

*Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire de l'éducation*  
ARTICLES / ARTICLES

## “The Students Swarm to these Peaceful Shores in Droves”: An Historical Overview of the Postwar Spring Break Phenomenon

**Ashley Doiron, Michael Dawson, Catherine Gidney**

St. Thomas University

### ABSTRACT

Despite the cultural and economic influence of Spring Break, and the fact that it has become a significant area of study in other fields of research such as psychology, sociology, college health, and business and marketing, historians have largely overlooked the phenomenon. This article provides an overview of Spring Break's postwar history by focusing primarily upon developments in the American Southeast, especially Fort Lauderdale, Daytona Beach and Atlanta. In bridging the histories of higher education and tourism we focus on three key developments: tensions between visiting students and host communities, commercialization and corporatization, and the racial dynamics of Spring Break. In our conclusion we briefly examine the phenomenon of “alternative” Spring Breaks and offer reflections on Spring Break's overall historical significance.

### RÉSUMÉ

Malgré l'influence culturelle et économique de la semaine de relâche universitaire, le « Spring Break » et le fait que de nombreux chercheurs en psychologie, sociologie, santé des étudiants universitaires, commerce et publicité s'y soient intéressés, les historiens ont négligé ce phénomène. Cet article fournit une vue d'ensemble de l'histoire de la semaine de relâche dans la période d'après-guerre, centrée sur le déroulement des activités dans le sud-est des États-Unis et, en particulier, Fort Lauderdale, Daytona Beach et Atlanta. Nous effectuons un rapprochement entre l'histoire de l'enseignement supérieur et celle du tourisme et nous mettons l'accent sur trois aspects clés de l'événement : les tensions entre les étudiants en vacances et les communautés hôtes, la commercialisation et le corporatisme et enfin la dynamique raciale de la semaine de relâche. Dans notre conclusion, nous considérons le phénomène des semaines de relâche « alternatives » et nous réfléchissons sur l'importance historique du « Spring Break ».

In 1960 the Hollywood film *Where the Boys Are* depicted a cultural phenomenon that began in the 1930s and took root in the 1950s: Spring Break. In its opening sequence the film boasted that students flocked “in droves” to its setting, Fort Lauderdale, a

development that city officials had encouraged and celebrated. But, as the film suggested, with its scenes of crowded beaches and public drunkenness and its allusions to sexual violence, Spring Break was not unproblematic. Indeed, by 1967, Roger H. Harper, Florida's state attorney, would declare such students a "despicable class of tourists."<sup>1</sup> Seen initially as a boon to small towns eager to attract tourist dollars, city officials, business people, and residents soon encountered the mayhem that could be unleashed by large numbers of unsupervised young people. As both an economic boon and an invasive, administrative challenge for local authorities, Spring Break spread as a cultural phenomenon among students. Indeed, today it is an accepted and often highly anticipated aspect of university life. Hollywood films, MTV and MuchMusic specials along with the *Girls Gone Wild* franchise have helped to establish annual trips to destinations such as Fort Lauderdale, Daytona Beach, Lake Havasu, among many other regional and local sites as a rite of passage for North American university students.

Despite the cultural and economic influence of Spring Break, and the fact that it has become a significant area of study in other fields of research such as psychology, sociology, college health, and business and marketing, historians have largely overlooked the phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand this is perhaps not surprising. Although the advent of social history has given rise to a number of key works on the history of student culture, the field remains in its infancy.<sup>3</sup> And while historians have examined some aspects of on-campus activities, students' off-campus activities, particularly their leisure activities, remain largely hidden from view.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, we know much more about student culture in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century than we do about more recent eras. Investigations into Spring Break thus offer not only a means to further explore the development of off-campus culture in the second half of the twentieth century, but also an opportunity to understand the historical roots of an activity that plays a key role in shaping public perceptions of university-student life.

Spring Break, though, has never just been about students. It also intersects with the histories of tourism, local business, civic politics, consumer culture and race relations, among others. This article thus offers an initial foray into the history of this understudied but important topic. In the pages that follow we offer a preliminary overview of Spring Break's postwar history by focusing primarily upon the American Southeast, especially Fort Lauderdale and Daytona Beach which played a central role in hosting and nurturing the phenomenon in the 1950s and 1960s, and Atlanta, the site of perhaps the most infamous "alternative" Spring Break: Freaknik. In doing so we focus on three key developments: tensions between visiting students and host communities, commercialization and corporatization, and the racial dynamics of Spring Break. In our conclusion we briefly examine the phenomenon of "alternative" Spring Breaks and offer reflections on Spring Break's historical significance.

## **Origins**

Pinpointing the "origins" of the contemporary Spring Break phenomenon is no easy task. Spring Break is in many ways a post-World War Two development. But

a nascent form of authorized break or holiday for college students existed by the early decades of the twentieth century when many post-secondary institutions were scheduling short breaks, usually a week in length, during the second semester of their school year.<sup>5</sup> These breaks were commonly referred to as spring vacation, or, because they often coincided with Easter, Easter Vacation. A number of early accounts indicate that athletic teams, in particular, embraced this opportunity to travel. *The Harvard Crimson*, for example, reported on athletic matches held during spring vacation as early as the 1920s.<sup>6</sup> For the Harvard teams, the southern United States was a popular destination during the colder spring months, but there were also reports of competitions held outside the country in places such as Bermuda.<sup>7</sup>

Although spring vacation travel seems to have been quite varied during the early decades of the twentieth century, a number of factors would eventually coalesce to bring Fort Lauderdale and other Florida communities to the forefront of spring travel for collegians on the East Coast. Indeed, an athletic competition, the College Swim Forum, is routinely cited as the initial catalyst that directed students' attention to Fort Lauderdale.<sup>8</sup> Although evidence is suggestive rather than conclusive, an often recited story has it that a member of the swim team of Colgate University in upstate New York convinced his coach and team members to train in Fort Lauderdale, his hometown, over the Christmas break of 1935.<sup>9</sup> The team enjoyed its time in Fort Lauderdale and eventually word spread among students that the city was a great place to visit, especially during the cold winter months. The Colgate swim coach, Sam Ingram, was so impressed with Fort Lauderdale that he suggested holding a swim meet at the municipal pool.<sup>10</sup> In December of 1936, Fort Lauderdale held its first annual College Swim Forum. Students from a number of universities came to compete, and according to municipal reports, introduced Fort Lauderdale to an even larger college crowd that would eventually return during future spring vacations.<sup>11</sup> Wartime complications undoubtedly slowed the development of the Spring Break phenomenon but it is, perhaps, telling that in 1945 the Office of Defense Transportation and the US Commissioner of Education, John W. Studebaker, deemed it necessary to call for a dramatic curtailment of university and college spring vacations in order to "avoid overloading transportation facilities."<sup>12</sup>

Post-war affluence and developments such as the federal government's investment in the highway system combined with the affordability and popularity of the automobile helped to set the stage for Spring Break's postwar expansion.<sup>13</sup> In the years following the conclusion of the Second World War, Fort Lauderdale would attempt to benefit from the post-war affluence and the tourism boom by appealing to students (an already familiar clientele because of the swim forum), in the hope of getting them to spend their spring vacations in the city. By the early 1950s, Fort Lauderdale's Spring Break initiatives were attracting thousands of students every year. In 1953, for example, in an attempt to further promote itself to the college crowd, Fort Lauderdale's Hospitality Committee sent out invitations to student councils, fraternities, and sororities across the country urging them to consider spending their spring vacations in the city. The move paid off the following year when approximately 15,000 students visited. By 1959 the number of students frequenting the city reached

20,000.<sup>14</sup> Who were these visitors and where did they come from? Spring Break still awaits its demographic historians, but registration figures for Fort Lauderdale's 1964 Welcome Booths offer some suggestive information. For that year visitors arrived from 731 different colleges or universities, the majority coming from "Midwestern schools, especially state universities" rather than the Ivy League. Very few freshmen were represented and there was, as expected, a high ratio of men to women.<sup>15</sup>

The growing number of visitors coincided with the increasing enrollment of students in post-secondary institutions. Following World War Two an expansion of post-secondary education opportunities throughout the country made college and university accessible to a larger segment of the population.<sup>16</sup> The growing number of college students together with the sustained period of postwar prosperity and dramatic changes in youth culture set the stage for the development of the Spring Break phenomenon. Florida's natural assets combined with the determined efforts of local entrepreneurs to ensure that Fort Lauderdale would emerge as an early and important centre of Spring Break activity.

### **Growing Pains: Expansion, Conflict and Control**

For fifty weeks of the year Fort Lauderdale, Florida is a small corner of tropical heaven, basking contentedly in the warm sun. During the other two weeks as colleges all over the country disgorge their students for Easter vacation a change comes over the sea. The students swarm to these peaceful shores in droves, twenty thousand strong. They turn night into day and the small corner of heaven into a sizeable chunk of bedlam. The boys come to soak up the sun, and a few carloads of beer. The girls come very simply because this is *Where the Boys Are!*<sup>17</sup>

With this narration so begins the 1960 film *Where the Boys Are*. The film, based on a popular novel of the same name, became a huge sensation. The success of the film, combined with the post-war affluence that made leisure travel more accessible, encouraged thousands of students to visit Fort Lauderdale during their spring vacations. By the 1950s Fort Lauderdale was already a popular destination for students but its appeal increased significantly with the release of the film which focused on courtship, sunbathing and drinking. Indeed, just three months after the film's release, in the spring of 1961, 50,000 students descended on the town of approximately 80,000 inhabitants on a single weekend.<sup>18</sup> Many likely arrived with images from the film still fresh in their minds, but those hoping for a Hollywood-style Spring Break experience would be disappointed.

The dramatic increase in student visitors caught the city by surprise. Unable to handle the crowds, beaches and bars had to close early, and the high ratio of men to women (ten to one), only exacerbated the situation.<sup>19</sup> On March 27 1961 the students made their frustration known when a riot broke out. Police officers from six of the neighbouring towns were called in to deal with the outburst.<sup>20</sup> Initially, the police reacted with caution. It was not until a beer bottle was broken over an officer's

helmet that they began to take action, turning fire hoses on the crowd and subduing the riot. The following day the mayor asked the City Commission to initiate a curfew and close down the bars until after the Easter holiday.<sup>21</sup> The plan backfired and students once again displayed their displeasure; riots continued for another two nights.<sup>22</sup> At one point, a student from Minnesota climbed up onto a traffic light and hung himself by his knees as he sang the Star-Spangled Banner. *Time* magazine quoted an officer who witnessed the scene as saying: "I thought he was kind of funny there at first. But then he started acting like Napoleon, saying he demanded Jade Beach, he demanded the right to drink beer in the street, he demanded this and that." This particular student was arrested and given a 70-day sentence for resisting arrest and inciting a riot. He was among 500 people arrested during three nights of rioting.<sup>23</sup>

Destruction of property, rowdy behavior, and riots have historically been a part of male student culture at North American universities, be it as a form of protest concerning on-campus issues such as quality of food, or related to yearly initiation rituals. At times this on-campus destruction spilled over to the local community creating town-gown tensions that administrators and student councils subsequently had to address.<sup>24</sup> Spring Break resulted in the formation of a new site of student culture, with students on the one hand beyond the reach of administrators and the threat of expulsion and on the other hand more exposed to police action. In towns located far from students' campus, dealing with Spring Break mayhem fell to local officials.

The 1961 riots triggered a debate among city officials over the benefits of welcoming student visitors. Many felt that hosting the students gave the city a bad reputation and discouraged families from visiting. The debates resulted in attempts to regulate and structure future spring vacations in Fort Lauderdale, including the formation of a citizens' planning committee tasked with finding ways to keep students occupied. The committee focused on funding wholesome nighttime activities, like concerts and athletic competitions, and set up welcome stations to register visiting students and distribute lists of places where they could stay.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the damage and grief the students caused they did offer a substantial source of revenue for the host city. Other Florida communities recognized that there was an opportunity to capitalize on the students' frustration by getting into the lucrative, yet difficult, business of hosting Spring Break crowds. Consequently, a number of cities emerged to compete with Fort Lauderdale for their business. Chief among these was Daytona Beach, Florida. Hoping to capitalize on students' disappointment with Fort Lauderdale, Daytona officials and businessmen launched an aggressive campaign to persuade students to visit their city.<sup>26</sup> One of the main contributors to their campaign was motel owner Bud Asher.<sup>27</sup> Keen to secure a new source of revenue, Asher spent the winter of 1961 driving to campuses across America informing students about Daytona's benefits, which included free beer, free barbecues, and endless parties if they were to patronize his motel.<sup>28</sup> In Georgia, where Asher was raised, he even promised students that if they were to visit Daytona he would pay for their gas.<sup>29</sup> These efforts paid off and by 1963 over 65,000 students arrived during the spring.<sup>30</sup>

Neither Daytona nor Fort Lauderdale could escape the problems caused by unruly student behavior and as early as 1964 there were signs that Daytona was rethinking

its position on hosting spring vacations. That year the police chief sent a letter to universities and colleges warning them that students would be arrested if they broke any laws and explaining that students who had been arrested in the past regretted their actions once they discovered that the record of their arrest was permanent.<sup>31</sup> In 1967, Daytona Beach took a further step and banned alcohol consumption on the beach—an activity that had been one of the unique attractions of Daytona, as it had always been illegal in Fort Lauderdale.<sup>32</sup> For its part, Fort Lauderdale experienced another significant riot in 1967, when students and police squared off in a battle to control access to the city's main thoroughfare.<sup>33</sup> During the riot students looted vegetable stands and delivery trucks. At one point stolen bottles of soda from a looted soft drink truck were thrown into the gathering crowd. As well, a bus was attacked; the windows were broken and the driver was harassed.<sup>34</sup> Surprisingly, despite the considerable amount of damage that was done, there were only a small number of serious injuries and the police made few arrests. Still, the violence reignited debates among city officials. It was in the aftermath of this riot that state attorney Roger H. Harper suggested that the students represented a “despicable class of tourists.... [that] conducted themselves salaciously and lewdly and overtaxed the city's courts and jails.”<sup>35</sup>

The riots and destructive behavior were not the only concerns that host populations and students struggled with during the 1960s. Anxieties about student behavior also focused on more private matters, particularly heterosexual activity—and were expressed by both local inhabitants and outsiders. While men far outnumbered women during Spring Break vacations in the 1950s and 1960s, the film *Where the Boys Are* depicted these places as sites of heterosexual pleasure and danger. Heterosexual culture was a prime feature of postwar campus life, reflected in any variety of activities, from dances, beauty pageants, and panty raids to sex education classes. Yet interaction between men and women generally occurred within a supervised setting meant to ensure proper comportment and, in particular, the moral and sexual purity of female students.<sup>36</sup> Off-campus culture challenged the values and ideals embraced by university administrators and may have presented greater opportunities for students to become involved in activities they would not otherwise have engaged in.

As a writer for the *Harvard Crimson* explained in 1964: “A notable feature of the Lauderdale or Daytona vacation, perhaps like any vacation, is the remarkable speeding-up of life. The steps in a relationship between a boy and girl are shortened considerably, and sex becomes an open and important concern.”<sup>37</sup> This reality was frightening for some. When asked about the sexual antics of his motel guests, Bud Asher said that he tried to prevent “sexual immorality” by packing five or six students into each room in order to limit their privacy.<sup>38</sup> (It is unclear, however, if Asher was truly concerned with the sexual morality of his guests or if he was concerned about his bottom line, as he could presumably charge extra for each person). Furthermore, the ratio of men to women, which remained high throughout the 1960s and 1970s, would have likely limited the number of potential sexual encounters.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, there were those who seemed to be genuinely concerned about students' sexual behavior and, perhaps as a result, both Daytona and Fort Lauderdale became popular spots for evangelicals during the break. Often the evangelicals were

students themselves. For example, in 1967, 500 members of the Campus Crusade for Christ carried out what they called “Operation Sunshine” which involved mingling with other students on the beach during the day while distributing pamphlets and informing them about services that were going to be held at night.<sup>40</sup> Despite their enthusiasm, these students often met with ridicule from others who were not involved in such organizations.<sup>41</sup>

Regardless of the concerns expressed by the public and the attempts made by both Fort Lauderdale and Daytona to distance themselves from students, they remained popular destinations well into the 1970s. In fact, the number of students visiting during the spring increased each year; by 1973, 300,000 students were arriving in Daytona.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, Fort Lauderdale launched reinvigorated campaigns to lure students to the city in 1973 and could boast 200,000 student visitors in 1976.<sup>43</sup> Although the number of students visiting the cities essentially quadrupled in the 1970s, reports of unruly behavior decreased dramatically.

By the 1960s, then, Spring Break had become not only a cultural institution but also a battleground. Students arrived with heightened expectations for their spring vacation getaways and they sometimes turned violent when the reality of Spring Break failed to live up to its growing mythology. Host communities engaged in direct competition in order to secure as many youthful visitors as possible but also endeavoured to limit the impact of those visitors on their own quality of life. Amidst these tensions Daytona Beach emerged to challenge Fort Lauderdale’s place as the recognized centre of Spring Break activities. In the decades that followed, Spring Break would again be transformed. The scope and scale of the Spring Break phenomenon was such that what had begun as a local initiative would soon be fully immersed in consumer capitalism. And as the corporate giants integrated themselves into this cultural phenomenon the patience of the host communities would again wear thin.

### **The Corporate Invasion of Spring Break and the Backlash Against Student Behavior**

Although Spring Break continued to draw students to Florida throughout the 1970s, in the 1980s and 1990s it reached new heights of popularity and garnered more attention than ever before. Hundreds of thousands of students flocked to the state during the spring months to partake in the festivities on offer. However, along with the increasing number of students came a variety of big businesses and corporations, and the host cities, at least initially, were more than willing to cater to them as well. In Daytona, for example, reports from as early as 1979 indicate that the city was holding a number of exhibitions where companies displayed and promoted their products to the visiting students and recruited future employees.<sup>44</sup> McDonald’s, for instance, was one of fifty companies sponsoring a display at College Expo ’79 in Daytona Beach. The corporation used the opportunity to collect information about student appetites and handed out pamphlets entitled “Join the Crew—Look What’s In It For You!”<sup>45</sup> Such exhibitions, dubbed Spring Fest, Spring Break Fest, and Expo America continued to be held well into the 1990s.<sup>46</sup>

The corporations also brought their products directly to the party. Not surprisingly, beer companies were among the most active on this front.<sup>47</sup> For example, in 1989 Coors Light sponsored a volleyball tournament offering a one thousand dollar prize to the victors.<sup>48</sup> That same year, not to be outdone, Anheuser-Busch erected a two-story inflatable Budweiser six-pack on a beach in Daytona. The company also had its employees on hand to distribute free clothing branded with the Budweiser logo.<sup>49</sup> The Miller Brewing Company also got in on the action, offering free breakfasts for students and hiring airplanes to tow banners advertising its products.<sup>50</sup>

The advent of music television marked another important corporate intervention. Other than perhaps the film *Where the Boys Are* nothing did more to popularize Spring Break than MTV's specials that were broadcast live from Daytona Beach. The first special, which aired in 1985, allowed people from across the country to witness for themselves the Spring Break activities in Florida from the comfort of their own homes.<sup>51</sup> By 1986 these specials reached a potential audience of over 28 million Americans.<sup>52</sup> The programs showed youth dancing and kissing, and featured games in which women covered themselves in honey and then rolled around in feathers.<sup>53</sup>

The fun, however, would not last forever, and in 1993 the television station was not invited back.<sup>54</sup> City officials began to feel as though the specials portrayed the city as something it was not, a year-round party destination. MTV had been airing the specials throughout the year; some believed this was sending the message that the party never stopped in Daytona.<sup>55</sup> Officials were hoping to present a more family-friendly image in an attempt to attract more tourists in the off-season and the repeated airings of these specials interfered with this initiative.<sup>56</sup> While MTV was no longer welcomed in Daytona, this did not stop the music video channel from filming specials elsewhere; it moved its party to Palm Springs and, by the end of the decade, to Mexico.<sup>57</sup>

Daytona's break with MTV was part of a larger crackdown on Spring Break festivities that was due in part to the fact that the dangerous aspects of Spring Break were starting to receive widespread attention.<sup>58</sup> As the influx of students increased each spring, host cities sought out new ways to keep the crowds under control. For example, Jacksonville, Florida launched an \$800,000 "Spring Break by Invitation Only" campaign that targeted students enrolled only in Ivy League universities in an attempt to demonstrate that the city was "looking for quality, not quantity."<sup>59</sup> Such attempts to revisit a golden age in which the crowds were manageable and affluent were in vain; by the 1980s Spring Break's momentum in Florida could not be halted, much less reversed. In 1985 Fort Lauderdale welcomed a record number of students, almost 350,000. By 1991 Daytona Beach was in a similar position with an estimated 400,000 students visiting.<sup>60</sup>

These more popular destinations would have to take different approaches in their attempts to control crowds. In 1986, for example, the Broward County Hotel and Motel Association in Fort Lauderdale introduced the Spring Break Code of Ethical Conduct.<sup>61</sup> Businesses that chose to participate posted the code, which outlined local laws and possible problems that might arise from noise and hotel parties.<sup>62</sup> In an attempt to further deter unruly student behaviour and attract more families, Fort



Lauderdale also renovated the area where young crowds on Spring Break used to congregate. Prior to the renovations the area had been known as “the Strip,” but after the renovations it was re-dubbed the “Beach Promenade.”<sup>63</sup> Even school administrators were starting to crack down on unruly behavior that was often exhibited on Spring Break. At Notre Dame University, for example, the dean of students threatened to suspend students who participated in lewd and inappropriate acts during Spring Break.<sup>64</sup>

Excessive alcohol consumption by visiting students further exacerbated the problems and concerns of host cities. In the 1980s reports of death and injury from alcohol-related incidents that transpired during Spring Break became commonplace. In 1986, for example, in a number of separate and unrelated incidents six students were injured and five were killed after falling from hotel balconies.<sup>65</sup> These tragedies underscored the dangers of binge drinking that frequently occurred during Spring Break. Although it was the responsibility of the students to police their own drinking habits, critics pointed out that they were not entirely to blame for the excessive drinking that took place. Alcohol consumption was heavily promoted in the host cities through advertisements and drink specials. At some bars, bottles of beer were being sold for a quarter and draught was selling for as little as a nickel. Additionally, signs displayed in bar windows encouraged patrons to drink with slogans like, “Party ‘Till You Puke.”<sup>66</sup>

Understandably, beer companies became a major target for citizens and officials who had had enough of the students’ unruly and dangerous behavior. Criticism came from all directions, from anti-alcohol groups to officials in the Federal Trade Commission. In response the beer companies toned down their advertising campaigns and even launched new initiatives focused on responsible drinking that pitched slogans such as “Think When You Drink” and “Know When to Say When.”<sup>67</sup> Such face-saving initiatives were not entirely successful.<sup>68</sup> Even students themselves began to criticize the advertisements put out by some of the beer companies. The Miller Brewing Co., for example, found itself embroiled in controversy because of an advertisement printed in 55 college newspapers in February 1989.<sup>69</sup> The advertisement consisted of a 16-page insert that included a list of Miller-sponsored events that were going to take place during Spring Break in Daytona Beach and on South Padre Island in Texas. It also boasted other, less traditional, lists including “4 Sure-Fire Ways to Scam Babes.” Students from many of the schools where the advertisement ran objected to what they viewed as sexist, objectifying material, and voiced their displeasure. The student government at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, for example, asked that the student body boycott Miller products until the advertisement was pulled and the company apologized. The company quickly acceded to both demands.<sup>70</sup> Despite the crackdown on Spring Break festivities by host cities in the early 1990s, the event itself continued to be popular and a number of destinations emerged as new hotspots. New businesses, like *Girls Gone Wild*, would capitalize on the continued popularity of Spring Break.<sup>71</sup>

The expansion and corporatization of Spring Break that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s provided stability for the phenomenon. Spring Break now had a number

of heavily vested interests. However, expansion led to regulation and corporatization led to criticism, as host communities began to fully realize the repercussions of entertaining college crowds. At one point in time Spring Break had seemed like a viable and lucrative economic strategy for Fort Lauderdale and Daytona, but as these cities would discover, it came at a price. As historian Hal Rothman argues, this is often a typical epiphany for many communities that rely on tourism. While tourism often brings about unexpected consequences for host communities, these communities are restructured to cater to visitors and as a result outside interests quickly weave their way in and siphon off local profits. The lifeblood of these communities becomes their identity as tourist destinations and they must work at sustaining this image.<sup>72</sup> This was certainly the case for Fort Lauderdale and Daytona, as it seems unlikely that they could have predicted the rate of expansion Spring Break would achieve or the ongoing tensions they would have to struggle with concerning the behaviour of student visitors.

### **Freaknik and Black College Reunion: Race and Rebellion**

To watch *Where the Boys Are* today is to be struck by the all-pervading whiteness of the characters. While class divisions are apparent and gender tensions are prominent, the film is all but silent on the issue of race. And yet there are hints in the historical record to suggest that racial tensions have long been a part of the Spring Break phenomenon. In 1961, the very same year that representatives of a largely white and male student body rioted in Fort Lauderdale to express their frustration at early closing times and overcrowded beaches, a very different protest was underway.

The fight for racial equality, though likely far from the minds of most of the students who were vacationing in Florida, was something that both Daytona and Fort Lauderdale were forced to address during the 1960s. With very few exceptions, the students who visited Fort Lauderdale and Daytona were white.<sup>73</sup> This was, in part, due to the fact that the cities restricted African-Americans' presence on local beaches. For example, in Daytona Beach there was a municipal ordinance in place until 1965 that restricted African-Americans' access to the beach.<sup>74</sup> Fort Lauderdale, on the other hand, had segregated beaches at the beginning of the 1960s, with the beach designated for use by the African-American population offering no facilities and accessible only by ferry.<sup>75</sup> In 1961 this segregation prompted the local NAACP president, Eula Johnson, and a group of African-American students to initiate a number of "wade-ins" — a beach-centred variation on the "sit-in." Johnson was sued for her role in the wade-ins. However, a federal court eventually ruled in her favor and against the city's discriminatory segregation policy. As a result, in 1965, the city built a bridge to the African-American beach.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the advancements of the civil rights movement and the integration of colleges and universities across the United States, and while beaches in both areas were being desegregated in the 1970s, the practice of travelling to places like Daytona and Fort Lauderdale for spring vacation remained almost an exclusively white phenomenon well into the 1980s. However, with the expansion of the Spring Break

phenomenon in the 1980s and 1990s a number of alternative breaks emerged to cater to the marginalized and often over-looked African-American segment of the student population. The two principal alternatives to materialize during this period were Freaknik and the Black College Reunion. The controversies surrounding the development of these alternatives highlight the extent to which Spring Break was not only structured by class and gender relations but by race relations as well.

While the traditional Spring Break was centered in Florida, Freaknik emerged in Atlanta, Georgia in the 1980s. Although it shared some similarities with the established Spring Breaks, Atlanta's "Freaknik" Spring Break was quite different: it was attended predominantly by African-American students and the festivities took place in parks and on streets rather than on the beach.<sup>77</sup> It all began for Atlanta in 1983 when a picnic was held for the city's college students who could not afford to travel during their Spring Break. Initially it was a small gathering; about fifty people showed up the first year. However, the picnic eventually evolved into a three-day event known as Freaknik, and began to attract more students each year.<sup>78</sup> In 1994 over 200,000 students attended.<sup>79</sup>

Despite its humble and tame origins, the event quickly became embroiled in controversy with racial tensions being paramount. In 1994 the managers of the Marriott Marquis circulated an internal memo indicating that they would refuse to rent rooms to Freaknik participants. When the memo was leaked to the public the hotel quickly apologized and released a statement declaring that it would not "discriminate against any group, regardless of race, age or other distinction."<sup>80</sup> Regardless of the attempts to brush off the incident the tempers of many African-American residents were inflamed. One city councilwoman highlighted the symbolic significance of the controversy: "These kids are the black cream of the crop, and if they are not treated well, there is little hope for the rest of us."<sup>81</sup>

Complaints about Freaknik existed from its advent; many of the residents who lived in the vicinity of where the events took place voiced their discontent about the noise and the traffic. In 1995 these complaints prompted the mayor, Bill Campbell, to attempt to rein in the celebrations.<sup>82</sup> In an attempt to control the scale of the gathering, for by now it was an event that attracted students from across the country, Campbell convinced "the presidents of the six historically black colleges of the Atlanta University Center" to write to "the presidents of other historically black campuses" asking them to "discourage their students' participation."<sup>83</sup> The city also refused to issue permits to facilities that were supposed to host the entertainment for the celebration.<sup>84</sup> While fewer students attended in 1995, the result was far from acceptable for city officials. With fewer organized activities available, the students took the party to the streets and, according to Campbell, visiting students and local residents engaged in widespread looting.<sup>85</sup> Over 2,000 crimes were reported ranging from indecent exposure to rape.<sup>86</sup>

Residents and media associated crime and sexual misbehavior with Freaknik from its inception, and this association was not totally without merit. Indeed, for the men who attended Freaknik one of the essential supplies for the festivities was a video camera.<sup>87</sup> The cameras were used to film women as they performed lewd

and suggestive acts. In an article published in *Essence*, a popular magazine among African American women, writer Kenji Jasper described a scene he witnessed during Freaknik in 1995. According to Jasper, he saw a woman standing on top of a car surrounded by a group of young men who were waving money in the air and shouting "Take it Off!" Encouraged by the shouting, the young woman began to strip naked and, as she was doing so, collected the money that was being thrown at her. Once she had stripped naked she put her clothes back on and attempted to get into her car. However, she was unable to as the mob rushed her, smashed her windshield, and then groped her.<sup>88</sup>

In spite of the controversy and complaints that followed each year after Freaknik, the city of Atlanta seemingly had a change of heart in 1997. That year the city created a committee to organize and schedule events for the students.<sup>89</sup> The initiative may well have been encouraged by the fact that it was an election year; Mayor Bill Campbell, seeking reelection, hoped to appeal to the African-American constituency.<sup>90</sup> But it was clearly an attempt to recalibrate Freaknik in a way that facilitated and ensured civic control over participants' activities. These efforts were in vain, however, as very few of the Freaknik participants attended any of the scheduled events. Instead, the students preferred to keep the party in the streets, resulting in major traffic jams, and, as historian Krista Thompson explains, one clear legacy of the 1995 crackdown on Freaknik was an intensification of the racialized conflict over urban space in Atlanta.<sup>91</sup> "In the face of authoritarian controls," Thompson argues, "the rights of blacks to occupy the city's streets at Freaknik became a central preoccupation of many student and local participants."<sup>92</sup> In the late 1990s the event continued to be plagued by tension and violence. In 1998, for example, over 481 people were arrested.<sup>93</sup> Serious incidents of crime were reported that year as well, including four rapes, six sexual assaults, and four shootings.<sup>94</sup>

Such actions led to another crackdown by the city. In 1999 fewer students showed up for the event. Nevertheless, there were still over 350 arrests and over 400 cars towed. However, Atlanta's unwelcoming attitude finally led students to choose other destinations and this essentially marked the end of Freaknik as a coherent entity as practically no one showed up in the year 2000.<sup>95</sup> Freaknik continues to occupy a special place in the minds of those who attended and witnessed it.<sup>96</sup> It was, after all, an event created by African-Americans for African-American, in reaction to the racial and class barriers that were an often unacknowledged part of the traditional Spring Break phenomenon.

Although it was perhaps the most popular, Atlanta was not the only destination for African-American college students during Spring Break. In fact, Daytona Beach had become a popular destination in the 1980s after African-American students and alumni from the schools in the area hosted a weekend called Black College Reunion there during Spring Break in 1984, an annual event that continues today.<sup>97</sup> Like Freaknik, Black College Reunion has faced its share of controversy. Concerns about the weekend peaked following an evening in 1998, when an African-American man who was attending the event shot into a crowded street wounding two bystanders and then four police officers who responded to the initial shots. The incident resulted in

petitions demanding that the Daytona city council ban the event. The city responded by drafting a plan to close down the bridges that connected Daytona Beach to the mainland. During the weekend of the Black College Reunion city police were only planning to allow residents and visitors with hotel reservations to cross in private cars, and a shuttle was to be provided to transport others. This initiative was never realized as the NAACP took the city to court arguing that the plan was unjust as the travel restrictions were only to be implemented during the weekend of the Reunion and not for any other event such as Bike Week or the Daytona 500, both of which attracted larger crowds.<sup>98</sup>

The following year, in 1999, there was a similar controversy. As in previous years, restaurants and stores changed their business hours, payment options and other regulations, specifically for the event. At many hotels students were required to wear wristbands, to identify that they were indeed paying customers, and were forced to read and sign statements acknowledging hotel rules and regulations. Five African-American students filed a lawsuit against the Adams Mark Hotel claiming that they were denied hotel services such as housekeeping and valet parking while the white visitors to the hotel were not.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the controversies, the Black College Reunion signified a shift in Spring Break's history from a primarily white phenomenon to a more multiethnic pursuit. Now African-American students were engaging in the same behaviors as white students in the same place, at the same time. Moreover, the racial tensions, public controversies, and the battles over public space and civil rights that infused both Freaknik and the Black College Reunion speak to the ongoing political significance of the Spring Break phenomenon—a dynamic that was visible at least as early as 1961 when Eula Johnson and her colleagues organized the Fort Lauderdale “wade-ins.”

### **Conclusion: Reflections on Contemporary and Historical Spring Breaks**

While Freaknik and Black College Reunion were laden with controversy and racial tensions, other, less contentious, alternative Spring Breaks emerged. In the 1990s organizations that offered volunteer opportunities during Spring Break were becoming increasingly popular. Some of these organizations, like the YMCA, had been offering students the chance to spend their breaks volunteering for more than a decade, but the trend really took off in the 1990s with the establishment of a number of organizations that catered specifically to students.<sup>100</sup> By the end of the decade almost 30,000 students were opting to spend their breaks volunteering.<sup>101</sup>

One of the organizations that sought out these students was Habitat for Humanity. In 1989 it created a new organizational branch called Collegiate Challenge, making it possible for teams of students to join together with local Habitat for Humanity affiliates and spend a week building homes for the less fortunate.<sup>102</sup> In 1990 a thousand students took part in the challenge.<sup>103</sup> Eleven years later the number had swelled to 9,500 students participating in 175 communities around the United States.<sup>104</sup> One of these communities was Fort Lauderdale, where the Spring Break phenomenon had begun. However, instead of spending their days lounging on the beach or drinking

in the city's bars, the students who arrived with Collegiate Challenge spent their days framing houses and pounding nails.<sup>105</sup>

A similar initiative, Break Away, was created in 1991 by two Vanderbilt University students. In addition to building homes for the less fortunate, it offered students the chance to participate in a number of activities including registering voters and helping out in homeless shelters. Students involved with the program often took part in training sessions where issues such as AIDS, homelessness, and domestic violence were discussed.<sup>106</sup> In addition to participating in the sessions students were sometimes asked to pay a small fee, or pay for their room and board during the time they spent with the organization.<sup>107</sup> Although these programs represented a serious time commitment, and often a financial commitment as well, some pointed out that their programs were perhaps not always embraced through purely altruistic motives. In addition to the satisfaction the students received from knowing that they were helping others, they sometimes received credit from their schools and could use the experience as a way to impress graduate schools and future employers.<sup>108</sup>

Together with Freaknik and Black College Reunion, Habitat for Humanity and Break Away challenged established notions about Spring Break. But at the same time students who partook in these activities were also following precedents established early on in the twentieth century when students used Spring Break as an opportunity to break away from the conservative culture of their campuses. Like their predecessors the students who took part in these alternative breaks were, in different ways, challenging authority and asserting their desire to pursue their own aims and interests.

Students' struggle to dictate their own behaviors is one of the central themes that has prevailed throughout Spring Break's history. Every student on Spring Break had their own unique set of goals and motivations. But whether they hoped to change discriminatory laws, spread the word of Jesus, or simply just party and have a good time, students arrived to find that there were barriers in place that could prevent them from realizing these goals. Students would have to negotiate with the pre-existing rules and regulations of the host communities as well as among themselves if they wanted to ensure a successful trip. Like the students on vacation, host communities also struggled to control their Spring Break experiences. As Spring Break expanded so too did the problems and anxieties that went along with it and local authorities attempted to regulate and control student behavior as tensions between visiting students and host communities became a central theme of Spring Break during the post-war period. By the 1960s students and host communities were engaged in an uneasy relationship. At certain points students found themselves catered to, and their outrageous and unruly behavior overlooked. At other points, however, they were met with resistance, harsh judgment, and attempts to stifle their fun. Host communities, like Fort Lauderdale and Daytona Beach, came to realize that their pursuit of youthful consumers came at a price. Like so many other tourist destinations they would find themselves becoming identified and defined by their visitors, and many of their attempts to distance themselves from students would be unsuccessful. By the 1980s and 1990s host communities were not the only ones wishing to distance themselves from the salacious and sensational images and behaviors associated with

Spring Break. For a growing number of students during this period the mention of Spring Break did not necessarily conjure up images of lounging and partying on a beach in Florida. Indeed, an increasing number of students began opting for a more non-traditional break. Although these breaks varied in what they offered, they all challenged traditional and popular images of Spring Break.

Today Spring Break is an industry; travel firms, cities, production companies, advertisers and many other entities exploit and capitalize on its popularity. However, this was not always the case. Spring Break was a significant phenomenon before it caught the eye of Corporate America. It began organically among students and it represented a release from the conservative nature of campuses in the postwar period. In time, however, as a result of being co-opted by a number of parties, Spring Break became associated with the stereotypical notions of the excess and carelessness of youth. Nevertheless, in recent decades some students have used Spring Break to break away from those stereotyped notions of student life, using the break to contribute to community and global outreach programs. Spring Break's development appears to be structured by a dynamic that pits established authorities, such as university administrators and corporate giants, against a complex youth culture that is sometimes compliant and accepting and sometimes rebellious, innovative and self-confident.

Spring Break was and is an occasion where student culture, which is typically limited to campus and surrounding areas, is played out off-campus for the rest of society to see. It has become a public spectacle, reported on and documented by the media. Consequently, and regardless of how partial a depiction it may be, Spring Break has shaped public, and even students', conceptions about what it means to be a university or college student. For that reason alone it is deserving of historical analysis. But Spring Break was also (and is also) an important economic, social and cultural phenomenon that marked the intersection of youth culture and North America's burgeoning tourism industry, that reflected and shaped racial tensions and gender ideals, and that served as a profitable but contested site for commercialism. Many of these themes along with many other aspects of Spring Break's history deserve greater attention. And specific local and regional studies are required to provide more detailed examinations of the complex ways in which students and host communities experienced this phenomenon. This article, we hope, provides some of the groundwork necessary to encourage and facilitate such studies.

## Notes

- 1 *Where the Boys Are*, directed by Henry Levin (1960; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004), DVD; "Lauderdale Urged to Shun Collegians," *New York Times*, 28 March 1967, 26.
- 2 For non-historical research into Spring Break see, for example, J.S. Perry Hobson and Bharath Josiam, "Spring Break Student Travel: A Longitudinal Study," *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 137, no. 2 (1996): 137-150; Anna S. Mattila, Yorghos Apostolopoulos, Sevil Sonmenz, Lucy Yu and Vinod Sasidharan, "The Impact of Gender and Religion on College Students' Spring Break Behavior," *Journal of Travel*

- Research* 193, no. 40 (2001): 193-200; George L. Smeraton, Bharath Josaim and Uta Dietrich, "College Students' Binge Drinking at a Beach-front Destination During Spring Break," *Journal of American College Health* 46, no. 6 (1998); Dawn M. Mewhinney, "Sexual Scripts and Risk-taking of Canadian University Students on Spring Break in Daytona Beach, Florida," *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 4, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 273-288; Laura A. Williams and Alvin C. Burns, "The Halcyon Days of Youth: A Phenomenological Account of Experiences and Feelings Accompanying Spring Break on the Beach," *Advances in Consumer Research* 21 (1994): 98-103; K. Ragsdale, W. DiFranceisco and S.D. Pinkerton, "Where the Boys Are: Sexual Expectations and Behavior Among Young Women on Holiday," *Culture Health & Sexuality* 8, no. 2 (2006): 85-98.
- 3 On student culture see for example, Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1999), chapter four; Beth Bailey, "From Panty Raids to Revolution: Youth and Authority, 1950-1970," in *Generations of Youth: Youth Cultures and History in Twentieth-Century America*, eds. Joe Austin and Michael Nevin Willard (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 187-204; Lynn D. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures From the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1987); Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), chapters seven and ten; Paula S. Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); David F. Allmendinger, Jr., *Paupers and Scholars: The Transformation of Student Life in Nineteenth-Century New England* (New York, 1975).
- 4 For exceptions see for example, Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Keith Walden, "Hazes, Hustles, Scraps, and Stunts: Initiations at the University of Toronto, 1880-1925," in *Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education*, ed. Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 94-121; Keith Walden, "Respectable Hooligans: Male Toronto College Students Celebrate Hallowe'en," *Canadian Historical Review* 68, 1 (March 1987): 1-34. There is also a growing literature on the 1960s that examines both on and off-campus student activism and counter-culture activities. See, for example, Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), and Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958-c.1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- 5 See, for example, "Registration After April Recess," *The Harvard Crimson*, 17 April 1908, accessed 18 October 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1908/4/17/registration-after-april-recess-pthe-april/>.
- 6 See, for example, "Lacrosse Team Will Start on Southern Trip This Afternoon," *The Harvard Crimson*, 14 April 1916, accessed 18 October 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1916/4/14/lacrosse-team-will-start-on-southern/>; "Choose Tennis Team to Make Southern Trip," *The Harvard Crimson*, 13 April 1923, accessed 18 October 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1923/4/13/choose-tennis-team-to-make-southern/>; "Tennis Team Will Make Trip South in Spring Vacation," *The Harvard Crimson*, 17 March 1936, accessed 18 October 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1936/3/17/tennis-team-will-make-trip-south>.
- 7 "15 Ruggers Will Sail to Bermuda For Trip," *The Harvard Crimson*, 1 April 1937, *The Harvard Crimson*, 1 April 1937, accessed 18 October 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1937/4/1/15-ruggers-will-sail-to-bermuda/>.



- 8 See, for example, Rodd Mcleod, "A Brief History of Spring Break," *Rolling Stone*, 4 February 1998, 56; Bill Marsh, "The Innocent Birth of the Spring Bacchanal," *The New York Times*, 19 March 2006, accessed 3 July 2010, [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/weekinreview/19marsh.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/weekinreview/19marsh.html?_r=1); Gary Mormino, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 317.
- 9 Mormino, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams*, 317.
- 10 "Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex, College Swim Forum (1935–Present)," City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, accessed 6 February 2010, <http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/flac/events.htm>.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 "Backs 'No Vacation' Plea," *The New York Times*, 31 January 1945, 17.
- 13 Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet?: The Golden Age Of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 3.
- 14 Mormino, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams*, 318.
- 15 These figures are only suggestive as city authorities relied upon surveys of students who took the time to register at the information booths. "Spring Weekend, Florida Style" *The Harvard Crimson*, 9 May 1964, accessed 4 September 2011, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1964/5/9/spring-weekend-florida-style-pwhile-harvard/?print=1>.
- 16 In 1930, for example, twelve percent of the American population between the ages of 18 and 21 was enrolled in college; by 1950, it had more than doubled to 30 percent. See Horowitz, *Campus Life*, 189. See also Linda Eisenmann, *Higher Education for Women in Postwar America, 1945–1965* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 45–51.
- 17 *Where the Boys Are*, directed by Henry Levin (1960; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004), DVD.
- 18 "Nation: Where the Bores Are," *Time Magazine*, 7 April 1961, accessed 17 September 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,874304,00.html>; US Census, 1960, accessed 15 June 2011, <http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/11085788v1p11ch2.pdf>.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 "3,500 Students Stage 'Mean' Riot in Florida," *The New York Times*, 27 March 1961, 52.
- 21 "3500 Riot in Florida When Put Off Beach," *The Washington Post*, 28 March 1961, A3.
- 22 Paul George, "Where the Boys Were," *South Florida History Magazine* 18, 1 (1991): 6–7.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 J. Angus Johnston, "Student Activism in the United States Before 1960: An Overview," in *Student Protests: The Sixties and After*, ed. Gerard J. DeGroot (London: Longman, 1998), 13. See also, McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 149, chapter six; Horowitz, *Campus Life*, chapter two; Bailey, "From Panty Raids to Revolution," 187–204.
- 25 C.E. Wright, "Lauderdale Awaits Collegians," *The New York Times*, 4 March 1962, 313; Frank Eidge, "Two Beaches Await Student Onslaught," *The Washington Post*, 24 March 1963, G12.
- 26 Gay Talese, "Youth Takes Over in Daytona Beach," *The New York Times*, 26 March 1962, 27; E. Wright, "Lauderdale Awaits Collegians," *The New York Times*, 4 March 1962, 313.
- 27 In the 1990s, after becoming mayor, Asher would ultimately have a change of heart when it came to welcoming students to the city. Cory Jo Lancaster, "MTV Shakes Off Sand from Daytona Beach," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 19 December 1993, C11.
- 28 Mormino, *Land of Sunshine*, 318.
- 29 Talese, "Youth Takes Over in Daytona Beach," 27.
- 30 "Easter Invasion," *New York Times*, 5 March 1964, XX5.
- 31 *Ibid.*

- 32 Judy Klemesrud, "Rite of Spring: Beer, Beaches, and Bikinis," *The New York Times*, 24 March 1967, 32.
- 33 "Student Mob Runs Wild in Florida," *The Washington Post*, 25 March 1967, A1.
- 34 The riot forced the cancellation of a scheduled march to protest the war in Vietnam. "Police Quell Melee of College Students in Fort Lauderdale," *New York Times*, 25 March 1967, 1.
- 35 "Lauderdale Urged to Shun Collegians," *New York Times*, 28 March 1967, 26.
- 36 McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 223; Beth Bailey, "Scientific Truth...And Love: The Marriage Education Movement in the United States," *Journal of Social History* 20, 4 (Summer 1987): 711-32; Bailey, "From Panty Raids to Revolution," 192; Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, "The 1960s and the Transformation of Campus Cultures," *History of Education Quarterly* 26, 1 (Spring 1986), 16.
- 37 Sanford Ungar, "Spring Weekend, Florida Style," *The Harvard Crimson*, 9 May 1964, accessed 9 September 2010, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1964/5/9/spring-weekend-florida-style.html>.
- 38 Talese, "Youth Takes Over in Daytona Beach," 27.
- 39 "Collegians Pack A Florida Town," *The New York Times*, 8 April 1966, 33.
- 40 Klemesrud, "Rite of Spring," 32.
- 41 "Collegians Pack A Florida Town," 33.
- 42 "300,000 Jam Florida Beach," *The Washington Post*, 23 April 1973, C3.
- 43 George, "Where the Boys Were," 5-8; Mormino, *Land of Sunshine*, 316-319.
- 44 Jon Nordheimer, "Business and Youth: Embrace in the Sun," *The New York Times*, 21 March 1979, C1.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 William Booth, "Hey, Give Ad I Usa Break...," *The Washington Post*, 4 April 1993, F1; Lucy Izon, "Spring-Break Students Shift to Florida's Daytona Beach," *The Calgary Herald*, 11 February 1989, E5.
- 47 Beer companies were not the only ones to use Spring Break to advertise their products to students. Parker Brothers, for example, held a number of volleyball tournaments in Daytona during the Spring Break of 1989 to advertise its new game, *Dare*. Izon, "Spring-Break Students Shift to Florida's Daytona Beach," E5.
- 48 Izon, "Spring-Break Students Shift," E5.
- 49 Paul Farhi, "Spring-Break Beer Messages Draw Fire," *The Washington Post*, 28 March 1990, F1, F6.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 Cory Jo Lancaster, "MTV Shakes Off Sand From Daytona Beach," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 19 December 1993, C11.
- 52 Kaplan, *Rocking Around the Clock*, 2.
- 53 See the following youtube clips: "Springer Break Honeyed and Feathered," accessed 18 March 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywhS3PSP5RM>; "MTV Spring Break Fantasy Burrito," accessed 18 March 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9t1M-bnQEA>; "Vanilla Ice Ice Ice Baby Spring Break MTV 1991," accessed 18 March 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4iux5SAccM>.
- 54 In 1999 the city would have a slight change of heart, and invite MuchMusic (MTV's Canadian equivalent) to film its Spring Break specials there. However, city officials knew that the station's audience was not nearly as large as MTV's and that they therefore could expect less attention. See Jonathon Gatehouse, "Wholesome Fun MuchMusic to Ears of Daytona Residents: Sandjob 2000: Community Invites Channel to Shoot Spring Break Special in Bid to Repair Image," *The National Post*, 23 February 2000, A24.
- 55 Lancaster, "MTV Shakes Off Sand," *The Ottawa Citizen*, December 19, 1993, C11.
- 56 *Ibid.*

- 57 See Rodd Mcleod "A Brief History of Spring Break," *Rolling Stone*, 4 February 1998, 56; Olga R. Rodriguez, "Cancun Bounces Back from Triple Blow; Visitors Return in the Wake of Last Year's Flue Outbreak, Economic Woes, and Drug Violence," *Times and Transcript*, 6 March 2010, G3.
- 58 Lucy Izon, "Florida Resorts Plan Special Spring-Break Events," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 31 January 1987, G6; Sonia L. Nazario, "Where the Boys Aren't: Miami Beach Bids for Fort Lauderdale's Unwelcome Horde," *The Wall Street Journal*, 21 February 1986, 35.
- 59 Rollin Riggs, "Spring Breaks," *The New York Times*, 31 March 1985, E1.
- 60 McDowell, "Fort Lauderdale Rides New Wave," D1.
- 61 Izon, "Florida Resorts Plan Special Spring-Break Events," G6.
- 62 *Ibid.*
- 63 James Yenckel, "Fun & Funky: In Fort Lauderdale, It's Hello Families, Goodbye Spring Break," *The Washington Post*, 1 November 1992, E1.
- 64 Nazario, "Where the Boys Aren't," 35.
- 65 Jon Nordheimer, "5 Student Deaths Mark Spring Break in Florida," *The New York Times*, 26 March 1986, 7.
- 66 Farhi, "Spring-Break Beer Messages Draw Fire," F1, F6.
- 67 *Ibid.*
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 "Miller Ad Supplement Brews Up Protests on U.S. Campuses," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 13 March 1989, A14.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 Girls Gone Wild was established by Joe Francis in 1998. Film crews travel to popular party destinations, like Mardi Gras and Spring Break locales, to film women who, in exchange for a t-shirt or a hat, expose themselves. For more on Girls Gone Wild see, Ariel Levy, *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* (New York: Free Press, 2005).
- 72 Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 22-23.
- 73 In 1964 an African American woman from a teachers' college in New York visited Daytona during the spring; apparently there were attempts made by a motel owner to prevent her from using the pool with the other students. Martin Tolchins, "'Vacancy' Signs Out as Students Wind Up Daytona Rendezvous," *The New York Times*, 30 March 1964, 13.
- 74 "The Endless Travails of Black College Reunion in Daytona Beach," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 24 (1999): 78-79.
- 75 Susan Gillis, *Fort Lauderdale: the Venice of America* (Charleston: Arcadia, 2004), 115-116.
- 76 Gillis, *Fort Lauderdale: the Venice of America*, 115-116. On segregation in institutions of higher education see, for example, McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, chapter six.
- 77 Krista Thompson, "Performing Visibility: Freaknic and the Spatial Politics of Sexuality, Race, and Class in Atlanta," *TDR: The Drama Review* 51 (2007): 25.
- 78 Ernie Suggs, "Street Party Became its Own Undoing," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 14 April 2008, accessed 16 September 2010, [http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/atlanta/stories/2008/04/13/whatever\\_0414.html](http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/atlanta/stories/2008/04/13/whatever_0414.html).
- 79 *Ibid.*
- 80 Ronald Smothers, "Spring Beak Puts Atlanta's Party Spirit to the Test," *The New York Times*, 25 April 1994, A12.
- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 Ronald Smothers, "Black Students Revel in Atlanta Despite Cool Welcome," *The New York Times*, 23 April 1995, 28.
- 83 Ronald Smothers, "A Fretful Atlanta Awaits a Deluge," *The New York Time*, 1 April 1995, 6.

- 84 Smothers, "Black Students Revel," 28.
- 85 "Hundreds of Revelers Arrested At Weekend Atlanta Street Party," *The New York Times*, 24 April 1995, A14.
- 86 Suggs, "Street Party Became Its Own Undoing."
- 87 Thompson, "Performing Visibility," 29.
- 88 Kenji Jasper, "In the Flesh: Freaknik 1995–1996," *Essence*, 27,4 (August 1996), 150.
- 89 Thompson, "Performing Visibility," 39.
- 90 Bill Campbell was himself an African American, but according to newspaper reports had fallen out of favor with the African American citizens of Atlanta.
- 91 Thompson, "Performing Visibility," 39.
- 92 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 93 "Black Colleges' Freaknik is Smaller, Calmer," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 30 April 1999, p. A10.
- 94 *Ibid.*
- 95 Suggs, "Street Party Became its Own Undoing."
- 96 *Ibid.*
- 97 "The Endless Travails of Black College Reunion in Daytona Beach," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 24 (1999): 78-79.
- 98 *Ibid.*
- 99 *Ibid.*
- 100 "Students Take a Break to Help Others," *The New York Times*, 3 November 1996, EL 7.
- 101 Jodi Wilgoren, "Helping Hands at Spring Break," *The New York Times*, 22 March 2001, A1.
- 102 The Collegiate Challenge gives students the opportunity to volunteer all year round. However, because it requires dedicating a full week to building homes, it is well suited for students looking to volunteer during their Spring Break. For more see the organization's website: [http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/ages\\_14\\_25/collegiate\\_challenge/default\\_collegiate\\_challenge.asp](http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/ages_14_25/collegiate_challenge/default_collegiate_challenge.asp).
- 103 Wilgoren, "Helping Hands at Spring Break," A1.
- 104 *Ibid.*
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 "Students Take a Break to Help Others," *The New York Times*, 3 November 1996, EL7.
- 107 *Ibid.*
- 108 Wilgoren, "Helping Hands at Spring Break," A1; David Marcus, "Hey it's Spring Break! Hand me a Hammer," *U.S. News & World Report* 126 no. 12 (1999): 71.