituency, combined with growing suspicions around the formidable Lewis C. Sheafe, made it easier for Daniells to take the expedient path of systemic separation. Such a path would ultimately lead to the People's Church and Sheafe leaving the Seventh-day Adventist Church.⁶⁵

Spiritless Separation

In Daniells's response to the People's Church, he called on them to exhibit a level of humility that he and his white constituents were unwilling to match. The attempt to address inequities was interpreted as an attempt to engage in the politics of the day. For the sake of expedience, Daniells endeavored to silence his Black constituency, but this decision came at a great cost. Not only did his decision lead to the exit of many Black members from the church; in addition, to justify the choice to deny access, he had to make EGW align with his position concerning the color line. For decades to come, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would adopt Daniells's interpretation as if it came from EGW herself. The path toward a segregated Seventh-day Adventist Church had been paved.

A Subtle Hermeneutical Shift

Comparing EGW's counsels alongside Daniells's "segregation compilation" of her writings highlights a subtle but important shift from institutional inclusion to institutional separation. By shifting the emphasis of EGW's writings from acceptance to separation, the church effectively neutered the significance of her counsels on race. What makes this reading even more dangerous is its subtlety. Indeed, she did shift her views concerning public integration as Jim Crow proceeded, and she consistently emphasized the need to move quietly and not politically in issues of contention. But in every written counsel for reaching African Americans amid prejudice and persecution stood the conviction that all of it could be undermined through patient biblical guidance by Spirit-filled workers. For EGW, a relationship with Jesus always trumped racism. Within such a model, the need to publicly agitate issues of equality did not matter because a true follower of Jesus would already see every person as equal. Daniells understood EGW differently.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 185–192.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 304–311.

⁶⁶ I think Daniells also began his own shift in thinking after Sheafe and the People's Church left the denomination. The creation of the Negro department at the General Conference in 1909 was Daniells's attempt to give African Americans a representative voice in the denomination (Rock, *Protest and Progress*, 13–27; Morgan, *Lewis C. Sheafe*, 401–440).

With Daniells's 1906 response to the People's Church, he made explicit an unofficial separationist policy for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As a result, Daniells effectively aligned EGW's writings with his administrative agenda. Eventually, the expedient policies of separation would spur segregation within the denomination. Under the guise of a universal "brotherhood," Adventists could invoke EGW to justify and perpetuate bigoted practices within the church—a practice persisting well into the twentieth century and arguably to this day.⁶⁷ Instead of a church internally integrated and prepared to light the way when the Spirit would begin destroying the walls of Jim Crow segregation during the Civil Rights era, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would only shed segregationist policies at the pace of the federal government. Consequently, the Seventh-day Adventist Church failed to recognize EGW's predictions of God's work against systems of racism in the United States. Instead of an Adventism established to destroy the bonds of racism through a radically Christocentric institutional model, it would capitulate to society's push for segregation.

Conclusion

Without a doubt, A. G. Daniells's leadership is a demonstration of administrative clarity of action and purpose worthy of aspiration and replication. And yet, as my research has shown, his willingness to accommodate the views of separationism set the church on a path of division and racism that we wrestle with to this very day. The comparative analysis offered in this article is representative of a greater work to be done in mapping out the role of racism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. If racism and segregation could appear to be justified theologically and through the writings of EGW, what other teachings based upon such interpretive traditions are we perpetuating in our current polity? To strengthen my analysis above, I would call upon scholars and administrators alike to explore how EGW's counsels on race were applied in various sectors. If my hypothesis remains sound, then it is more than likely that the application of Daniells's "segregation compilation" impacted not just the United States but the entire global field. And if this is the case, how do these implicit biases impact institutions and initiatives today? I believe that such questions have a direct impact on issues ranging from women's role in leadership to culturally appropriate missions and outreach.

The direction of my research also extends into questions relevant to those interested in the history of religion in the United States, especially around studies that engage the impact of social bias within religious, social,

⁶⁷ E.g., Alisa Williams, "Racist Language Overshadows Black Christian Union Event at Southern Adventist University," *Spectrum*, 6 February 2018, <https://spectrummagazine.org/article/2018/02/06/racist-language-overshadows-black-christian-union-event-southern-adventist-univer>.

and political policy. My analysis brings to the fore a history of capitulation and accommodation of social norms and customs within Adventism. But I hope that by clarifying our contributions to racism and bias, that those outside Adventism may find useful corollaries to their own lived experiences and traumas. It should be no surprise that administrators contend with complex and nuanced problems on multiple fronts. While it is impossible to foresee the future impacts of a decision with any meaningful clarity, we should perhaps bear in mind that expedient solutions may produce a cascade of negative outcomes. So perhaps we should ask ourselves: What mechanisms can we create that will expose our cultural blind spots—to hopefully prevent oppressive cycles invisible to our own lived experience—and foster productive leadership and growth within our faith communities?