THE INVISIBLE FACULTY FIGHT BACK: CONTINGENT ACADEMIC LABOR AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE CORPORATE UNIVERSITY

By

VINCENT TIRELLI

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2007

UMI Number: 3278423

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in satisfaction of the dissertation requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

THE INVISIBLE FACULTY FIGHT BACK: CONTINGENT ACADEMIC LABOR AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE CORPORATE UNIVERSITY

by

Vincent Tirelli

Advisor: Professor Marshall Berman

This dissertation examines the potential of worker mobilization under adverse market conditions through an inquiry into efforts to organize contingent academic labor. In doing so, it first provides a historical and theoretical analysis of the development of the corporate university, explaining the central role that contingent academic labor plays in it. Following this groundwork, it then employs the case study method to analyze the experiences of contingent academic labor activists, primarily at the City University of New York and at Yale University. My primary hypothesis is that the reasons for the creation of the corporate university and the contingent academic labor force that characterizes it are as much rooted in class-based politics as they are in economics, and, therefore, that long-term success depends upon political mobilization, not merely upon narrowly construed collective bargaining strategies. The narrative case studies point to both successes and failures of such incipient mobilizations, and they serve as a measure of the validity of the primary hypothesis of this dissertation. By evaluating each case in terms of selected criteria, this dissertation provides a much-needed analysis of the politics of higher education that includes the often excluded contingent academic laborers as a vital part of a democratic movement that has been growing in the university.

In memory of my parents, Mary and Mike Tirelli

Acknowledgements

I have some friends, colleagues, and supporters who have helped me along the way. My colleagues in the academic labor organizations that I have participated in, too numerous to mention here individually, have shared the struggles with me, and I have learned much from them about academic labor politics and about solidarity. That would be my comrades from the Part-Time Instructional and Research Staff Union (PTU), Part-Timers United (the "second" PTU), the New Caucus, CUNY Adjuncts Unite!, the International Committee of the PSC, the Executive Council of the PSC (2003-2004), and, last, but not least, my friends at the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL).

Jonathan Lang, Jeff Gerson, Sally O'Driscoll, and Will Petry – graduate students, at the time, who were further along than me – guided and encouraged me as I first became involved in the politics of higher education. Wayne Vansertima, a fellow student at the Graduate Center from the sociology program, helped me to work through some of the ideas that I was playing with early on in the process and he provided some much-needed validation of them. Roy Felshun, Gail Malmgreen, and the late Deborah Bernhardt at the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University provided me with invaluable guidance in researching the history of the Professional Staff Congress. They were all very gracious and always very helpful.

Maureen O'Dougherty always knew what to tell me to get me back on track after I derailed, and as an anthropologist her insights on ethnographic research were very helpful. Another anthropologist, the late Stan Davis, was a great supporter and he too helped me to understand the problems of ethnographic research. George McClintock encouraged me to write my first article about part-time faculty for *The Graduate Student*

Advocate, and, in the process, he helped me to develop my confidence as a writer. Harry Cason, Eric Marshall, Danny Kessler, Mitu Hirshman, Lorraine Minnite, Manny Ness, Steve Leberstein, Steve London, Chris Agee, and Marcia Newfield all gave me helpful suggestions that were of immeasurable help to me at various stages of the dissertation. Jon McCabe endlessly discussed higher education politics with me and shared much of the formidable insight that he had acquired while doing research at the central administrative offices of CUNY. Audre Charrette and Marianne Patiram each made important editorial suggestions. Dan Heffron, from Kforce Government Solutions, with Linda Zimbler and Aurora D'Amico from the National Center for Education Statistics, graciously assisted me with generating some of the data that I used from the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty.

Finally, I would like to thank Daniela Daniele who taught me to find my own creative rhythm and to trust it. The errors and omissions, of course, are my own.

Preface

As a child my favorite movie was the 1934 Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy classic, *The March of the Wooden Soldiers*. The battle against oppression was never more clearly depicted in my childhood mind than in the struggle between the fairy tale heroes of my youth and the twisted and nefarious Silas Barnaby and his minions of bogeymen. I must confess, each time I watch the film I still get that tingly feeling in my spine just at the moment when Stan realizes the untapped power that lies at their disposal, and he says to Ollie, "You know what? The wooden soldiers!" They then begin to push the little red buttons on these self-directed cadres of anti-bogeymen and the band starts to play the marching music. Whenever I see this part of the film, I feel like a child again, a child who was afraid, but now feels the hope of being rescued by these virtuous saviors.

Of course, as I became an adult I learned that it was not all so simple, but like many who see the world in such stark terms as children, the images stayed as a part of my internal cultural catalogue. And, of course, today I eschew any form of militarism and any simplistic notions of good and evil because I have read Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and the Frankfurt School, among other readings on my personal syllabus, and I know that the world is a more complex place than is Toyland, and that no soldiers, wooden or otherwise, will rescue us, and that to live freely in a democratic society one must properly individuate and live as a fully developed social being. I was a (very young) child in the Sixties. As Toyland gave way to Vietnam in my mind, I came to understand that the personal is political – and this is true more urgently today than ever before.

For those of us who fear for our future, our environment, our livelihoods, our democracy, our freedom, and our children, and who view war, corporate globalization,

and trends toward privatization as the adult equivalent of the bogeymen, then the question before us is the following: who will be *our* wooden soldiers? Or perhaps the wooden soldiers will not be a simple manifestation of our childhood cultural images, but perhaps it will be characteristics that are in all of us, in one shape or form. Perhaps it will be an idea, which will then be actualized by those who understand it, by those who are in a position to act upon it and to be the fighters and the organizers.

I imagine that among these heroes could be the cadres of intellectuals, the contingent faculty who populate the American academic system – the teachers of both our youthful and adult students. The process of education is, or should be, about growth, self-discovery, and about breaking free from that which limits us – it is revolutionary. A true revolution must capture hearts and minds and restlessly reside in the collective dreams of the public. Personal liberation is about learning to overcome alienation, learning to be more human; it is about learning that whatever the fate of humanity might be, that, by definition, it is a collective fate. Teachers can be the midwives of this understanding. Through my own experiences I have come to believe this.

In 1976 I was an eighteen year-old freshman at Queens College of the City University of New York (CUNY). Tuition was implemented for the first time at CUNY that year. Although I did not have any clue then as to the implications or the politics of this event, I instinctively felt, or so it seemed to me at the time, that this event was part of a broader trend that I would have to come to terms with. In 1986 I became a Graduate Teaching Assistant mentored by Ken Sherrill in the Political Science Department at Hunter College. I was insecure, but I loved teaching and I came to see the importance of it. Professor Sherrill was a big help, and I learned a lot from his example. Just months

before this first teaching gig began, I had become involved in the activity of a group of more advanced graduate students and adjunct faculty who were organizing around the issues and concerns of part-time faculty – the Part Time Instructional and Research Staff Union (PTU). I worked for two years with PTU in an attempt to decertify the Professional Staff Congress/AFT Local 2334 as the collective bargaining agent for adjunct faculty. We did not believe that they adequately and fairly represented our interests (I discuss the details of this campaign in Chapter Four of this dissertation). When I first wrote about this campaign in an article for *The Advocate* (May 1990), the CUNY graduate student newspaper, I was sent a note by Professor Robert Engler of the Graduate School's Political Science Program. He said, "The place of adjuncts as migrant laborers and what appears to be 'regular faculty' who are indifferent to their exploitation offers uncomfortable insights into the structure and performance of the City University and of many, if not most, comparable institutions… I hope you will continue to think, organize, and write in this area." I took his advice.

In the decertification campaign, I learned a great deal about unionism, academia, politics, and myself. For me, it was a kind of political baptism. I began to see my own *personal* struggle to do something that made me happy – i.e., being a teacher – in the context of much broader *political* struggles that were not only about part-time faculty, but were also about higher education politics, in general, and about the role of the public sector in contemporary American society. I came to believe that the future of higher education, and everything entailed by that, is indelibly tied to the conditions of its work force – the faculty – and I began to see how these conditions were gradually being transformed. I saw how these patterns were not unique to the academic universe, but that

they existed in some form in most sectors of the economy. Events over time have only helped to crystallize my beliefs and to back them up.

Coming out of a working class Italian-American background left me with some emotional baggage that told me I could not succeed at academics, even though I was always a good student. Paul Willis' *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* helped to describe for me some of the obstacles that I was facing. I read this while participating in a study group on John Dewey's *Democracy and Education* with Stanley Aronowitz, who helped me to put some of these ideas together. Personal feelings of conflict over psychically leaving my family and moving on to another way of life – into a realm of greater freedom where I could, and even should, have a voice of my own – left me with all sorts of physical and emotional maladies that, at first, seemed inexplicable. I came to understand some of this when I read about "alienation" in Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, which was introduced to me by Marshall Berman, who would later become my advisor for this project. I learned more when I began to teach my students about Erich Fromm's *Escape From Freedom*. And I learned more, still, on the couch of my psychologist, Robin Greene. In my mind, my emotional baggage had mixed in with the maelstrom of higher education politics and left me with feelings of paralysis. My hopes of becoming a college professor – a dream engendered by my role models when I was in my first years of college – my Queens College professors – were threatened by those same trends in higher education which I became aware of when I began as a teaching assistant. That is why I threw myself into the politics of organizing part-time faculty. Only in doing that work did I feel like I had hope for my own future, and that hope was nurtured by the camaraderie of the collective

effort. When I first became an active member of PTU, I did not understand these issues in the personal ways described above. I understood it principally as a worthwhile political struggle that I felt passionately about. With an anger over social injustice, I became involved in student activism, part-time faculty politics, and higher education politics. My own interests and the interests of the public, especially the community served by CUNY, seemed to coincide.

In April 1991, in the midst of a student protest over budget cuts at CUNY, *The Advocate* published an article by Kate McCaffrey, an anthropology PhD student, which was titled, "The On-going Lesson: A Brief History of Access and Tuition at CUNY." The article had been researched and written for an anthropology class at the Graduate Center that McCaffrey had taken, but given its timeliness, she submitted it to *The Advocate* staff. This article helped me to begin to envision what I would write about for my dissertation. She talked about the changing status of access and of tuition at CUNY, and how these developments correlated to the changing ethnic and racial composition of the CUNY student body. Obviously, this was true, but I was not sure why. I sensed that the changing use of part-time faculty fit into this equation in some way, although I did not yet know how. Later, I decided that for my dissertation I would situate the part-time faculty conditions in the broader framework of higher education politics, which in turn is situated within the framework of national social and political trends. At the time, I did not understand it in terms of the politics of post-Fordism. Marshall Berman pointed me in this direction. It took me a while longer to actually put the pieces together – events were breaking all around and the world of higher education politics was changing faster than I could keep up with. At times, I felt that I should have chosen some long-dead

historical figure to write about. At least then I would have had a fixed target instead of a moving one. But I had the general tools, and after much angst, years of psychotherapy, supportive colleagues and advisors, a few detractors (some imagined, some real), and other calamities befitting a part-time, leftist, professor-to-be in the new world order, I finally sat down at my desk and began writing.

Early-on in the project, an interesting event occurred. On November 30th, 1999, the World Trade Organization (WTO) opened up its conference in Seattle – but not on time. The opening ceremonies were cancelled and the whole opening day was disrupted due to the actions of tens of thousands of protesters. They were protesting global corporate policies regarding jobs, health, and the environment. Most of them were peaceful demonstrators. A few were more aggressive and attacked the most obvious symbols of global corporate hegemony – e.g., Starbucks, Niketown. Whatever one's view of the various tactics, the protest on this day has placed radical thought and action in an appropriately wider context. Now, trade policy is not only the domain of governments and corporations. And the corporate global model for jobs and for the environment has been placed under a slightly more powerful microscope than had previously been the case. A global social and political movement, which had already been in motion in other parts of the world, finally arrived on the shores of the United States. The corporate policies being protested did not take shape overnight. The effects of these policies are more insidious than just trade. They affect our environment, our health, our supply of food and water, our climate, our work patterns, our social life, and our culture.

This dissertation is primarily about work and education – academic labor. In part, it situates academic labor in the context of these broader patterns. By putting academic

labor under a microscope, we can also learn about larger processes in our society. A central question that I ask is: how can those who are acted upon by powerful institutional forces, become those who act to shape and democratically change these powerful forces?

I believe that contingent academic labor is in a unique position to provide leadership for this challenge. Their education, their commitment, and their position in the maelstrom of politics give them a vantage point from which to visualize a path towards greater freedom, and the means to share that vision, if they so choose.

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Introduction

The politics of work is going through a critical reconfiguration as elite actors have made a grab for unparalleled economic and political power at the expense of the (broadly-defined) working class and poor. The epoch in which we live brings us the possibility and promise found in the "end of work" theme,[1] but at the same time it heralds a new era of attacks on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, a polarization of wealth, and a steady and continuous dismantling of what was once the welfare state. These changes are happening in many, if not most, sectors of the economy, and they are manifested most conspicuously through globalization and its related processes. If democracy and justice are to prevail, then the work of politics must be renewed and reinvigorated to meet the challenge of these transformations. How can we cope with the contradictions that these processes represent? How can we stave off the worst aspects of these changes?

Under more fair circumstances, the flexibility of work could benefit workers by allowing them to work fewer hours, and to have more diversified employment while maintaining good salary and benefits. For some sectors of the economy, such as certain technology-related fields where the demand for work is high, flexible employment might be a desirable option for employees. In such fields, employees are likely to receive substantial salaries, benefits, and retirement plans through their employer; or they might work out of a temporary agency that maintains steady income and benefits. These options can be rewarding for the person who prefers to work on a particular project, and

[1] Jeremy Rifkin, *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*, with a forward by Robert L. Heilbroner (New York: A Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995). Rifkin argues that the tragedy of job decline and displaced workers could lead to a critical social transformation that holds great promise.

then have time to explore other options before the next project begins. It can keep work interesting and varied. It would be a more just labor market for the worker, and it holds out the promise of such things as a four-day work week, a six-hour day, and less time at the job.[2]

However, most sectors of the economy today do not reflect this comparatively ideal labor market scene. Instead, the trend towards contingent employment and individuals working multiple jobs – "flexible" employment – leaves many workers insecure and it undermines their bargaining position. These employment patterns create a job market that favors employers and diminishes the value of workers. The contingent nature of this type of employment stems from efforts by employers to slash salaries, cut benefits and expenses, and to outsource jobs, sometimes globally, so as to better control the work force and keep wages down. The general characteristics of these changes revolve around the underemployment of workers, sometimes labeled as a trend towards temporary and/or part-time employment, but, more often than not, it is a reclassification of work roles, and a downgrading (if not an outright downsizing) of job status. The flexibility of work is not about employees having variety and choices, but rather it is driven more by its ability to allow for flexible accumulation. This trend has become a prominent feature of contemporary life and a subject of contentious debate.[3]

Despite the transformations in technology that have created all kinds of possibilities, and the fact that the gears and levers of this capitalist economy express

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[2] See Stanley Aronowitz and William DiFazio, *The Jobless Future: Sci-Tech and the Dogma of Work* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 342-358.

[3] See Kathleen Barker and Kathleen Christensen, eds., *Contingent Work: American Employment Relations in Transition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

themselves more broadly, geographically speaking, than they did in the past, the fundamental dynamics of class relations have not changed all that much.[4] The processes of capital accumulation still operate on the basic principle of profit, and this means finding cheap raw materials, a cheap work force, and having an available market to consume the goods – in other words, the exploitation of nature and the exploitation of men and women.

This dissertation examines the possibilities and limitations of labor organizing as a means of opposing these trends toward the degradation of work within one "industry." Specifically, it looks at the deprofessionalization and decline of academic work and its practitioner, the academic worker. Higher education is not typically thought of as an industry, but in steadily succumbing to the power of the capitalist aura it increasingly comes to fit the design. June Nash compares the changing patterns of the academic work force to the "Babbage principle," originally introduced by nineteenth century capitalists:

> The principle is simple: segment the workforce in jobs where subordinated workers undertake the denigrated, low-paid portions of the task structure, thereby preserving the privileges of a core group who monopolize the prestigious, more highly compensated sector. But in the case of academia, a method that has proven counterproductive in the U.S. industrial scene, with the debasement in the organization of work and the alienation of the workforce, is now being tried with faculties charged with instilling the highest levels of aspiration in training future generations who will undertake the most responsible roles in the society.[5]

Following this line of thought, this dissertation will explore the political economy of higher education and the changing composition of academic labor. It will also examine

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[4] Doug Henwood, "Talking About Work," in *Rising from the Ashes? Labor in the Age of "Global" Capitalism*, ed. Ellen Meiksins Wood, Peter Meiksins, and Michael Yates (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998), 17-27.

[5] June Nash, Preface to *Anthropology of Work Review*, 15 (Spring 1994): 1

the questions that these changes in the work force raise for our students, for the larger labor movement, and for our increasingly turbulent society.

More precisely, the immediate object of this study is the "flexible" teaching work force in institutions of higher education and the efforts to organize that contingent work force. "Contingent" includes any temporary, non-tenure track, adjunct or part-time faculty, including graduate student employees (e.g., teaching assistants). My general hypothesis is that the reasons for the creation of this work force are as much political as economic (i.e., budget driven), and, therefore, that labor success depends upon political mobilization, and not just on market forces and the economic assumptions of the business model of unionism. In developing this argument, I argue that the creation of the contingent academic labor *system* undermines faculty rights *and* serves as a veil that legitimizes a corporate university system that is tiered along social class lines, therefore, a political response that goes beyond the confines of collective bargaining is a necessary component of a strategy that seeks long-term success. Unless one has intimate knowledge of faculty working conditions and can view it from the ground level – or from the underground – it would not be easy to recognize such dynamics. It is this invisibility of the lower-tier faculty that hides not only their own disparate working conditions, but also the ways in which higher education can serve to reinforce class inequality.

Therefore, this dissertation aims to provide an analysis that balances a look at the changing structure of power, insofar as it affects higher education, with a look at the actors and events that take place on the ground. Accordingly, this inquiry will discuss: a) the broad historical context in which this contingent work force was created; b) narrative case studies that will exemplify these trends, as well as the labor activism

generated in response to them; and c) given the case study outcomes and the history of such conflict, I will conclude with an exploration of the possibilities for higher education, for organized labor, and for society.

My sub-hypotheses is that contingent academic workers can succeed in improving the conditions of their employment and, in the process, work to protect and extend the quality and accessibility of higher education if the following three conditions are met: 1) the formation of democratic organizations that can serve to mobilize this work force; 2) the development of strategic alliances with other groups of workers and community groups (including full-time teachers, staff, and students); and 3) the development of a shared understanding of conditions and events that can serve as the glue for a broader based movement. The case studies point to both successes and failures that exemplify the importance of these conditions, and will serve as a measure of their validity.

For the last of the three conditions I will rely on interpretation of campaign literature, activities, circumstances, events, and observed discussions to demonstrate the existence of shared understanding. This shared understanding or awareness needs to be considered because, while pockets of contingent workers occasionally succeed in shifting limited resources into their corners, it seems unlikely, given the effects of division and fragmentation of the work force, that these workers can have more than limited local success unless there is a broader based movement with a democratic vision of higher education, and this requires a set of beliefs that go beyond the immediate needs of a particular group of workers – Man, it has been said, cannot live by bread alone.

Accordingly, this dissertation defines the issue not merely as a set of working conditions for a particular group on a particular campus, but instead as a major

international trend: a two-tiered system, or more accurately, one might call it an increasingly polarized multi-tiered system.[6] This increasingly polarized multi-tiered system became a common component of labor-management relations in many sectors of the economy during the mid-1970s. In this system the rights and privileges of the current employees are usually preserved, but it allows for new hires to be part of the lower tier(s). Academic labor has not been protected from this trend. This trend has affected the focus and mission of the university system. The creation of the lower tier within academic labor diminishes the overall role of the faculty and increases the decision-making power of the administrative apparatus. It diminishes academic freedom, since contingent faculty do not have secure jobs. Consequently, the ideological conflicts that are manifested within the university – curriculum issues, pedagogical differences, culture conflicts – take place on a terrain where the faculty are left to fight with one hand tied behind their backs, due, of course, to the most insidious of the campus conflicts and perhaps the most invisible of them, i.e., the conflict over the shape and composition of academic labor.

The efforts to organize part-time/contingent faculty, which the cases exemplify, are best understood in the context of the changing structure of power. By going beyond the local labor campaigns and theoretically situating the contingent academic labor system within the broader social, economic, and political framework of national development, Chapter One borrows both from the sociology of education literature and from the literature which analyzes the structure of power so as to facilitate a more meaningful understanding of the political economy of higher education. In doing so, it loosely follows the historical epochs and the respective elite formations within each of

[6] David Staples characterized it in this way in the Spring of 1998 in a private conversation.

them, as established by C. Wright Mills in *The Power Elite*.[7] Mills explicitly excludes the idea of a "ruling class" so as not to limit his analysis of "who rules" to the simplistic construction of the "big economic men."[8] This dissertation implicitly includes a class-based concept of elites that understands elite formation within each epoch to consist of ruling circles comprised of shifting alliances, though recognizing that "capital remains the decisive element in how America is ruled."[9] This framework then serves as a prism for analyzing the historical epochs of the structure of power in so far as the system of higher education is concerned.

Chapter Two continues with this historical analysis of the political economy of higher education and brings it up to the contemporary university system, which developed out of the shift in power from the urban constituencies who had participated in promoting the New Deal Democrats to the more conservative suburban actors, whose rise contributed to the decline of the New Deal Order in the mid-1970s and 1980s. This coincides with a shift of interest from domestic to global affairs by ruling elites. The pattern of disinvestment in social programs, engendered by shifts in federal policy, and the pattern of corporate investment on the global terrain – both influenced by policies established and enforced by elites – have influenced the shape of the labor market, both locally and globally. The effects of these broader shifts in the structure of power have had a significant impact on the university system, especially the public university system, and have framed the working conditions for academic labor in fundamental ways.

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[7] C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 269-297.

[8] Ibid., 277.

[9] Stanley Aronowitz, *How Class Works* (New Have: Yale University Press, 2003), 104.

Following from the analysis of these structural shifts, Chapter Two then provides a brief description of the demographic layout of contingent academic labor, of the conditions of work that they labor under, the social implications of this system, and a review of some of the most important literature on the transformation of the professoriate. I argue that the division of labor within higher education has consequences for the aims of higher education. That is to say, the contingent academic labor system, such as it exists, reinforces class-based distinctions in higher education, thereby perpetuating inequality. Though this is the tendency, it need not be the case. This Chapter concludes with a brief overview of the resistance to this system and of the efforts to organize contingent academic labor, including a description of the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL), which initially convened in December of 1996. Efforts to organize contingent faculty have not been wildly successful, but they do provide some interesting and notable examples that can help us to better understand the strategies and tactics employed by those trying to organize academic workers at the beginning of the new millennium. The depiction of these efforts provides a view of the problems and of the possibilities for engaging collectively in activity that could improve or at least stop the slide of working conditions.

While the shifts in power that have shaped higher education are (inter) national in scope, the vantage point from New York City, discussed in Chapter Three, provides some good examples of how politics and class interact in the American system of higher education. This vantage point begins with the founding of The Free Academy in 1847 and takes us through several key struggles that culminate in the fiscal crisis years of the mid-1970s. The Free Academy [later to be named the City University of New York

(CUNY)] deserves a comprehensive viewing for reasons having to do with its historic position as the first free municipal institution of higher education.[10] This is followed by a look at the ways in which class conflict had taken place during the Progressive era within the system of public higher education in New York. Also among the struggles examined in this chapter are those experienced by the New York College Teachers Union, founded in the 1930s. The College Teachers Union was *not* the ancestor of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the current CUNY faculty and staff union. Rather, it was a militant union that was crushed in the anti-communist purges of the 1940s and 1950s. The PSC emerged out of the far less militant institutions which themselves emerged out of the vacuum created by these oppressive state policies. This Chapter follows these developments up to the founding of the PSC. Finally, after a brief look at the struggle for open admissions at CUNY, the chapter concludes with an examination of the 1975 New York City fiscal crisis. This historical perspective shows us how politics and class strife have long been central components of the decision-making processes regarding public higher education. Tragically, the New York City fiscal crisis of 1975 was an important aspect of these power shifts in that the austerity measures and policy implementations in New York City at this time would soon serve as a model for the rest of the country.[11] CUNY was the first higher education institution to fall victim to these measures.

Chapters Four and Five are comprised of narrative case studies that depict how segments of the lower rungs of academic labor have mobilized and fought back. An attempt is made to depict the various types of organizing that has been taking place by

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[10] Willis S. Rudy, *The College of the City of New York: A History, 1847-1947*. (New York: The City College Press, Inc., 1949), 2.

[11] William K. Tabb, *The Long Default* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982), 6, 117.

choosing select locations and by also choosing various types of contingent academic labor configurations. While the cases are not exhaustive, they cover many aspects of the conflict that are common to most locations, and, hopefully, they give the reader a comprehensive vision of the problem, while providing a legitimate foundation for analysis.

The first case study, Chapter Four, is a detailed narrative of some of the conflicts surrounding academic labor at CUNY from the founding of the PSC in 1972 to the contemporary period. It will show that from the very beginning there were problems with its representation of part-time faculty. It examines the various formations of part-time faculty activism within the PSC, and it chronicles the relationship between the broader political conflicts over CUNY and the development, in the 1990s, of a new caucus within the union that responded to these conflicts by building an activist alliance of academic labor that included the part-time faculty in on the ground floor. In developing the New Caucus, some of the submerged social distinctions within the bargaining unit came to the surface, and the beginnings of a continuing dialogue ensued. By 2000, the New Caucus won the central leadership positions of the PSC and most of the campus chapters. This Chapter concludes with a "report card" that evaluates the new leadership, six years later, and it summarizes some of the key changes that have been made regarding part-time faculty interests, as well as some of the problems that remain.

Chapter Five examines the graduate teaching assistants (TAs) who have been activists in the struggle against the contingent academic labor system. Most notably, though not exclusively, it reports on the Yale Graduate Employee Students Organization (GESO) and their 1996 National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) victory. This Chapter

defines the terms and parameters of the graduate student employee struggle, beginning with the first graduate teaching assistant union at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and it describes some of the playing field, while situating their fight within the broader struggle of academic labor. It also takes a glancing look at the problems and strategies of graduate teaching assistants in other locations. Finally, it reviews the travails of the New York University (NYU) Graduate Students Organizing Committee (GSOC), affiliated with the United Auto Workers (UAW). On April 3, 2000 the NLRB ruled that they could vote on whether to join a union. By February 2002 they reached a contract settlement, the first for TAs at a private university, but more recently these gains, and the right of collective bargaining, have been placed in jeopardy due to a decision by the NLRB regarding Brown University in 2004.

Following up on the case studies, the Conclusion discusses which labor-organizing strategies and organizational formations will have the most impact and the best likelihood of success within the system of higher education, given the state of labor and the state of capital today. I also argue that the movement to organize contingent classes of higher education faculty can serve as a model for social movements in the new century because they embody generalized political conflicts within the contemporary labor movement and within contemporary capitalism. Being an occupation in transition, the professoriate offers much in terms of study and analysis. The category offers itself as a vehicle for examining contemporary trends. It can do so in such a manner that brings into relief the contradictions of post-Fordist society with regard to work and democracy.

In capitalist society, human labor is considered to be a commodity that can be bought and sold just like commercial products. Karl Marx points to this process in *The Communist Manifesto*:

> The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-laborers.[12]

He can add the college professor to his list. That is, university professors, at least theoretically, belong to a category that is more akin to citizenship, but the faculty look more and more like subjects; it is professional, but they look more like employees; it is more human, that is, less alienated than other forms of work, but increasingly they are becoming like cogs in the machine – mere commodities. Of course, employees under industrialism *all* resemble the latter category in each of these examples, but the point is that college professors are not typically thought to be employees working in an industry, though their work life is coming to resemble that as the structure of work in the university is transformed. Likewise, their students are not traditionally thought of as consumers. That is what makes it so interesting, and that is precisely why it can provide some insight into the problems faced by contemporary labor and society. The crisis of academic labor portends a new level in the conflict between capitalism and democracy, yet it also points us to a new way of looking at that conflict. It carries within it the seeds of greater human freedom. As climate change and the accompanying environmental degradation become an increasing threat to civilization, the necessity for nurturing a democratic form of human freedom that embraces the common good – as opposed to the prevailing model that privileges free trade and hyper-individualism – thus becomes more urgent. The

university can be a vital part of that process, and contingent academic labor has an important role to play in making that so.

In the debates and discussions about democracy, it has become a generally accepted principle that education and democracy go hand in hand. One view of this argues that for an individual to reach his or her full potential, to learn to think critically, honestly, and to find legitimate solutions for the common good that are not just covers for private interests, then education is a vital component. Thus, the university is often viewed as a place in society where free inquiry and free expression should flourish and be nurtured. However, there is disagreement as to whether reaching one's full potential and developing civic virtue are the primary purposes of education. The opposing viewpoint, to put it starkly and in dichotomous terms, argues that the purpose of education is the dual functionalist task of serving as the handmaiden of corporate research interests and of training a work force. The debate over how we best accomplish the task of education often carries with it this conflict over the purpose of the university, sometimes as a subtext to the debate. If our educational system is subject to the same vagaries of the market as other sectors of the economy, as it clearly is and has been to some extent, then the purpose of it will be shaped by that process and it will be shaped without a debate and without discussion or deliberation.

Seen in this light, the struggle over employment in higher education becomes more than just another sector of the labor force fighting for better wages, although it is clearly that some of the time. However, consciously or not, this struggle has also become a political, social, and cultural battle over the role that education will play in our society,

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[12] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Editon, ed. Robert C. Tucker, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1978), 476.

and over the very notion of what work means in our brave new world. This dissertation is a contribution to that debate.

Methodology

Immediately after the initial proposal for this dissertation was accepted, the organizing efforts of contingent faculty, spurred on by the NLRB decision regarding Yale, which stipulated that TAs can organize, have exploded and continues to grow, albeit amidst conflict and turmoil. It had been initially driven by graduate student employee organizing, but it has overflowed into the other categories of academic labor as well. Given the abundant, yet still embryonic, nature of the object of this investigation, a qualitative approach that makes use of ethnographic research and interpretive analysis is the design that is most appropriate, though I also draw upon available quantitative data to provide some description of the academic labor landscape. A broadly generalized hypothesis is, thus, more useful to this type of research than a narrowly constructed one. To reiterate, I will make use of the case study method to provide empirical examples of these trends, and provide a partial taxonomy of the major activities in various locations to exemplify the differences and similarities that exist. In addition to the case studies, I will provide an interpretive analysis of the historical and theoretical components of this phenomenon, as per the outline above.

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that it is essential to educate the educator himself.

Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845).

Chapter 1/ The Academic Labor System: Origins

It is not new or uncommon to point out that there is a relationship between the shape of the educational system in any given society and the configuration of power in that society along social, political, and economic matrices.[1] That relationship is not always a symmetrical one, nor does it reflect only the dominant element in social class conflict. In order to fully appreciate the development of the university and its work force, it is necessary to conceptualize it within this broader framework. This chapter attempts to provide an outline of that conceptual framework. It is within this context that the contemporary contingent academic labor system was created, which will be discussed in Chapter Two. Though social inequality is surely reinforced through the mechanisms of the system of education, a key argument of this chapter is that the contradictions within the system do not allow for power to flow in only one direction. Despite the significant hidden inequalities, it may very well be that higher education *is* the best hope for democracy and equality, after all. Thus, it becomes a site of contention in the politics of class conflict.

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[1] Jerome Karabel and A.H. Halsey, eds., *Power and Ideology in Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Stanley Aronowitz and Henry A. Giroux, *Education Under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal, and Radical Debate Over Schooling* (Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, Inc., Massachusetts. 1985); Martin Carnoy and Henry M. Levin, *Schooling and Work in the Democratic State* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1985).

Reproduction Theory and The Sociology of Education

The sociology of education is the academic discipline that has as its object of study the role and function of education in society, as well as the extent to which the social relations that exist in a given society are reproduced through the educational system. This dissertation aims to appropriate some of the key concepts within this discipline and to incorporate them into this work. A brief summary of some of the key ideas in this discipline will be the starting point of this analysis, followed by the application of these ideas to a historical narrative of higher education in the United States that focuses on its relationship to political, economic, and social power, as well as on the changing role of the faculty.

The sociology of education emerged in the mid-twentieth century, but it has its roots in classical sociological theory and the writings of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. The early scholars in the field followed the structural-functionalist tradition being espoused most famously, at this time, by Talcott Parsons, and rooted in the writings of Durkheim. The commencement of the cold war brought with it an expansion of official interest in technological development which included a concern for an "adequate flow of scientists and engineers," and sufficient "human resources," meaning intellectual resources.[2] Within the social sciences, in general, there was a distinctive shift to an approach that was decidedly more instrumentalist in its methodological approach to scientific inquiry. It was within this context that the structural-functional analysis of education in the United States first flourished. The structural-functionalist paradigm generally looks to find out how individuals are

[2] Karabel and Halsey, 8.

integrated within the social structure, but it does not typically address the question of differential power within the system itself. Society is viewed as a kind of neutral playing field in which individuals can become integrated into its various levels. It assumes a consensual model, and it does not look deeply at the roots of social relations, nor at social inequality, but rather it concentrates on equilibrium in society.[3] Thus, the acceptance of the status quo was veiled with the legitimating claim of consensus.

Among the thinkers who were critical of the structural-functionalist school for having too great an emphasis on how to best integrate a society instead of examining the forces that create divisions along the lines of social class were those who espoused conflict theory. Rooted in the ideas of both Marx and Weber, conflict theory had fully emerged by the 1960s.[4] It acknowledged the detrimental effects of social inequality and argued that social theory ought to expose these relationships rather than present them in terms of a hierarchical society where humans are considered, in some cases, strictly in terms of their labor market value.[5] Karabel and Halsey offer a succinct explanation of the differences between the functionalist theory of educational stratification and its Marxist and Weberian critics:

> While some functionalists, for example, may take for granted that the superior technical knowledge of the highly schooled is responsible for their higher earnings, Marxist oriented conflict theorists conclude that cognitive differences offer at best only a partial explanation for their visibly superior status, and point instead to personality factors. It is also possible to argue that where functionalists have provided a description of the relations existing between the educational system and other social institutions, conflict theorists have put forward an explanation of why these relations exist and how they change over time…. Moreover, where

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[3] Karabel and Halsey, 11.

[4] Ibid., 28-44.

[5] Ibid., 12–16.

> functionalists have tended to look at the socialization process as one of those common values that hold a society together, neo-Marxists and neo-Weberians have examined the interests that underlie these values and have noted that socialization differs systematically by social class. Finally, where functionalists have often viewed the educational system as offering opportunities for mobility for individuals, conflict theorists have generally stressed the role of education in maintaining a system of structured social inequality.[6]

Within the school of conflict theory there is much disagreement over how that inequality manifests itself, and over what is the most constructive way of approaching the study of this problem. The conflict over conflict theory is worthy of some further exploration.

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis comprehensively describe this system of structured social inequality in their seminal 1976 work, *Schooling in Capitalist America*. They argue that the problem of inequality is perpetuated through the educational system, though it does not arise in the educational system. Rather, it is a result of the mechanisms of the capitalist mode of production. They point out how the educational system has traditionally been thought of in liberal circles as the great equalizer of these capitalist-induced inequalities. However, they argue that the relationship is more complex than this.

The hierarchy in social relationships brought about by economic life is not automatically perpetuated, but rather its stability "is the result of explicit mechanisms constituted to maintain and extend the dominant patterns of power and privilege."[7] They

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[6] Karabel and Halsey, 34-35.

[7] Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (Basic Books, A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, 1976), 126.

refer to "the sum total of these mechanisms and their actions" as the reproductive process.[8]

> These are precisely the social relationships which are necessary to the security of capitalist profits and the stability of the capitalist division of labor….
>
> To an extent, stability is embodied in law and backed by the coercive power of the state.[9]

However, coercive power alone could not maintain control, as evidenced by the "furious" struggles engendered by the "consolidation and extension of capitalism."[10] They go on to argue that "the reproduction of the social relations of production depends on the reproduction of consciousness."[11] This consciousness is not simply the "unintended by-product of social experience," but rather, its reproduction is facilitated by "consciously organized" social relationships.[12] The educational system is an integral part of this process:

> …schooling fosters and rewards the development of certain capacities and the expression of certain needs, while thwarting and penalizing others. Through these institutional relationships, the educational system tailors the self-concepts, aspirations, and social class identifications of individuals to the requirements of the social division of labor.[13]

They argue that there is a "structural correspondence" between the social relations of the educational system and those of production.[14]

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[8] Bowles and Gintis, 126.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., 127.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 128.

[13] Ibid., 129.

[14] Ibid., 131.

> Hierarchical relations are reflected in the vertical authority lines from administrators to teachers to students. Alienated labor is reflected in the students lack of control over his or her education, the alienation of the student from the curriculum content and the motivation of school work through a system of grades and other external rewards rather than the student's integration with either the process (learning) or the outcome (knowledge) of the educational "production process."[15]

One could argue that this analysis is one-dimensional and that it places an undue emphasis on the structure of power while neglecting the role of human agency. In fact, Bowles and Gintis are criticized on this count by numerous scholars[16] including Aronowitz and Giroux who argue that, though the approach is valuable in that it "makes evident how class and power bear down on classroom and social relations," it also has problems:

> …this position generally ignores the question of how students and teachers produce forms of resistance or, for that matter, how they mediate school life through the histories, languages and experiences that constitute their various cultural backgrounds and histories.[17]

Bowles and Gintis are guilty, according to this perspective, of drawing "accounts of schooling in which the logic of domination appears to be inscribed without the benefit of human mediation or struggle."[18] And, "even where contradictions and mediations are mentioned, they generally disappear under the crushing weight of capitalist domination."[19] Finally, it is argued that,

> …these accounts are marred not only by a reductionist instrumentalism regarding the meaning and role of schools, but also by a form of radical

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[15] Bowles and Gintis, 131.

[16] Karabel and Halsey, 41-44; Aronowitz and Giroux, 74-79, 146-7; and Carnoy and Levin, 20-25.

[17] Aronowitz and Giroux, 147.

[18] Ibid., 78.

[19] Ibid., 79.

> pessimism that offers little hope for social change and even less reason for developing alternative educational practices.[20]

To be sure, Bowles and Gintis have not completely ignored the ways that resistance develops, as indicated when they argue as follows:

> …recurrently through U.S. history these reproduction mechanisms have failed, sometimes quite spectacularly. In most periods -- and the present is certainly no exception –- efforts to use the schools to reproduce and extend capitalist production relations have been countered both by the internal dynamic of the educational system and by popular opposition.[21]

And, they recognize, at least in theory, that it is not just a vulgar-Marxist notion of the economic system determining the consciousness of the working class, but that there are *always* possibilities for resistance:

> The contradictions of corporate capitalism will not by themselves create a revolutionary movement, but they do give birth to a revolutionary potential.[22]

Moreover, they argue that the expansion of mass education is not an outcome of pure class domination, but that it "can best be seen as an outcome of class conflict."[23]

Nonetheless, critics of Bowles and Gintis often view them as focusing too much on the dominant (hegemonic) forces in society and paying too little attention as to *how* resistance plays a role in the process. In some ways, this is a dispute over the level of analysis and over what is emphasized. It is difficult to see "resistance" in a macro-level analysis, especially if the dominant forces have power that is disproportionately greater than the power of the subordinate class(es). It is, however, possible to point out the contradictions which may be the pathway of that resistance. One might ask, what is the

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[20] Aronowitz and Giroux, 79.

[21] Bowles and Gintis, 129.

[22] Ibid., 223.

object of study? For Bowles and Gintis, the object is the reproduction of the relationships of class conflict as they are manifested through the system of education. Elite interests have played a significant role in shaping that system. They might have argued that the stories of successful resistance are few and far between and barely dent the structure, though they encourage the search for cracks. Still, what role does resistance play?

Whereas Bowles and Gintis focus on economic structures, other writers concentrate on how reproduction occurs through cultural mediums. Looking at reproduction somewhat abstractly, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron[24] emphasize how cultural patterns can influence relations of power, and they examine how that manifests itself through the process of education. That is, they examine how power relations are mediated through a process of cultural reproduction which supports the dominant elements over the subordinate ones through the practices within the educational system. Perhaps most interesting in their work is their use of the notion of *cultural capital*. Cultural capital is the knowledge and habits which one acquires through the family and from one's upbringing. Whether one has enough of the "right" cultural capital in relation to the educational system depends upon where one stands in relation to the dominant ideology as it is represented within the pedagogic paradigm. Thus, a working class student in a traditional school setting that is influenced by the dominant ideology (i.e., that of the ruling elites) would encounter that setting with the disadvantage of not having the requisite (arbitrary) cultural capital necessary to navigate the terrain successfully, thereby diminishing one's chances of "success," as measured by arbitrary

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[23] Bowles and Gintis, 239.

[24] Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. Richard Nice, with a foreword by Tom Bottomore (London: Sage Publications, 1990).

social standards. Bourdieu and Passeron, however, even more than Bowles and Gintis, leave the subject with little room for maneuvering. That is, they have little room in their theory for showing how resistance develops.[25]

Paul Willis,[26] in a detailed ethnographic study of cultural reproduction in the schools pushes the envelope a bit further. In his study of working class "lads" in England, he finds that there are resistances by the students toward their schooling, and that it is these resistances which ultimately lead working class kids to do poorly in school, thus remaining within their social tier and following the path to working class jobs. These modes of resistance speak to how class conflict is negotiated. However, he concludes that if we can learn to harness these modes of resistance that it could somehow develop into an explicit consciousness of class relations and lead to action.

The question still remains, however, as to how working class interests that are on the ground, so to speak, fit into the mix so as to play a role in the shaping of power? Or, is the effect of the elite on the structure of power so overwhelming that the working class play little role in shaping it because they do not understand it? The questions surrounding issues of class consciousness and resistance to elite power still have not come very far from the earlier debates within Marxism. V.I. Lenin believed that class consciousness could never be attained by the working class on their own, thus he put forward his idea of a highly centralized vanguard party to lead them.[27] Rosa Luxemburg, however, was critical of this aspect of Lenin's plan arguing instead that it is the

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[25] Aronowitz and Giroux, p. 84.

[26] Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor*, with an introduction by Stanley Aronowitz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

[27] V.I. Lenin, *What is to Be Done?* (New York: International Publishers, 1969).

spontaneous action of the masses that would bring them to this point of maturation: "The working class demands the right to make its mistakes and learn in the dialectic of history."[28] Marx seems to share this view when, in *The German Ideology*, he writes that the class overthrowing the ruling class "can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew."[29]

A brief digression into the use of the word "spontaneity" by Lenin and by Luxemburg might help to better explain this point. Lenin's understanding of spontaneity, in the context of his conflict with those he called Economists, was of something that was unguided – a movement that develops in an unscientific and undisciplined manner. He opposed spontaneity to a disciplined political consciousness. Thus he scorned the Economists for slavishly "cringing before spontaneity," as he accused them of having a form of trade-union consciousness that sought economic gains for workers, but that did not have a political understanding that could lead to a revolutionary socialist class consciousness.[30] Notwithstanding the validity of such a critique of the Economists in his day, for which his use of the word "spontaneity" is contextually specific, his own analysis can be criticized in that it gravitates against an even deeper understanding of revolutionary class consciousness. This is made clear when we examine Luxemburg's thought. She agreed with Lenin on much of the revolutionary agenda, but spontaneity had a different meaning in her thought. It is presented in a manner that has greater nuance and with deeper psychological connections. For Luxemburg, it is about growth

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[28] Rosa Luxemburg, "Organizational Questions of Social Democracy," *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, edited by Mary-Alice Waters (New York: Pathfinder Press, Inc., 1970), 130.

[29] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Edition, ed. by Robert C. Tucker, *The German Ideology: Part 1* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc, 1978), 193.

[30] Lenin, 30-44.

and the development of the inner being, and it could be guided, but not guided in an authoritarian manner, as she argued Lenin had proposed, but guided in a more democratic way. Though Lenin and Luxemburg both understood that it is the conditions of the epoch that shape the limits and possibilities of the movement towards greater freedom, Luxemburg had a more sophisticated understanding of the development process of revolutionary class consciousness. What Lenin was best at was in explaining how the conditions in Russia at the time needed to be met with an adaptive response if the socialist project was to be applied. Where he fell short, I would argue, was in the somehow subconscious transmission of authoritarian values and characteristics that were already part of Russian society under the Tsar. It is both the objective conditions and the subjective understanding of them by the participants that presents the chance for new possibilities to grow. Lenin had a much better grasp of the former than of the latter. Of course, sitting in front of my computer, it is perhaps boorish to second-guess a revolutionary icon fighting a century ago against Tsarist oppression. The point, however, is to learn the lessons of the earlier struggles so that we may better understand contemporary oppression, which has grown exponentially more complex.

Therefore, in following this thread, one might argue that resistance to elite rule comes, in part, from a consciousness, as opposed to a denial, of one's own oppression and of injustice perpetrated upon others, even when that consciousness is not fully explicit or when the subject is only partially aware. It is in the phenomenological process of *overcoming* the alienated self – along with the denial that characterizes that alienation – that human beings can begin to approach a truly radical transformation in

consciousness.[31] It is in this *process* that democratic character traits can be fostered. In this respect, John Dewey's *Democracy and Education*,[32] the bible of progressive educators, has some commonalities with the ideas of both Luxemburg and Marx. The educator, for Dewey, needs to act as a *guide* or expert, rather than as an authoritarian disciplinarian who *controls* his students and, in the process, transmits the social, cultural, and psychological characteristics that correspond to that control. According to Dewey's philosophy, by teaching in a democratic manner, a democratic personality can be nurtured in the process of schooling. The "mistakes" of Luxemburg's working class, the "ridding itself of all the muck… [in a revolution, and becoming] fitted to found society anew" of Marx's revolutionary proletariat, and the principle of guidance as opposed to that of control, discussed by Dewey, all speak to the same point about the necessity of experience and self-determination in the formation of democratic consciousness.

If class-consciousness and the resistance to elite control, which is associated with it, are things that are necessarily self-determined, how then does one move from a lack of awareness to greater awareness, i.e., from denial to actualization? Man is still a social animal, and we grow and develop through a reflexive social process with other human beings. Teachers can play a vital role in that process. But for it to be conducive to the formation of democratic habits and practices, it must be genuinely experienced by the student (and by the teacher), and not just a lesson plan to be passively consumed.

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[31] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Edition, ed. by Robert C. Tucker, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, "Estranged Labor," 70-81; Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 3-39, 103-206, 240-299.

[32] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1944), 1-68.

Aronowitz and Giroux, borrowing from Antonio Gramsci, develop the idea of the "transformative intellectual" as a kind of medium between the working class and its awareness of itself as a class.[33]

> That is, intellectuals who are part of a specific class and/or movement and who serve to give it an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The notion of transformative intellectual is important for educators because it broadens our understanding of the role of intellectuals by highlighting their social function as mediators between the state and everyday life. In this definition, the concept of intellectual is politicized…. [T]his concept is important because it lays the theoretical ground for radical educators to examine their own organic connections to specific groups; at the same time, it points to establishing social relations with social groups in concrete institutional contexts such as neighborhoods, trade unions, etc. Furthermore, its logic argues for democratic organizations in which intellectuals and the masses coalesce around building their ascendance as groups fighting the material and ideological forces of domination, while simultaneously and self-consciously educating every member of the community to develop the general skills, knowledge, and capacities to govern.[34]

The historical development of a large contingent academic labor force presents possibilities for faculty (whatever their position in the academic labor hierarchy) to act as "politicized" intellectuals, to participate in a new labor movement that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of labor union organizing by identifying itself as a social class movement, and to act as the transformative intellectuals envisioned by Aronowitz and Giroux. By accomplishing this, they can participate in the de-legitimization of the contingent academic labor system, lay bare the existing set of social inequalities, and serve as a catalyst for an already growing movement for greater democracy both inside

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[33] Aronowitz and Giroux, 135. They explicitly build on Gramsci's idea of the "organic intellectual." See Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals," *Selections from The Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, 3-23.

[34] Ibid.

and outside of the campus gates. In this process they can serve to push the boundaries of human freedom, i.e., by comprehending them and by acting on that comprehension.

The limits of freedom are framed by the objective political, social, economic and material conditions of any given moment, and by the subjective understanding of these conditions by the citizenry, both as individuals and collectively.[35] The "limits" are not static and unyielding, but they represent moments in the process. In dialectical fashion, the limits can be pushed and extended. At each moment in the development of political, social, economic, and technological forces, there are new possibilities for both the advancement of human freedom and for its restriction. Those who are in a position to understand necessity, by critically locating themselves within their own space and time, are thereby empowered to act consciously to participate in the shaping of these dynamics. They would be those who have developed the "sociological imagination," written about by C. Wright Mills.[36] They will be enabled to grasp the "intersections of biography and history within society,"[37] and thereby have the chance to live as authentic, conscious, positive agents and to explore the edges of those limits so as to go beyond them.

The next section of this chapter explores the changing shape of the structure of power – the first piece of the equation that seeks to understand some of the limits that frame this conflict. Through historical excavation, I will trace the growth of the system of higher education in the United States, the central conflicts in each period that animated

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[35] Mieczyslaw Maneli, *Juridical Positivism and Human Rights* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1981), esp. 257-277. Maneli traces the idea of freedom from Kant through Hegel, Marx, and Dewey. I studied these ideas with him in several undergraduate classes from 1978-1981 at Queens College, City University of New York.

[36] C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

[37] Ibid., 7.

this growth, and the relationship between higher education and the national development of political, social, and economic power. This will show how the system of higher education has from the very beginning been shaped and influenced by the changing structure of power, and how it, in turn, has contributed to transformations in the structure of power. This relationship is to be understood in terms of the above discussion of freedom, in terms of the dialectical interplay between structure and superstructure, and in terms of the sometimes static and sometimes dynamic conflict between elite power and democratic resistance, with human agency serving as the stuff that animates all of these aspects. With regard to the contemporary epoch, Chapter 2 will argue that an important function of the contingent academic labor *system* is to serve as a legitimation mechanism for the social hierarchy, for elite interests, and for the accompanying economic disparities within this structure of power. However, conscious agents can resistance this system, and, thus, we will also examine some of the ways that the "invisible faculty" fight back.

The Structure of Power: Mills' Epochs and the System of Higher Education

Two of the most common classical theories advanced by social scientists regarding the structure of power in the United States have been the pluralist model and the power-elite model. The most noted proponents of these theories have been Robert A. Dahl[38] and C. Wright Mills,[39] respectively. Pluralist theory, according to Dahl, assumes a political playing field in which interest groups negotiate, compromise, and compete with each other, but where no one group is ever likely to become so powerful as to control the

[38] Robert A. Dahl, *Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Conflict and Consent* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1967). In his later works, Dahl developed a greater appreciation for the role of elites.

[39] C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

playing field itself. It is a neo-Madisonian view of the political universe, and it shares with structural-functionalism the assumptions of consensus and of a rough equality of opportunity in society. It is an approach to understanding power that employs a static political "model," as opposed to a dynamic historical approach to understanding the shape of power, such as that which is put forward by Mills in *The Power Elite*.

The power-elite model shares with conflict theorists, such as Bowles and Gintis, the view that relatively few actors, who disproportionately influence the political and economic structures of society, have an increasingly complex influence on the shape of power as we near the contemporary epoch. Mills argues that the contemporary universe depicted by pluralists represents only the middle level of power,[40] and that important decisions affecting the public occur largely outside of public view in such places as corporate boardrooms. This is done not through a conspiratorial process, but rather through a coincidence of interests between the different elite categories in society.[41] Mills classic account of the historical development of the power elite in the United States is a useful framework for understanding the changes in the structure of power and it is not inconsistent with the qualified social conflict perspective outlined above.

Mills describes five epochs of the power elite in the United States. In each configuration, he looks at the political order, the economic order, and the military order and compares the extent to which each of these orders influences the shape of power. It would be useful in terms of developing a better understanding of the contingent academic

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[40] C. Wright Mills, "The Structure of Power in American Society," in *Power Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills*, ed. and with an introduction by Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963), 30-31.

[41] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 276-277.

labor system in contemporary society to gain an understanding of the changing role of higher education through the prism of Mills' epochs. This excursion into the longer historical view gives us a perspective that can help us to understand the limits and the possibilities of power, i.e., by carefully describing the structure of power, in effect, we make room for resistance. Mills' epochs did not extend beyond the late 1950s, the time of his writing *The Power Elite*, however, the 1960s brought with it a confluence of events and circumstances, and the New Left, weaned on Marx and Mills, broke through the culture of denial that characterized the 1950s and emerged to challenge the state and the powers that controlled it. Continuing with Mills' framework, this dissertation will construct an extension of his epochs to include subsequent developments in the relations of social power, the role of the state, and the political economy of higher education. The following pages, therefore, present an explication of Mills' historical account with an overlaying account of the place and function of the system of higher education within each of these epochs. As we get closer to the contemporary period the relationship between elite interests and the shape of the educational system becomes more intimate.[42]

The first epoch described by Mills lasted from the American Revolution until the administration of John Adams.[43] During this founding epoch, ideologically rooted in the theory of the natural right to property, the Constitution was designed both to protect against "tyranny" of the majority through the institution of a complex system of checks and balances along with the separation of powers *and* to preserve the system of slavery.

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[42] Alain Touraine, *The Academic System in American Society* (McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1974). Touraine's work examines the academic system in the United States in relation to the historical development of productive forces in society since the industrial era began. His work has inspired the initial formulation of this analysis, though it has been more useful to follow Mills' account of the development of elite power.

[43] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 269-270.

The elite consisted of "men of affairs," and the three orders – political, economic, and military – roughly coincided. The leadership consisted of men who could easily move from the role of legislator and merchant to that of scholar and surveyor to that of frontiersman and soldier.[44] There was a "simple and direct" unification of these institutions in this society, which was free of the complexities and specializations of modern-day life. The colleges had trained some of these elites, though it was not a requirement for entrance into the upper echelons of society.

The colleges that had emerged from the colonial days through the early years of the new nation were instruments for preserving the established society.[45] That is, unlike later formations of the higher learning, these colleges were primarily concerned with conserving the existing knowledge "rather than [with] the search for new knowledge."[46] They were organized with the aim of forming character rather than with the aim of fostering research.[47] The curriculum consisted of Latin, ancient Greek, and Mathematics, and their method was one of rote learning. However, given the state of national development at this time, the importance of the colleges should not be overstated.

The colonial colleges were not strictly theological seminaries, as is commonly inferred, though they were founded as "wards" of religion.[48] They were a mixture of private denominational sponsorship, and, in an American innovation, of state supervision

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[44] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 269-270.

[45] John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities*, 1636-1968 (Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1968), 10.

[46] Brubacher and Willis, 23.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 114 -115.

as well.[49] Perhaps the most urgent reason for founding a majority of the colonial colleges was to educate a "suitable, orthodox body of native clergymen," however, it is "equally true and equally important that their curricula were not those of divinity schools but of liberal arts schools…."[50] As the new nation was formed and the 18th Century was coming to a close, only about one-fifth of all graduates were going into the clergy.[51] There was little professional training, however, and the liberal arts curriculum did not seem to have played a significant role in shaping the minds of America's foremost thinkers.[52]

The early institutions of higher education in America were not connected to professional and advanced faculties, as were their European counterparts.[53] They were colleges, not universities, and they were small and scattered.[54] Among those colonial colleges established around mid-eighteenth century onwards, the trustee boards had interdenominational representation.[55] This came about because of sectarian conflicts between hostile Protestant denominations, which needed diplomatic solutions if institutions were to succeed.[56] Thus, they came out of the same tradition of conflict as the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Tolerance was not the aim, but mutual

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[49] Hofstadter, 114.

[50] Ibid., 116.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, *The Academic Revolution* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), 1.

[53] Hofstadter, 114

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid., 117

[56] Ibid., 118.

forbearance was a necessity.[57] Also, in these early colleges, there was a unique system of lay government that developed. It was a system in which "the major decisions were made by boards of nonresident governors who were not teachers" (though ministers were prominent on the governing boards).[58] The conflicts over decision-making authority with regard to academic issues has been a thicket of contention in higher education ever since.

If it was during the colonial period that the foundation for higher education in the United States was laid, it was during the next epoch that the frame of the house of higher education was constructed. The second epoch that Mills considers is bounded by the ascendancy of Jefferson's Republican Party at one end and by Civil War at the other. This period witnessed the extension of the United States westward with the Louisiana Purchase, an increase in the urban poor, including among them many of the new immigrants, and the expansion of the white male franchise, which was the decisive political marker that defined the new epoch. This was the age of Jacksonian democracy. Mills describes this period as having followed "Jefferson's political philosophy, but, in due course, Hamilton's economic principles."[59] The formation of the elite during this period was a "plurality of top groups" that was "at most a loose coalition."[60] This was the period that, according to Mills, most resembled the pluralist theoreticians' anachronistic image of the dispersal of political and social power in mid-twentieth century United States; i.e., what was arguably a fair observation by Alexis de Tocqueville of the dynamics of human associations and the structure of power in his age, had become,

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[57] Hofstadter, 119.

[58] Ibid., 114.

[59] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 270-271.

[60] Ibid.

in the hands of the pluralist theoreticians living in the twentieth century, the basis of a simplistic and inadequate depiction of the relations of power in their own society.

The pluralistic permutations of colleges in this second epoch were reflective of the so-called open frontier, the burgeoning urbanization and industrialization, and of the numerous competing subcultures that had vied for power in the United States at the time.[61] The Dartmouth College Case of 1819 gave these colleges a boost.[62] This case involved a conflict between the college trustees at Dartmouth College and the state legislature of New Hampshire, which tried to change the charter of Dartmouth College so as to make it into a state university.[63] The New Hampshire state court decided in favor of the changes implemented by the state legislature, but the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Daniel Webster (Dartmouth College, class of 1801) argued before Chief Justice John Marshall on behalf of the college trustees. Marshall agreed with Webster's argument both on the question of the Dartmouth charter being a contract, and "that the college was a private rather than a public corporation."[64] The outcome of this meant that "private colleges, once chartered, would now be secure from state interference; and it helped to create a firm legal foundation for the little colleges that soon began to mushroom wildly throughout the country."[65]

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[61] See Jencks and Riesman, 1-8.

[62] *Dartmouth College v. Woodward*, 4 Wheaton 517 (1819).

[63] Richard Hofstadter and Wilson Smith, eds., *American Higher Education: A Documentary History*, Volume I and II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 149-150, 202-219.

[64] Hofstadter and Smith, Vol. I, 149.

[65] Ibid., 150; Also see Brubacher and Rudy, 59.

There was not just one model of higher education in the U.S. at this time, but rather the epoch of laissez-faire, individualistic capitalism engendered many models.[66] This multiplicity corresponded to the various social and economic groupings in American society. The Free Academy, a municipal college, was established in 1847 in New York City to provide education for those among the working class who met the intellectual qualifications (discussed at length in Chapter Three of this dissertation). There was also a rise of technological colleges, among them Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute which was formed in 1824 and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology which was formed in 1865.[67] There were women's colleges, which first arose in the South – Wesleyan Female College of Macon, Georgia opened its doors in 1836.[68] The first coeducational college, Oberlin, opened its doors in 1833.[69] There were also hundreds of colleges established by Christian religious denominations.[70] It was easier for religious dissenters to strike out on their own rather than attempt to reform the church to which they belonged.[71] During the 1850s, a movement grew calling for the establishment of "democracy's colleges," the state agricultural and mechanical colleges.[72] The federal government with the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862 supported this movement. This support was provided through a land-grant formula whereby the Federal government set aside revenues for states to use

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[66] Brubacher and Rudy, 59-83.

[67] Ibid., 63-64.

[68] Ibid., 64-65.

[69] Ibid., 66.

[70] Ibid., 69-70.

[71] Jencks and Riesman, 2.

[72] Brubacher and Rudy, 62-63.

for their colleges teaching agricultural and mechanical arts.[73] The explosion of colleges during this epoch occurred concurrently with the spread of ideas and attitudes about American democracy. The colleges were, thus, subject to the same vicissitudes of conflict and contradiction as was the developing democracy. One could say that higher education in the United States is a sibling to the pragmatic and democratic ideals that emerged during this epoch. The growth and expansion of colleges at this time also brought with it, naturally, conflicts over curriculum and over the role of the faculty.

The conflicts over curriculum during this period were most famously exemplified by the controversy surrounding the Yale Report of 1828. Reformers and critics of the curriculum were becoming louder, and Yale stood firm in support of the rote-learning of the classical Latin and Greek curriculum,[74] taught by tutors who were "excellent drill-masters," but alleged to be lacking in the "true literary spirit."[75] The Yale Report of 1828, which was the reply of the Yale Corporation and faculty to their critics, argued that the study of the ancient classics was the best way to discipline the mind.[76] The critics were quieted and the classics became entrenched at Yale for the remainder of the century.[77] However, the debate did not end there. The pragmatic spirit was strong in the United States, and *this* tradition was ultimately no less influential in the development of the college curriculum.

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[73] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 568.

[74] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, 252.

[75] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, "Julian M. Sturtevant on the Quality of Teaching at Yale in the 1820's," 274.

[76] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, 252.

[77] Ibid., 276.

Thus, despite the Yale Report and its influence, the battle over the curriculum raged on and the struggle over the elective system became "the central educational battle of nineteenth century America."[78] The demands for a more practical and diverse curriculum would not go away. Interestingly, this pragmatic streak in American life goes hand-in-hand with the idea that came to be called "American exceptionalism" – i.e., the idea that class conflict, as it had developed in Europe, could not find fertile ground in the United States. That is to say, unlike Europe, the United States does not have a feudal past or a traditional aristocracy. Tocqueville, who was somewhat nostalgic for the ancient regime, was the first to recognize that the absence of an aristocratic tradition necessitated that we find "some democratic procedures to replace it."[79] The plurality of associations that he celebrated led him to have hope for this nineteenth century society, even in the face of the egregious contradictions represented by the institution of slavery. It was this associational tradition and the get-it-done attitude that went along with it, as opposed to waiting for action to be initiated from above, which provided a womb-like context for the continuous nurturance of the pragmatic spirit. In turn, it was this spirit that prodded the curricular reforms and supported the belief that education was not just for the well-to-do.

Thus, the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), along with the Yale Report of 1828, together may have for a time proved to be "effective barriers against advancing democratic forces pressing for control of higher education," however neither the Dartmouth decision nor the Yale Report

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[78] Brubacher and Rudy, 100.

[79] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. by J.P. Mayer, transl. by George Lawrence (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc, 1969), 696.

"endeared the colleges to the populace."[80] As the era of Jacksonian democracy progressed, popular forces registered their disapproval by substantially reducing legislative subsidies to the colleges, "especially denying any notable share to them in the distribution of the surplus federal revenue returned to the states in 1837."[81]

The most famous of the citizens who opposed the traditional curriculum set forth in the Yale Report is, undoubtedly, Ralph Waldo Emerson.[82] His work that addresses this conflict most directly is the seminal essay, "The American Scholar" (1837). Emerson's address at Harvard argued for education to be a process in which the individual is actively engaged, rather than one where the individual is following long-dead scholars blindly and without originality. Foreshadowing the work of John Dewey, Emerson intonates, "We hear, that we may speak."[83] While the great works are valuable for us to repair to in times of darkness, he offered that, "each age, it is found, must write its own books."[84] The classics of knowledge are essential for any learned person, but colleges "can only highly serve us, when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and, by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame."[85]

The debate over curriculum continued to rock the classical school of education that focused on the drilling of Latin, ancient Greek, and Mathematics, though it would be

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[80] Brubacher and Rudy, 35.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid., 105-106.

[83] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," in *Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited and with a foreward by William H. Gilman (New York: New American Library, Inc., 1965), 228.

[84] Ibid., 227.

some time before this tradition would give way to a new curriculum. As an alternative choice to this required classical curriculum, Francis Wayland, president of Brown University, argued, in 1842, for a more flexible curriculum with a general education for the benefit of all classes, which would include a range of elective courses in the liberal arts and sciences.[86] His vision was ambitious and democratic.

> It is frequently said that this is a republic, here we are all equal, the avenues to distinction are, and of right ought to be, open to all; every man whether poor or rich, of whatever occupation, should have the opportunity of improving himself to the utmost; this is demanded by the nature of our institutions, and it is important to success in the arts as well as necessary to the full development of the universal mind.[87]

He proposed a university where students would be able to choose what they study within certain broad limitations. He argued that high intellectual achievement could be found in every mode of occupation.[88]

Another advocate who favored the more widely inclusive elective principle, as opposed to the classical curriculum, and who had been influenced by the German Universities, was Henry P. Tappan. Writing *University Education* in 1851, Tappan, having formerly been a professor at the University of the City of New York (NYU), would soon become the president of the University of Michigan. He wanted more than just a horizontal expansion of the curriculum, as did Wayland, but rather he advocated a vertical expansion, as well, which would include more advanced studies and scholarship

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[85] Emerson, 229.

[86] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Francis Wayland's Report to the Brown Corporation, 1850," 478.

[87] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, "Francis Wayland's Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System, 1842," 334.

[88] Ibid., 372.

in the development of graduate institutions of higher learning.[89] He sought the cultivation of a true university that would go beyond the college level. He believed that we have multiplied our colleges and expanded our branches of study, but we have improved nothing.[90] By expanding and deepening the scope of higher education, Tappan writes that "education would stand out, as in truth it is, not as a mere preparation for the facile doing of the business of the world, but as the highest aim of the human being."[91] He saw education as being of two kinds: that imposed by tutors and governors, and an education that is self-imposed.[92] Both are necessary. The first kind corresponds to the college experience, but the second, the self-imposed education, would be the higher learning. The University would be the place where the spirit of scholarship "would thus be thoroughly awakened, the life of a scholar clearly defined, and, instead of calculating the time of study, his regards would be fixed upon the ends of study—the glorious attainments to be realized."[93] Neither Wayland nor Tappan would see their proposals develop in any great measure, but the seeds of transformation were sewn.

As the conflicts over the shape of the college system and its curriculum proceeded, the status and role of the faculty were also subject to debate. During this period, faculty had "distressingly low" salaries, which some argue had served to keep the best away; and many of those that entered the profession often did not remain very long

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[89] Brubacher and Rudy, 107.

[90] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, "Henry P. Tappan on University Education, 1851," 491.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 500.

[93] Ibid., 503.

due to the low pay and also because of the low status that accompanied it.[94] Historians John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy explain:

> At that time Francis Wayland… noted that college salaries were far below those of other professionals. Not only that but a man's salary on entering a college career was likely to remain practically unchanged throughout his incumbency and that with very little expectancy of supplementing it on the side. Indeed it was not difficult to argue that early higher education in America was financed in part by the exploitation of the professor.[95]

Those trends have been a common feature of higher education in the United States, with only sporadic deviations, as we shall see throughout this dissertation.

Amidst the tumult and conflict over curriculum, some critics began to question the ways in which the colleges were controlled.[96] Jasper Adams, the president of Charleston College, placed the blame on the boards of trustees, portraying a conflict over their role that continues to be a source of contention in the university:

> The trustees are not instructors, they have not, with very few exceptions, the habits of instructors, they are unacquainted with the habits, the dispositions, the prejudices, and the peculiar modes of thinking which prevail among students; – how can they, then, be successful in dealing with them? The instruction and discipline of a college are the appropriate business of the faculty, and not of the trustees. Besides, the faculty and not the trustees supply the place, perform the duties, assume the responsibilities, and enjoy the rights of the parents, so far as the education of their sons is concerned. The trustees leave their appropriate sphere of duty, dignity, and usefulness, when they interfere with the instruction and discipline of a college.[97]

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[94] Brubacher and Rudy, 37; Hofstadter and Smith, "Henry E. Dwight on the Low Status of Teachers, 1830," 305.

[95] Brubacher and Rudy, 37; Regarding college finances in this period, Brubacher and Rudy cite Frederick Rudolph, "Who Paid the Bills? An inquiry into the Nature of Nineteenth Century College Finance," *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 31, Spring, 1961, 144-157.

[96] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, 253.

[97] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, "Jasper Adams on the Relation between Trustees and Faculty, 1837," 323.

The "appropriate sphere" of the trustees is understood, from this perspective, to mean a concern for the broader guardianship of the university which focuses on its longer-term interests.

Another critic of trustee interference in faculty responsibilities was Frederick A. P. Barnard, president of Columbia University (1864-1889) and a staunch defender of higher education for women. He argued before the trustees of the University of Mississippi:

> Gentlemen, . . . you have undertaken the construction of a railway to connect the town of Jackson, Mississippi, with the town of Jackson, Tennessee. You have employed a corps of engineers… You do not undertake to tell the engineers how they shall cross this river, or build that embankment, or cut that hill; that is the engineer's business. You employ the engineers because they understand that business better than you. If you let them alone, they will do it judiciously. If you were to follow them mile by mile and compel them to make bridges and embankments and tunnels according to your ideas, the work would probably be spoiled. Just so in the University. …[If] you are to direct the details of the work at every step, you will succeed no better than you would succeed if you were to direct the engineers of the Mississippi Central in the same way. Our professional knowledge and experience will be set aside and rendered useless, and our whole work will probably be badly botched.[98]

The conflicts over who should control the university have continued to be a central area of political conflict within the university system. Both Adams and Barnard make compelling arguments that the university would be better served if the boards of trustees respected the professional competence of the faculty bodies and steered clear of attempts to micro-manage the institutions which they serve. When trustee efforts enter the realm of day-to-day management that interferes with such matters as curriculum and faculty-student relations, then it constitutes a violation of faculty prerogative and academic

[98] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. I, "Barnard Argues for Enlarged Faculty Powers, 1856," 391.

freedom. However, the pre-Civil War colleges did not, in any great measure, embrace the modern idea of academic freedom.

As the professoriate became more professional in terms of "the character of the scholar, the research function and scientific conceptions of the search for truth, and by the manifold services, aside from teaching students, that are rendered to the community by the great university," the idea of academic freedom became more meaningful.[99] As the college system became more of a university system, the prerogatives that faculty would come to possess began to emerge.[100] It was not long before "a college president could proclaim to the American community what the founders of the first European universities had understood from the beginning: 'Professors are sometimes spoken of as working for the college. They *are* the college.'"[101] However, before that next epoch could emerge, the country would first be convulsed by a bloody Civil War.

The Civil War reshaped the country and its Constitution, and it cleared the way for modernization to proceed. Industrial expansion gave an impetus to changes in the college system. Subsequently, the engineer, the natural scientist, and the industrial technician gained a measure of professional respectability among U.S. academicians and their social indispensability became a foregone conclusion.[102] The necessity of curriculum changes that corresponded to this new state of affairs became more widely accepted. Thus, the changes in the system of higher education that had been simmering

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[99] Hofstadter, 261-2.

[100] Ibid., 274.

[101] Hofstadter, 274; He cites "President Paul Ansel Chadbourne in his inaugural address at Williams College, 1873, Spring, *History of Williams College*, p. 234." Emphasis added.

[102] Brubacher and Rudy, 111.

during the second epoch came to a boil during the third epoch, and the dawn of the American university had arrived.

The third epoch of power in the United States, according to Mills' scheme, stretched from the end of the Civil War to the Great Crash of 1929.[103] Mills called it "the age of simple corruption," and believed it to be the "golden era of the American ruling class."[104] During this epoch, capitalism in the United States, already having had experienced its initial gestation period, began to develop into a more complex structure from a classic model of capitalism to a corporate-dominated entity. Once the Supreme Court made sure, in the *Slaughterhouse Cases* of 1873, that the newly-minted Fourteenth Amendment would be ineffective in protecting the rights and liberties of blacks,[105] ironically, it was not long – 1886 – before it interpreted its equal protection clause as protecting the corporation, as if it were a person.[106] The burgeoning cultural belief in equality in the United States that had emerged during the era of Jackson, would now give way to the re-concentration of wealth in the form of this artificial, corporate, trans-generational person.

Industrialization and the concomitant processes of urbanization and immigration began to re-shape the national landscape, sharpening class divisions and social hierarchy. Organized labor was finding its place in the new industrial order with the emergence of

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[103] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 271-272.

[104] Ibid., 271.

[105] *The Slaughterhouse Cases*, 16 Wallace 36 (1873); See Howard N. Meyer, *The Amendment That Refused to Die* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), passim. This decision protected so-called states' rights through a convoluted interpretation and thereby undermined the purpose behind the Fourteenth Amendment to protect individual civil rights from state laws and practices that violated the rights and liberties recognized under the U.S. Constitution.

[106] *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company*, 118 U.S. 394 (1886).

the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the Industrial Workers of the World. Social Darwinism emerged as a powerful ideological weapon that ruling elites and their supporters would use against those who would dare to question the justice of the new configurations of economic, social, and political power. This epoch witnessed the rise and fall of the agrarian-based Populist movement, which was, in part, a response to the dehumanizing aspects of industrialization.[107] The defeat of William Jennings Bryan and the Populists in the national election of 1896 set the seal on the consolidation of power by the business elites.[108] The new political party realignment – i.e., the "system of 1896" – brought with it a dramatic decline of voting, accompanied by a stasis of two-party competition throughout the country, manifested most extremely in the South where the white Democratic party ruled monolithically, and where the 1896 Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson (163 U.S. 537) gave the blessings of the powerful and the backing of the law to a most extreme system of racial segregation and to all of the injustices and terror associated with it.[109] During this epoch, communism first became a perceived threat by U.S. elites. It was an age where the United States flexed its imperial muscles in places as near as Wounded Knee, as far as the Philippines, in neighboring Mexico, Central America, and throughout the Caribbean. Still, the military order was subordinate to the political order, which was, in turn, subordinate to the economic order.[110] In this era, there arose what was perhaps the most powerful reform movement

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[107] Norman Pollack, *The Populist Response to Industrial America* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1962), 10.

[108] Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Why Americans Still Don't Vote: And Why Politicians Want It That Way* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 45-93.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 271-272.

in U.S. history, the Progressive movement, and among its undertakings was a transformation of the educational system in ways that would both expand the opportunity and limit the outcomes, as we shall see.

This epoch carried with it a shift in the character of social relations of production from an activity that went on within the family – e.g., "the family farm" – to a production system that is "carried on in large organizations in which an employer directed the activities of the entire work force and owned the products of their labor."[111] Bowles and Gintis explain:

> The emerging class structure evolved in accord with these new social relations of production: An ascendant and self-conscious capitalist class came to dominate the political, legal, and cultural superstructure of society. The needs of this class were to profoundly shape the evolution of the educational system.[112]

This rapid transformation of the nation and of its economic engines was the context for the shaping of the modern university system. The revolutionizing of the means of production engendered a vast expansion of the system of higher education. The curriculum expanded to include a range of disciplines in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, and the ever more popular elective system finally began to take its place giving students some choice in their course of study. Along with these changes, knowledge became increasingly specialized and departmentalized, not merely to conserve it, but to advance it as well.[113] That is to say, the educational system that had been geared towards preserving the established society in the previous epochs – i.e., it had a

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[111] Bowles and Gintis, 157.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 593-594.

reproductive role, though a marginal one – now was becoming a full participant in the production of new knowledge.

This transformation included the tremendous expansion of the "land grant" colleges, which, in addition to classical studies, included a focus on the agricultural and mechanical arts, as well as on the study of military tactics. The original Morrill Act, passed in 1862, did not accomplish what had been expected of it. The Populists, the National Grange, and the Farmers' Alliance all complained that these institutions, also known as "democracy's colleges," did not go far enough in establishing more practical courses that met their needs.[114] The Morrill Act of 1890 provided annual federal appropriations for the land-grant colleges and "worked to encourage state authorities to furnish similar financial aid."[115]

The "great sums" made available to Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Chicago, Stanford, as well as to the state universities, the land-grant colleges, and to the older private institutions such as Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Princeton "were so large as to dwarf the means available to previous enterprises of higher education."[116] Significantly, it was the growth of the sciences in the university that attracted the attention of "men of great wealth."[117]

The rapidly growing interest in science, the increasingly popular elective system, and the expansion of the curriculum, which led to departmentalization and specialization,

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[114] Brubacher and Rudy, 63.

[115] Ibid., 159.

[116] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 593.

[117] Ibid., 593-594.

were all central components of the sea change occurring in the higher education system. These changes had their advocates and their detractors.

Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard from 1869 to 1909, was the most famous and the most enthusiastic proponent of the elective system. He argued that a university of liberal arts and sciences must train its students to "self-control and self-reliance through liberty," rather than to train them "for those functions in which implicit obedience is of the first importance."[118] The elective system is geared towards the former aim, whereas the uniform classical curriculum would be more conducive to achieving the latter. The *Nation*, edited by E. L. Godkin at the time, weighed in on the debate by critically describing Yale President Noah Porter's defense of the classical methods as being akin to the idea of teacher-as-schoolmaster who not only teaches a strictly required curriculum, but who, in the process, also tries to shape the character and conduct of the student by emphasizing faith, discipline, and morals, i.e., the instructor standing *in loco parentis*.[119] On the contrary, the *Nation* editor asserts that "the influence of the professor diminishes in the direct ratio of his eagerness to exert parental authority."[120] Yet, some of those who were critical of Eliot's elective system would qualify their remarks, as does Porter, by acknowledging that at the higher levels of the University freedom of choice would be a prudent course, but that "the majority of undergraduate students have neither the maturity

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[118] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Charles William Eliot Expounds the Elective System as 'Liberty in Education,' 1885," 714.

[119] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "The New Curriculum: Some Views from the *Nation*, 1882," 730-733.

[120] Ibid., 736.

nor the data which qualify them to judge the relative value of studies or their bearing on their future employments."[121]

Specialization now became the norm as new and distinct fields emerged, including such disciplines as experimental psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, modern literature, and all of the various subdivisions within the natural sciences.[122] As the universe of knowledge expanded, the role of higher education became more integrated with and more closely tied to the destiny of the society at-large. In the private universities, the state universities, and in the land-grant colleges dramatic advances were made in pure and applied science "which gave enormous prestige to experimental and investigative research."[123] The "yardstick of value" became utility and "social efficiency."[124]

But not everyone was enamored of the new age. Woodrow Wilson, a professor of jurisprudence and political economy at Princeton in 1896, saw contradictions emerging early on, and was critical of these developments:

> I am much mistaken if the scientific spirit of the age is not doing us a great disservice, working in us a certain great degeneracy. Science has bred in us a spirit of experiment and a contempt for the past. It has made us credulous of quick improvement, hopeful of discovering panaceas, confident of success in every new thing.[125]

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[121] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Noah Porter Rejects the Elective System, 1871," 699.

[122] Brubacher and Rudy, 118.

[123] Ibid., 117.

[124] Ibid., 119.

[125] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Woodrow Wilson on 'Princeton in the Nation's Service,' 1896," 692.

Perhaps Wilson was, in part, just whistling *Dixie*, but he makes another point that is more prophetic than nostalgic when he says, "we have not given science too big a place in our education; but we have made a perilous mistake in giving it too great a preponderance in method in every other branch of study."[126] The influence of science over the other disciplines soon came to be felt even in "humanistic fields like literature, history, and philosophy [which] felt honor-bound to prove that they, too, had their 'scientific' side and were based on precise data."[127]

The rise of science and of its methods did not take place in a vacuum, but in a social, political, and economic context. Science may have become the "guiding star of higher education, as it had of modern civilization,"[128] however, in both of these spheres science would share the heavens with another star – that of the corporate business paradigm. The scientific gains of the period were of enormous value to society, but they were not without consequence. In terms of social life under corporate capitalist rule, the accumulation of profits by the few – advanced by scientific discovery, but fully taken advantage of by economic reorganization – made the disparities between classes even greater, and, in the process, it created even more intransigent barriers for the growing proletariat's chances of overcoming this widening chasm. Henry George made the observation, in 1879, that man had become a "mere link in an enormous chain of producers and consumers, helpless to separate himself, and helpless to move, except as they move…. [The laborer] has no more influence [over satisfying his wants] than he has

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[126] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Woodrow Wilson on 'Princeton in the Nation's Service,' 1896," 694.

[127] Brubacher and Rudy, 117.

[128] Ibid.

over the motions of the solar system."[129] Racism, ethnic discrimination, and sexism, especially as they applied in the work force, served to further complicate the problem and to entrench the disparities. At times, it became difficult to discern between what was "scientific" and what was the use of the moniker of science to justify partisan interests.[130] This conflict of interest was probably nowhere more convoluted than in the question of scientific management, raised by Frederick Winslow Taylor in *The Principles of Scientific Management*, first published in 1911.

Taylor's principles, geared towards finding the "one best method" that would make for the greatest efficiency and profit in the work place, were not just for industry, per se, but he explicitly put his ideas forward as being applicable to the university as well.[131] The problem in Taylor's method is that its aim for maximizing profit disproportionately influenced its search for efficiency. This tendency, in fact, caused a rift between Taylor and one of his most famous protégés, Frank Bunker Gilbreth, who also sought to make the work process more efficient, but with the welfare of the workers as an important part of the equation. Thus, the "one best method" of achieving efficiency can have very different meaning depending upon whether one views the worker as an instrument of production or as a human being. One of Taylor's other protégés, Morris L. Cooke, was charged with creating and implementing a plan for measuring "efficiency" in

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[129] Henry George, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry Into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth…The Remedy* (New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1960), 285.

[130] For a richly woven account of the development of some of the most pernicious doctrines of this period, and their roots, see Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1955).

[131] Frederick Winslow Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1911; 1947; First published in the Norton Library in 1967 by arrangement with Harper and Row, Publishers, Incorporated.), 8.

the university according to a "scientific" calculus.[132] The trend toward the separation between planning and execution of the labor process that is the hallmark of Taylor's brand of scientific management in industry, would soon be applied to the educational system in the United States.

Before exploring the relationship of scientific management to the university system, it is worth revisiting, more fully, Taylor's paean to possessive individualism and to the meritocratic virtues of capitalism. Taylor provides, as a primary example of his principles, a description of how best to carry pig iron.[133] In this description he compares the worker to an ox, and suggests that the worker should not be relied upon to think about the process, but rather that an expert should study it and design a plan that the worker, with some training, could follow. Now, the aim of this, as noted, is to maximize the profits for the owner, and the method is the efficient instrumental use of human labor. The worker might benefit, too, based upon a system of incentive and reward, and provided, of course, that he is up to the task. Putting aside for the moment the invidious comparison of a human worker to a beast of burden and also the degrading notion that manual workers cannot be relied upon to think, one cannot help but wonder, what possible image could be dancing around the mechanical mind of Taylor and in the minds of his followers with regard to intellectual labor and to the process of education? His protégé, Cooke, gives us a pretty good clue.

In 1909 Henry S. Pritchett, the president of M.I.T., but acting in his capacity as the first president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT),

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[132] Clyde W. Barrow, *Universities and the Capitalist State: Corporate Liberalism and the Reconstruction of American Higher Education, 1894-1928* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 67.

[133] Taylor, 40-64.

hired Cooke to conduct a study of the system of higher education in the United States. The results were less than scientific. The corporate capitalist model of higher education was placed on the drawing board and the managerial revolution in higher education had begun. Cooke's plan of scientific management had an instrumental view of the process of higher education. Clyde W. Barrow explains as follows:

> If adopted in conjunction with the new student "elective system," faculty specialization meant that courses could also become standardized, interchangeable parts with precise and predetermined specifications with which students could be assembled…. Cooke went so far as to recommend the creation of a central "file of drawers in which were placed the lecture notes for all the different courses, written in a rather uniform style and all on standardized cards." This would reduce unnecessary duplication of start-up costs, since each professor would no longer have to organize his own set of notes.[134]

Cooke understood the work of teaching and scholarship to be comparable, in fundamental ways, to work in most other occupations and that it should, thus, be measured by the same standards.[135] One could argue that teaching is vastly different from carrying pig iron, but from the standpoint of scientific management, the same principles apply. Implicit in this construction is a revealing conceptualization. Cooke understands the various occupations to have similar dynamics because he views them all as consisting of, to use Marx's language, alienated labor – i.e., a commodity to be bought and sold. One crucial difference, though, between Cooke's view and Marx's is that Marx was seeking to emancipate workers from this dynamic whereas Cooke was seeking to enforce it.

The commonly made argument against Cooke's position was that professors are professionals, autonomous (or should be), and not paid an hourly wage. Cooke had only

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[134] Barrow, 72; embedded quotation attributed by Barrow to Morris L. Cooke, *Academic and Industrial Efficiency*, CFAT Bulletin no. 5 (Boston: Merrymount Press, 1910), 24-25.

[135] Ibid., 70.

to adapt the model to accommodate some of these traditional views of the college professor. Such concessions might be made, but the transformation of the university to suit elite interests made those concessions a small price to pay – give the faculty some limited form of status, while diminishing their power and their university citizenship.

A better argument to counter Cooke would have been to acknowledge the claim of scientific management that carrying pig iron and teaching in the university *do* have similarities. The form of payment, i.e., wage labor, piece-work, hourly pay, or even a professional salary, does not determine whether labor is alienated or not. The dynamics in all of these cases might be fundamentally the same. It is the nature of the relationship that counts, not the method of payment alone. The main difference, from this perspective, is that the university professor *is* higher up on the food chain, and *is less* exploited. However, rather than insisting on the uniqueness of the professoriate, academic labor might have gone in the other direction and argued for the emancipation of all workers. Perhaps the world was not ready for this all too human distinction. From another perspective, it might be noted that the important difference is that the object of work, being live students and not pig iron, changes the equation of work, but that distinction seems to be lost on those proponents of "scientific" management who seek to impose a measurable form of standardization on the learning process.

Cooke was successful in transforming the university system into the image of corporate capitalism, though not without limit because the culture of higher education is one where freedom of thought is fundamental. Nevertheless, the managerial revolution "redefined the standards, strategies, and definition of a successful university president by

institutionalizing corporate-derived bureaucratic norms of managerial behavior."[136] How did this process succeed? Barrow explains its primary mechanism for winning over powerful allies:

> [U]niversity presidents who adopted the ideology of managerialism as their administrative model found themselves rewarded with prestige, higher incomes, foundation or corporate directorships, and offers for better university positions. Adoption of the managerial role could easily be rationalized within the normative framework of progressive democracy.[137]

In this manner, elites were able to begin the national transformation of the higher education system into a form that fit their needs. But some professors had a different understanding. J. McKeen Cattell, a renowned psychology professor at Columbia, in 1913 asks the following question regarding university reforms: "Are we of the world's greatest democracy and in the twentieth century to revert to the theory that the common people should do the daily work imposed on them, and trust to the king and his lords to care for them?"[138]

The problem with the "scientific management" notion of education is that it makes numerous implicit assumptions about the learning process – namely, that it is a linear process, based on the imparting of information so as to develop skills and techniques, as opposed to a dialectical social process concerned with the growth and development of the individual. It recognizes learning to be an *instrumental* and *mechanical* process of training. Dewey understood these distinctions and in *Democracy and Education* showed in great detail how the social process of education is what influences the character of the student as much as, if not more than, the content of the

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[136] Barrow, 77.

[137] Ibid., 78.

material being taught. With regard to the question of the development of consciousness, discussed earlier in this chapter, the Tayloristic method of training is, ironically, a better fit with Lenin's philosophy of (class) consciousness, i.e., that it is (mechanically) imparted to the individual from without, than it is to Dewey's understanding of a democratic character structure as being developed through a dialectical social process. Thus, the "scientific" method as applied to the schools (including some of the progressive reforms that were purportedly rooted in Dewey's philosophy) were not just part of a wider mass-based educational system, but of a process that assumed the individual to exist in this functionalistic form – in this way, we have an opening up of the school system for the masses, however, it is accompanied by an understanding of the individual that led to hierarchy and stratification in schooling, i.e., an understanding that promotes a functionally-tiered "meritocracy" rooted in arbitrary cultural capital and which does not examine, or even conceive of, the effects of social class conflict. Of course, just because an underlying assumption – a theory of the individual – can influence policy does not mean that individuals automatically conform to it, especially in a university setting that requires critical thinking. That is to say, I am *not* suggesting that individuals are completely shaped by these structures, but rather that the relative exclusion of other, more democratic, types of structures limits the possibilities for human development and promotes the capitalist form, as well as the capitalists' agenda and mechanisms of control. I *am* suggesting that these mechanisms and this agenda have been ideologically implemented and are not just the by-product of modernization in an industrial era.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT), with a governing board of trustees which included among them prominent university presidents,

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[138] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol., II, "J. McKeen Catell on Reforming University Control, 1913," 807.

including Pritchett, identified above, and Nicholas Murray Butler, longtime president of Columbia University, was established out of an idea that "germinated at a White House luncheon held by Theodore Roosevelt in the summer of 1904."[139] However, the real center of policy formation was the executive committee which for more than twenty years included among its members, in addition to Pritchett and Butler, Frank A. Vanderlip, the vice-president of National City Bank, and Robert A. Franks, president of Home Trust Company.[140] Another organization, chartered by John D. Rockefeller in 1903, was the General Education Board (GEB).[141] Between 1903 and 1929 the GEB included Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Jr, and some of most prominent bankers and industrialists in the nation.[142] Barrow shows convincingly how the two organizations worked very closely with one another and provided a "forum in which representatives of the largest financial groups in the United States could sit together and organize their class consciousness relative to the university in cooperation with prominent educators and university presidents."[143]

> In effect, GEB was the coordinating mechanism in a complex and sophisticated network of conscious class action…. This network was further consolidated when GEB reached a formal agreement with CFAT to share and exchange information in 1908. The agreement occurred shortly after Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University, resigned as president of the CFAT board of trustees to become a member of GEB. Andrew Carnegie was already a member of GEB. Furthermore, the two foundations negotiated an informal division of labor in which GEB

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[139] Barrow, 61.

[140] Ibid., 62.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid., 62-63.

> increasingly focused its efforts on the South…, while CFAT concentrated its resources in the Northeast and elsewhere to a lesser degree.[144]

The uncoordinated variations in the types of colleges that existed at this time went against the "corporate ideal of social efficiency."[145] According to Barrow, this led the executive committee members of the Carnegie Foundation to advocate on behalf of a comprehensive plan for a national system of higher education in the United States.[146] Rockefeller concurred with this view and he charged the GEB with the task of promoting such a plan.[147] This comprehensive plan would lead to the growth of the university system, but like the corporate capitalist model that it resembled, it was not without its contradictions.

The primary means of implementing such a plan was through financial incentives. The enormous resources of the GEB and of the Carnegie Foundation were used not just to advance education, but also to shape a stratified system of higher education. Between 1902 and 1934, almost three-quarters of foundation money for higher education, mostly from the Carnegie Foundation and GEB, went to only twenty institutions.[148] This concentration of grants at the top (almost $250 million) allowed them to exert considerable leverage on the entire system. In this new hierarchical system of universities and colleges the lower-tier college administrators quickly figured out that they would

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[144] Barrow, 63-64.

[145] Ibid., 82.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid., 86-87.

have to fill a particular market niche in order to survive.[149] They could not compete with the new top tier of research universities for the funding of research, journals, professional associations, hospitals, laboratories, and libraries.[150] The elite few in the top tier became the dominant institutions, and from this position they "could set trends and standards for the entire nation."[151] Thus, like the railroad before it, the system of higher education was to become part of a "single coordinated system… [but for this to succeed] the individual parts of this national machine had to be standardized so as to fit them together."[152]

One of the mechanisms used to gain compliance with this standardization of the system of higher education was the Carnegie pension fund. Since it was rare for colleges to offer pensions at that time, through this incentive it made it possible for "select institutions… [to] attract and keep prominent faculty members from around the country."[153] This gave a "competitive advantage to members of the Carnegie system."[154]

But the planning by elites did not go unchallenged. Resistance came most fiercely from the public state institutions. Having other sources of income, they were not as vulnerable as the private colleges to the influence of the elite foundations. Populists groups in the western states "repeatedly opposed the collegiate monopoly."[155] This conflict began in 1908 when the Carnegie Foundation charter "was amended to include

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[149] Barrow, 86-87.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid., 85.

[152] Ibid., 83.

[153] Ibid., 84.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid., 90.

public universities within the pension system."[156] The public universities presented a formidable obstacle to the elite foundations' vision of a national system of higher education, i.e., they had to be included in this system if the corporate paradigm was to be complete and unchallenged. Those states that wished to avail themselves of the Carnegie pension benefits system gained acceptance "only on the condition that the state university undertake internal administrative reforms."[157]

Though criticism of elite plans for the higher education system were widespread, the opposition was not coordinated and cohesive.[158] Nonetheless, the biggest thorn in the collective side of the Carnegie Foundation and the GEB was "democracy's colleges." They were, according to Barrow, criticized by the Carnegie Foundation for "wastefully diffusing scarce educational resources, promoting lower academic standards in the competitive market, and inefficiently duplicating curricula between schools…. [They were also] acting contrary to a socially efficient division of labor in offering instruction in the liberal arts and humanities."[159] This criticism by the Carnegie Foundation, of course, assumes that liberal arts and humanities have little or no role to play in a college that is focused on an agricultural and mechanical curriculum.

The resistance from the A & M colleges conflicted with the plans of Carnegie and Rockefeller, and this led to charges that the colleges were introducing "politics" into higher education.[160] That is to say, those who disagree with the "business model" are

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[156] Barrow, 90.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Ibid., 88.

[159] Ibid., 91.

[160] Ibid.

engaged in "politics," whereas those who embrace its logic are simply acting rationally and practically. The corporate model is put forward, much as the "good-government" Progressives put forward their model of municipal government as being about efficiency while their opponents were accused of being partisan, but hidden in that policy of efficiency, too, were ideological assumptions that supported a class-based social division that restricted the influence of the lower classes. The Populists would not be deterred, though neither would the Carnegie Foundation:

> Ultimately, CFAT excluded most land-grant colleges from the pension system with an arrogant notice that "the Trustees of the Foundation are not in a position to deal with them as agencies of higher education."[161]

The criticism of the curriculum of the land-grant colleges was more political than pedagogical. In fact, the communities within these colleges had been putting together a coherent philosophy of education for the farmers and workers for some time.[162] Included among these practices was a policy of admission standards that had been designed to admit those who had not obtained the benefit of a proper collegiate preparation, as well as a program that included a liberal education, which had been part of the directive of the Morrill Act.[163]

Given the instrumentalist notion of both education and of labor under the principles of Taylor's scientific management, neither the Carnegie Foundation nor the GEB wanted "farmers" to study liberal arts in that this would work against the efficient reorganization of the system of higher education. The representatives of these

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[161] Barrow, 91.; Embedded quotation attributed by Barrow to CFAT, *Annual Report*, 1909, pp. 85-88.

[162] Ibid., 91-92.

[163] Ibid.

foundations seem to have missed the human distinction that Emerson made decades earlier in "The American Scholar":

> Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is a Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm….
>
> In this distribution of functions, the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state, he is Man Thinking. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.[164]

The education of a people and the social engineering of them toward the ends of an instrumental division of labor under capitalism are two very different goals. The conflict over curriculum at the land-grant colleges, and the coordinated elite efforts at imposing their agenda through manipulation of financial incentives starkly reflects these different goals. This instrumentalism would become a somewhat hidden element of the social reforms that would take place in the schools in the ensuing decades.

One thing that the Populist movement had in common with the Progressive movement was that they both had a critique of big business and of the corruption in politics. However, the Progressive movement, which had its heyday from about 1900 to 1914, differed, primarily, in that it was an urban middle-class reform movement that was also critical of the lifestyle of the poor and immigrant masses and distrustful of their political judgment. Progressivism was a mixed bag of "muckraking" journalists, trust-busters, municipal reformers, social gospel types, and adherents to Teddy Roosevelt's "New Nationalism." It appealed to the middle class, but it also appealed to and reinforced the interests of economic elites. More specifically, the Progressive efforts at

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[164] Emerson, "The American Scholar," 224-225.

municipal reform and scientific management in urban government had fit in well with the class and business interests of the middle class, but it was also, in part, a response on the part of business elites for "good government" to smooth the way for their plans. At the same time, it was a prohibitive response to the culture of the immigrants and to the rising tide of socialism and radicalism that had come in with the boats at Ellis Island.[165] The Progressive policies may have sounded like "reform," and there is no doubt that some of the institutional mechanisms they promoted created some new avenues for political participation, but there was a clear social bias in their ideology and in their policy objectives.[166] This bias was carried over to their education policy.

The Progressives had a problem in that if they were claiming that they were seeking efficiency and democracy, then they had to make it accessible to all.[167] Colleges and universities played a critical role in legitimating this order because "they assumed responsibility for certifying talent strictly on the basis of individual merit and without reference to prior ascriptive distinctions."[168] However, we can see, perhaps most clearly during this period, the emergence of a contradiction that would run through U.S. education to this day – the simultaneous expansion of education *and* restrictions to that educational system that were marked by a not-so-hidden hierarchy and stratification. To use the language of the sociology of education, the educational system came to serve both a productive *and* a reproductive role.

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[165] Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1980), 342-346.

[166] Dennis R. Judd and Todd Swanstrom, *City Politics: Private Power and Public Policy*, Fourth Edition (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004), 70-102.

[167] Barrow, 95.

[168] Ibid.

The expansion of education, at all levels, led to calls for rationalization, i.e., scientific management, and though that rationalization of the school system may seem to have made it more orderly in terms of administration, it had other, more insidious, effects as well. It was not hard for the Progressives to see scientific management as being consistent with their own vision of the schools, which fit in well with the vision of Carnegie and Rockefeller. At its theoretical root, this commonality rests in the shared liberal understanding of the idea of the individual as being an atomized, isolated being, as opposed to the understanding of the individual as being, simultaneously, both a separate, autonomous being *and* a being shaped and influenced by social life. This is *not* to say that the system of schooling should not have been organized in *any* way, but it is to point out that the principles upon which it was organized have their roots in an instrumental theory designed to improve, for the businessman, the one best method of hauling pig iron.

The primary way that expansion and rationalization of the system of education led to hierarchy and stratification was through standardization combined with testing and tracking in the secondary schools. The coordination with the system of secondary schooling was necessary if standardization was to be fully implemented. The early colleges did not have a standard uniform curriculum which the secondary schools could prepare for, but with the changes occurring, then the secondary schools would need to make their curriculum uniform as well so there would be no discontinuity between secondary education and college.[169] At the time, some colleges established preparatory departments to try to bridge the gap.[170] However, the problem with these

[169] Brubacher and Rudy, 242.

[170] Ibid., 243. Later, they would call such programs remediation, and subsequently ban it from CUNY's senior colleges (see Chapter 4).

transformations of the educational system was more than just the pedagogical soundness of a "one best method" or of a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum. It was also problematic in the way that the Progressive biases crept into the seemingly democratic expansion of education. This bias is most evident in the uniform examinations which were developed to order this process.

The "Regents" exams were established in New York in 1878, probably being "the first to perform such a standardizing function."[171] In 1890, Butler proposed a wide-ranging plan for a uniform set of exams, which later became the College Entrance Examination Board.[172] College requirements soon came to dictate high school curriculum. The explosion of testing became a means of tracking and stratifying "young people loosely according to race, ethnic origins, and class backgrounds."[173] Bowles and Gintis argue that intelligence tests would become "powerful ammunition in the movement to restrict immigration… [but] of greater interest here is their eventual use in educational selection."[174] Both the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation poured millions into investigating the possible use of these tests for educational tracking purposes.[175] Bowles and Gintis capture the extent of the testing regime and the role that the elite foundations had in implementing it:

> Carl Brigham, whose foundation-supported research had earlier confirmed Goddard's study of immigrant feeble-mindedness, went on to develop the Scholastic Aptitude test in his capacity as the secretary of the newly formed College Entrance Examination Board. In 1930, Rockefeller's

[171] Brubacher and Rudy, 245.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Bowles and Gintis, 194.

[174] Ibid., 196.

[175] Ibid., 197.

> General Education Board gave half a million dollars for the founding of the Cooperative Test Service to the American Council of Education (itself established in 1918 by Rockefeller and Carnegie money). In addition to the Cooperative Test Service, Carnegie and Rockefeller supported the Educational Records Bureau, the Graduate Records Office, the National Committee on Teachers Examinations, and the College Entrance Examination Board. Prodding and a substantial grant from the Carnegie Foundation achieved the consolidation of these testing units under the aegis of the Educational Testing Service in 1948. In the first half of the twentieth century, these organizations alone received over $7 million from the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations.[176]

The ideological standpoint that is behind this explosion of testing in the schools has continued to grow and to shape education at all levels into the Twenty-first Century.

The expansion of the educational system during this epoch was replete with the bias that came along with tracking and stratification. Furthermore, the positive aspects of the Progressive educational philosophy were hijacked by the influence and interference of the elite foundations. Rather than being shaped by the influences of John Dewey and Jane Addams, "who saw a reformed educational system eliminating the more brutal and alienating aspects of industrial labor," instead, the educational system was swayed by the "time-motion orientation of Frederick Taylor and 'Scientific Management,' with its attendant fragmentations of tasks, and imposition of bureaucratic forms and top-down control."[177] The corporate educational system was, thus, born.

Barrow explains some of the impact that this transformation had on university policies:

> The progressive emphasis on the role of the expert meant that once educational questions were reformulated as problems of business organization and the investment of public capital, then presumably experienced business-men—and not educators, farmers, workers, students, or the general public—could rightly claim to be the experts. This defined

[176] Bowles and Gintis, 198.

[177] Ibid., 44.

> a scenario, as Veblen astutely observed, in which not only did appointing businessmen to boards of trustees or educational reform commissions seem legitimate, but in which doing the contrary would seem like mere "politics" instead of good public administration.[178]

It was a significant ideological victory for business.[179] The reforms in the university administrative hierarchy and control, as well as reforms in such areas as testing and curriculum, served to reinforce the culture and class interests of elites.

The professoriate, thus, was not the last word on education policy, though their status had improved by the age of the university. They were, to be sure, a factor in the transformations that had taken place, but mostly in a passive way. That is to say, much of what was done by elites – scientific management, the use of the Carnegie pension funds, etc. – were all geared, in part, to centralizing control, and that meant that if the plans were to succeed then the potential power of the faculty had to be neutralized. Faculty did fight back, but they did not have any rich and powerful national foundations to coordinate their efforts. Academic labor unions were growing during this period – the National Educational Association (NEA) was founded early on in 1857, though it did not begin to become a rank-and-file organization until 1916. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was founded in 1915, and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) was founded in 1916 – however, they were all in an embryonic state and still relatively weak. However, due to the need by business for research and discovery, faculty did manage to gain some rights during this period.

With the development of science and the expansion of the university, as well as the increase in the importance of the university to the forces of production in the rapidly

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[178] Barrow, 97.

[179] Ibid.

industrializing society, a measure of leverage was gained by first-rate scholars in that they could demand some movement towards scholastic and intellectual freedom in their work or threaten to leave their positions.[180] As early as 1875, Daniel Coit Gilman, President of Johns Hopkins, would declare that the spirit of the University should be "that of intellectual freedom in the pursuit of truth and of the broadest charity toward those from whom we differ in opinion."[181] But academic freedom, nevertheless, was not a given.

The controversies surrounding Darwinism were perhaps the most famous of the conflicts where academic freedom was shown to be protected by the thinnest of veneers, if at all. Alexander Winchell, a professor of geology and zoology at Vanderbilt University, was at the center of such a controversy over a modest tract on evolution that he had written in 1878. After receiving complaints over the matter by Bishop McTyeire, the president of the trustees, he was soon dismissed.[182] However, characteristic of "the state of university development… Vanderbilt, not Winchell, was the loser by the incident; for the scientist was immediately called to the chair of geology and paleontology at the University of Michigan."[183] Just a year later, at Yale, Noah Porter objected to William Graham Sumner's use of Herbert Spencer's *Study of Sociology* in undergraduate courses, given that "the capacity of an undergraduate student when introduced to the elements of a science, to discriminate between the valid and the invalid is much below that of a

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[180] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 841.

[181] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Daniel Coit Gilman's Declaration on Intellectual Freedom, 1875," 845.

[182] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 842.

[183] Ibid.

graduate."[184] Porter concluded politely that since he is "presumed to authorize the use of every textbook," that he must formally object to its use in such cases.[185] Ironically, Sumner, who in a few years would publish his highly acclaimed and highly subjective paean to inequality, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (1883), defended his position by arguing that "sociology was about to do for the social sciences what scientific method has done for natural and physical science, viz.: rescue them from arbitrary dogmatism and confusion."[186]

It was not just science and bad social theory that were the object of attacks by those seeking to limit academic freedom. In 1894, Richard T. Ely, professor of political economy at the University of Wisconsin, was accused by the State Superintendent of Education of "aiding and abetting" a strike by printers in Madison and of teaching socialism.[187] However, the academic profession, including a "host of affectionate students, rallied to his support."[188] The Wisconsin Regents, having tried Ely and exonerating him, declared the following: "In all lines of academic investigation it is of the utmost importance that the investigator should be absolutely free to follow the indications of truth wherever they may lead."[189]

The principles of academic freedom continued to develop and to be shaped by conflict and negotiation, though violations of it continued to be commonplace. In 1915,

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[184] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Noah Porter Objects to William Graham Sumner's Use of Herbert Spencer in Undergraduate Courses, 1879," 850.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Sumner's Review of His Controversy with Porter, 1881," 851.

[187] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "David Kinley Recalls the Attack on Richard T. Ely, 1894," 858.

[188] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 843.

the AAUP came out with their "General Declaration of Principles," and, among other things, argued that teachers, as well as investigators, must have in their mind no mental reservation, because it is clear that the confidence of the students in the teacher will be impaired if they believe that the teacher is not "expressing himself fully or frankly, or that college and university teachers in general are a repressed and intimidated class who dare not speak with the candor and courage which youth always demands in those whom it is to esteem."[190] The 1915 "Declaration" also cites as a compelling reason for academic freedom nothing less than the common good: "The responsibility of the university as a whole is to the community at large, and any restriction upon the freedom of the instructor is bound to react injuriously upon the efficiency and the *morale* of the institution, and therefore ultimately upon the interests of the community."[191]

Despite some advances with regard to academic freedom during this epoch, college professors were not living well. The 1902 refrain of John James Stevenson, professor of geology at NYU, is a familiar one to today's contingent academic laborers: "it is certain that in our day there is no calling in which the pecuniary compensation is so low, while the intellectual requirement is so high as in that of college professor."[192] He goes on to argue the case for faculty compensation by pointing out that despite the investment of vast resources in the physical plant, laboratories, and materials of the

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[189] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "The Wisconsin Regents Speak for Academic Freedom, 1894," 860.

[190] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "The A.A.U.P.'s 'General Declaration of Principles,' 1915," 867.

[191] Ibid., 868.

[192] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "An Academic Scientist's Pleas for More Efficient University Control, 1902," 764.

university, the very existence of the American college is "due to the consecrated devotion of those who give it instruction."[193]

Harvard's President Eliot, on the other hand, was known to think of this inequity as a good thing:

> The poverty of scholars is of inestimable worth in this money-getting nation. It maintains the true standards of virtue and honor. The poor friars, not the bishops, saved the church… Luxury and learning are ill bedfellows.[194]

It is one thing to say that the love of money is not a good characteristic in a college professor, but Eliot's claim is built on an implicit assumption that denotes a particular hierarchical notion of university control, with power vested at the top. J. McKeen Cattell, a Columbia psychology professor, differed with Eliot's position. Cattell, who accepted the Marxist social ideal that is "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,"[195] argued "that the university should be a democracy of scholars serving the larger democracy of which it is a part."[196] He considered the big salaries of college presidents, in some cases "three or four times the salary of the greatest scholar or teacher on the faculty… [to be] subversive of decent social and educational ideals… [and, that] it would be in the interest of the university and of society if the salaries for professors were increased."[197]

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[193] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "An Academic Scientist's Pleas for More Efficient University Control, 1902," 764.

[194] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Charles William Eliot, Inaugural Address as President of Harvard, 1869," 613.

[195] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "J. McKeen Cattell on Reforming University Control, 1913," 796.

[196] Ibid., 808.

[197] Ibid., 792.

As the epoch progressed, faculty became increasingly critical of trustees and management.[198] Thorstein Veblen, perhaps the greatest critic of the rule of the university by businessmen, describes the reality of the parsimonious life of most university men and how they might fulfill the need to keep up the prestige of the university by "a conspicuously expensive manner of living."[199]

> University men are conventionally required to live on a scale of expenditure comparable with that in vogue among well-to-do businessmen, while their university incomes compare more nearly with the lower grades of clerks and salesmen….
> … these needs may, of course, be met in some poor measure by saving in the obscurer items of domestic expense, such as food, clothing, heating, lighting, floor-space, books, and the like; and making all available funds count toward the collective end of reputable publicity, by throwing the stress on such expenditures as come under the public eye, as dress and equipage, bric-a-brac, amusements, public entertainments, etc. It may also seem that it should also be possible to cut down the proportion of obscure expenditures for creature comforts by limiting the number of births in the family, or by foregoing marriage.[200]

Luxury and learning may make ill bedfellows, as Eliot claims above, but austerity and learning are not exactly a match made in heaven.

Veblen spells out the meaning of the growth of the embryonic corporate university and of its control by businessmen. He castigates the spirit of American business as that of "quietism, caution, compromise, collusion, and chicane."[201] He rips the governing boards of universities as "an aimless survival from the days of clerical rule, when they were presumably of some effect in enforcing conformity to orthodox opinions

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[198] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 750.

[199] Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Businessmen* (New York: A. M. Kelley, Bookseller, 1918; reprint by arrangement with The Viking Press, 1965), 162.

[200] Veblen, 161-163.

[201] Ibid., 70.

and observances, among the academic staff."[202] And he decries, astonishment dripping from his words, that businessmen should be the contemporary trustees of our institutions of higher learning:

> Business success is by common consent, and quite uncritically, taken to be conclusive evidence of wisdom even in matters that have no relation to business affairs. So that it stands as a matter of course that businessmen must be preferred for the guardianship and control of that intellectual enterprise for the pursuit of which the university is established, as well as to take care of the pecuniary welfare of the university corporation. And, full of the same naïve faith that business success "answereth all things," these businessmen into whose hands this trust falls are content to accept the responsibility and confident to exercise full discretion in these matters with which they have no special familiarity.[203]

The upshot of this for Veblen is that the habits that characterize business matters are carried over to educational matters, to the detriment of scholarship and learning. For reasons having to do with the need to control large bodies of students, "the instruction offered must be reduced to standard units of time, grade and volume."[204] Thus, education becomes a process that is standardized and bureaucratized, but not without implications for the educational process:

> Such a system of authoritative control, standardization, gradation, accountancy, classification, credits and penalties, will necessarily be drawn on stricter lines the more the school takes on the character of a house of correction or a penal settlement; in which the irresponsible inmates are to be held to a round of distasteful tasks and restrained from (conventionally) excessive irregularities of conduct.[205]

A "house of correction" is a powerful metaphor that speaks to the rise of so-called scientific management in the system of schools and universities.

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[202] Veblen, 66.

[203] Ibid., 69.

[204] Ibid., 103.

[205] Ibid., 221.

Alternatives to these processes had been debated and discussed for some years prior to Veblen's powerful critique, and, though they were not implemented in any great measure, they serve as reference points for the problems faced by academic labor, both then and now. Stevenson argued for faculty control over appointments of professors and instructors, over all matters regarding curricula, even for control over the internal arrangement of buildings.[206] He adds that faculty should have the time and the resources to conduct research, lest they become "superficial purveyors of second-hand knowledge," the implication being that a strong university depends on professors who are independent thinkers because they are thorough investigators.[207] Andrew White, founding president of Cornell, put forth in his 1905 autobiography that he had always insisted "that the faculty should not be merely a committee to register the decrees of the president, but that it should have full legislative powers to discuss and to decide university affairs."[208] And Daniel Coit Gilman, founding president of Johns Hopkins, writes in 1906 that the "power of the University will depend upon the character of its resident staff of permanent professors."[209]

At the other end of the debate, Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard from 1909 to 1934, put forth in 1920 the notion that the non-professional body (i.e., appointed trustees), as opposed to the faculty, should be the final authority for three reasons: the

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[206] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "An Academic Scientist's Pleas for More Efficient University Control, 1902," 769.

[207] Ibid., 768.

[208] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "White on the Distribution of Administrative Powers in the 1880's," 759.

[209] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Gilman Recounts the Founding Principles at the Johns Hopkins, 1876," 756.

public must, in the final analysis, decide, and that means non-professional judgement; the non-professional board is responsible for financial administration, and those that control the finances must have "final control"; and, finally, that the non-professional body is the only body "to act as arbiter between the different groups of experts."[210]

As the shape of the modern university evolved, and the issues of the proper role of faculty power and of the place of academic freedom were debated, a dramatic element was added to the mix that brought into relief the limits of academic freedom and derailed the already slim hopes for a more democratic university while advancing the interests of big business. That element was the entry of the United States into World War I. According to Barrow, the war caused a change in the intellectuals' ideological basis for research, leaving them more receptive to "the principle of centrally administered, mission-oriented research."[211] Their attitudes toward public service came to embrace a national interest "that was defined by state executive elites."[212] This included a new role for those in the humanities and social sciences, as well, as they became enlisted in the extensive war effort within the university through campaigns to standardize the social science curriculum so as to put it in compliance with the ideology behind the war effort.[213] Barrow explains:

> The major responsibility for this task during World War I was delegated to the National Historical Service Board. The NHSB was a group of historians from major universities and colleges called together on April 29, 1917, by the Carnegie Institute's director of the department of historical research. The group placed itself at the service of the national

[210] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "A. Lawrence Lowell Justifies the Control of Universities by Laymen, 1920," 837.

[211] Barrow, 124.

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid., 142.

> government and worked under the supervision of COPI and the USBE [Committee on Public Information, the government's official war propaganda agency, and the U.S. Bureau of Education – V.T.]. In a span of one and a half years, the NHSB revolutionized American social science curriculum and made great strides toward standardizing its content as an American ideology.
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> NHSB wrote several pamphlets or "teachers' leaflets" which were printed and distributed by the USBE. These were utilized by professors, schoolteachers, newspapers, and innumerable private agencies promoting "education in patriotism."[214]

Such efforts led Randolph Bourne to call it "a war made deliberately by the intellectuals!"[215] He mockingly declared it a "war that will serve the triumph of democracy and internationalize the world."[216] He offers, as an alternative, that "they might have turned their intellectual energy not to the problem of jockeying the nation into war, but to the problem of using our vast neutral power to attain democratic ends for the rest of the world and ourselves without the use of the malevolent technique of war."[217] He accused those intellectuals who supported the war as having reconciled their anxieties by regressing to a "primitive idea" that was insensibly translated into a "craving for action."[218]

> War was seen as the crowning relief of their indecision. At last action, irresponsibility, the end of anxious and torturing attempts to reconcile peace-ideas with the drag of the world towards Hell. An end to the pain of trying to adjust the facts to what they ought to be! Let us consecrate the facts as ideal! Let us join the greased slide towards war![219]

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[214] Barrow, 142-143.

[215] Randolph S. Bourne, "The War and the Intellectuals," *War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays, 1915-1919*, edited and with an introduction by Carl Resek (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 3.

[216] Ibid., 3.

[217] Ibid., 5.

[218] Ibid., 11.

[219] Ibid.

The legitimating role played by intellectuals gave the university an overtly conservative social function, but it also left a legacy of bitter and divisive antagonisms.

Those faculty members who expressed opposition to the war faced hostility and, in some cases, dismissal. Columbia University was ground-zero for these conflicts during the war hysteria of 1917-1918. Charles Beard was subject to an "inquisition" by a committee of the trustees.[220] The details of this infamous case have been described and discussed in great detail elsewhere,[221] but suffice it to say that though he supported the war against Germany, he also supported the right of others to speak freely on it, and he thought of the university as a place where free public discussion could and should take place. In protest against the firings by the trustees of two faculty members who hinted that they were not toting the patriotic party line, on October 8, 1917, Beard resigned his position at Columbia. Columbia's President Butler "explicitly declared… that participation in the war suspended all the normal commitments of the university to freedom for its members."[222]

> "What had been tolerated before becomes intolerable now," he said. "What had been wrongheadedness was now sedition. What had been folly was now treason." This, he said, could be taken as "the University's last and only warning to any among us, if such there be, who are not with the whole heart and mind and strength committed to fight with us to make the world safe for democracy."[223]

What would soon become the military-industrial-academic complex had its first stirrings.

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[220] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Charles Beard Explains the Reasons for His Resignation, 1917," 889.

[221] See Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 883-892; Also see Barrow, 221-231.

[222] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 844.

[223] Ibid., 843-844.

As the university became more integrated with the powerful in the early 1920s, an alliance of left-leaning intellectuals, including Norman Thomas, Dewey, Beard, and A. A. Berle, came together in the League for Industrial Democracy (LID).[224] According to Barrow, this formation represented a new awareness among them "that the problem of academic democracy was inseparable from the general conditions of industrial labor."[225] This distinction was not lost on university governing boards as they were largely successful in "eliminating the far left wing of American faculties."[226] Most notably, in this respect, was the case of Alexander Meiklejohn, President of Amherst College, who was fired for allowing radicals among the faculty and for making articulate statements to the effect that radicalism had a legitimate place in the university. Following his dismissal, college presidents would now be responsible to their boards of trustees for failing to regulate their faculty who would cross over from "liberal freedom" to "radical license."[227]

> Meiklejohn's removal put college and university administrators on notice that they were managerial employees responsible for preventing academic radicalism and license by regulating its frontiers. They key was regulatory prevention, not *ex post facto* repression.[228]

Meiklejohn had tolerated communism and pacifism among his faculty, and this was his crime. He agreed to resign on June 19, 1923, but he made one last commencement address in which he "called for the abolition of all boards of

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[224] Barrow, 236.

[225] Ibid., 237.

[226] Ibid., 247.

[227] Ibid., 244.

[228] Ibid., 246.

trustees at American colleges and universities as a first step toward academic self-management and intellectual freedom."[229]

The Progressive Era, the war years, and the post-war conflicts over the place of faculty had thrust higher education in a new direction – ideologically, structurally, and in terms of the scientization of the curriculum. What many people called the "cold war university,"[230] which would emerge more fully during Mills' fifth epoch, would have its growing pains during the turbulent fourth epoch.

Mills denotes the fourth epoch of power in the United States as being the period from the Great Crash of 1929 to World War II – the era of the rise of the New Deal order. This epoch saw a shift in the political balance of power between capital and labor. In terms of Mills' description of the balance between the political, military, and economic orders, in this epoch the military order was still subordinate to the political and economic orders, but corporate economic power, which had dominated the previous epoch, now found the corridors of political power to be crowded with other men and other interests.[231] Mills understood the 1930s to be a political decade:

> …the power of business was not replaced, but it was contested and supplemented: it became one major power within a structure of power that was chiefly, run by political men, and not by economic or military men turned political.[232]

Of course, this was the epoch where labor insurgency as well as other democratic upsurges, such as the unemployed workers' movement, found their political voice, and

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[229] Barrow, 245.

[230] Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1.

[231] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 272.

[232] Ibid., 273.

where, still, the "weakened" small propertied farmers had retained some influence.[233] Mills recognizes that as capitalism suffered a major breakdown these various political actors competing for power contributed greatly to the break from the classical laissez-faire model. The transformation of organized labor unions during the 1930s was perhaps the most dramatic of the shifts in power among organized interests. In 1930 only 12 percent of the work force belonged to unions.[234] In 1935 Congress enacted the Wagner Act which, among other things, established the right of workers to organize into labor unions, and by 1941, 27 percent of the work force belonged to unions. The growth of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' (CIO) model of industrial unionism helped to spark the militancy of labor during this epoch, and, in the face of dire economic straits, this militancy had played no small role in pushing the New Deal programs leftward, though state intervention had restricted the most radical tendencies.[235]

In terms of the system of higher education, by the mid-1930s, public universities saw enrollments increase, in part due to the lack of jobs, but also due to the inexpensive education available when compared to the private colleges.[236] Additionally, as a result of the development of teacher-training centers under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, "universities and colleges became aware of their possible roles in developing credit programs in adult education and in noncredit workers' education

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[233] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 273.

[234] James R. Green, *The World of the Worker: Labor in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 133.

[235] Ibid., 158.

[236] Lowen, 28.

extension classes."[237] Public higher education also benefited from the passage, in 1935, of the Bankhead-Jones Act, which provided land-grant colleges and experiment stations for agricultural research with over $19 million, "effectively doubling the amount of federal money flowing to tax-supported institutions of higher education."[238]

In terms of academic labor during this period, teachers were not insulated from the heady influence of radicalism and militancy. The teachers' unions did not actually engage in collective bargaining until the 1960s, but through agitation, public pressure, education, and lobbying, they fought for their rights and for their profession. As "professionals," it is true that they often had, collectively speaking, one foot in and one foot out of labor politics. However, the development of mass public higher education brought with it an increasing acceptance by faculty of academic labor unions, especially among the tutors and instructors who occupied the lower tiers (The development of academic labor in higher education during the 1930s is discussed further in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.).

The expansion of the University system during the 1930s not only affected academic labor, but recharged the curriculum debates, as well. In 1936, Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago, raised a stir with *The Higher Learning in America*.[239] Hutchins, who would fight against the loyalty oaths and blacklists that were endemic to the cold war university during the McCarthy era, argued in this work that much of the university system was being dedicated to a disorder of incoherent

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[237] Joyce L. Kornbluh, "New Deal Teacher-Training Centers, 1934-1935," http://www-distance.syr.edu/kornbluh.html, 10/22/04.

[238] Lowen, 29.

[239] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Robert M. Hutchings Assesses the State of the Higher Learning, 1936."

specializations and empiricism, and that this was all at the expense of a genuine higher learning. He leveled the charge that these trends were rooted in anti-intellectualism:

> The more information, the more discoveries, the more inventions, the more progress. The way to promote progress was therefore to get more information. The sciences one by one broke off from philosophy and then from one another, and that process is still going on. At last the whole structure of the university collapsed and the final victory of empiricism was won when the social sciences, law, and even philosophy and theology themselves became empirical and progressive.
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> …But the idea that his [i.e., a man's] education should consist of the cultivation of his intellect is, of course, ridiculous. What it must consist of is surveys, more or less detailed, of the modern industrial, technological, financial, political, and social situation so that he can fit into it with a minimum of discomfort to himself and to his fellow men. Thus the modern temper produces that strangest of modern phenomena, an anti-intellectual university.[240]

Both Harry D. Gideonse and John Dewey responded to Hutchins in a debate that captured the attention of the academic world.[241] They both agreed with much of Hutchins criticism of the contemporary university, but not with what he seems to have suggested as a solution.

Gideonse, teaching economics at Chicago when Hutchins book came out (in 1939 he would become President of Brooklyn College), responded with *The Higher Learning in a Democracy*.[242] For Gideonse, Hutchins suggestions "make sense only within the framework of the traditional metaphysics of rational absolutism."[243] His concern is that Hutchins ideas lead to the conclusion that "the higher education in America is to forsake

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[240]Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Robert M. Hutchings Assesses the State of the Higher Learning, 1936," 930.

[241] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, 941.

[242] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Harry D. Gideonse on Hutchins and Flexner, 1937," 941.

[243] Ibid., 943.

the path of science and humanistic concern for a democratic society and to return to the Ivory Tower of absolutistic metaphysics."[244]

Dewey writes that, though Hutchins has "shrewdly pointed out many evils attending the aimlessness of our present educational scheme," his solution is problematic.[245] He explains as follows:

> It does not require much reading between the lines to see the remedy proposed rests upon a belief that since evils have come from surrender to shifting currents of public sentiment, the remedy is to be found in the greatest possible aloofness of higher learning from contemporary social life. This conception is explicitly seen in the constant divorce set up between intellect and practice, and between intellect and "experience."[246]

Dewey disagrees with the implicit "remedy" that he discerned from Hutchins' book, and suggests, instead, that "educational reconstruction cannot be accomplished without a social reconstruction in which higher education has a part to play."[247] His suggestion cuts to a deeper level of analysis, and it avoids the reversion to the image of the university as being an ivory tower that is divorced from the vicissitudes of the "real" world.

An ideological discussion of curriculum and content that ignores the larger society amounts to, at best, speculating as to how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, and, at worst, by ignoring social relations and conditions, it amounts to providing no alternative visions, and, thus, by exclusion, it provides legitimacy, support, and/or cover for private interests that benefit at the expense of the public good. The truth of these curriculum debates, as inferred by Dewey, lies beyond the dancing angels and the hidden

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[244] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "Harry D. Gideonse on Hutchins and Flexner, 1937," 941.

[245] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "John Dewey on Hutchins' Philosophy of Education, 1937," 951.

[246] Ibid.

devils. While these debates raged on in the upper decks, down on the field, where the game was being played with much less publicity and hoopla, the shape of higher education was in flux, as was the structure of power in society.

The clearest indication of the fundamental changes that higher education was experiencing during this period can be found in the conflicts and struggles over funding: on the one hand, this epoch saw an expansion of resources devoted to the public higher education system; on the other hand, private universities found it more difficult to navigate their way through conflicts and struggles over funding, which by now had become more scarce. Diminished support from the big foundations for private higher education institutions along with gains in enrollments for public higher education created a funding crisis for even the elite private colleges during the depression years.

Among the upper-tier universities, the struggle for funding during this period is best depicted by Rebecca S. Lowen in *Creating the Cold War University, The Transformation of Stanford*. Lowen's ground-breaking analysis shows an on-the-field view of the developments among the elite institutions, with a focus on Stanford. It provides a perfect example of Mills' understanding of the formation of elite centers of power in that it is not simply depicted as a conspiracy of powerful governmental elites imposing their will on the university, but that it is better understood as a "coincidence of interests."[248] She views as problematic the common interpretation of the post-war/cold war university, attributed to Clark Kerr among others, which posits that the relationship of the university to the federal government is due to the "natural outcome of the

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[247] Hofstadter and Smith, eds., Vol. II, "John Dewey on Hutchins' Philosophy of Education, 1937," 952.

[248] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 276-277.

inexorable rise of a powerful, centralizing state increasingly dependent upon scientific knowledge and expertise."[249] She argues instead that interests within university administrations played a vital role in securing military patronage.

Prior to the Second World War, "for most scientists, the relationship [with the federal government] was seen as potentially threatening to professional independence, portending the subjection of their work to political agendas."[250] At this time,

> …scientists sought patronage from private industry, wealthy individuals, and private philanthropies. The federal government itself showed a distrust of experts whom it could not directly control, rejecting pleas in the 1930s, for example, for federal funding of academic science.[251]

Lowen explains that the common belief has been this mutual wariness between the federal government and the university had dissolved "with the onset of World War II, when the government once again called upon scientists – most notably, the nation's physicists – for assistance."[252] During the war, the existing institutional formations in the university were mobilized as ultra-radicals became ultra-patriots and even class conflict was temporarily suspended. However, Lowen explores the nature of the new relationships between the university and the federal government and finds that the commonly held view of how it developed is not entirely accurate. She explains as follows:

> While most attention has focused on the physics community, the general assumption has been that the relationship developed between physicists and the state was eventually replicated by other academic scientists and social scientists. The federal government came to recognize the usefulness of a broad array of scientific and social scientific disciplines in

[249] Lowen, 8.

[250] Ibid.

[251] Ibid.

[252] Ibid.

> fighting the cold war; the scientists, aware of the enormous prestige enjoyed by the physicists, eagerly sought to emulate them by developing ties to state patrons. [253]

However, this story does not entirely stand up to Lowen's scrutiny. Instead, she argues that "the leaders of the nation's universities, along with patrons and some scientists, strongly influenced the creation of the cold war university."[254] From 1939 onward, accepting federal patronage at Stanford was "first an institutional necessity and then a patriotic duty."[255] If we look at the university (especially Stanford) not as a passive recipient of military patronage, but as an active agent, then we find that scientists may be "independent professionals by training, [however] they are also employees of a corporate entity."[256] She argues that university administrators played a key role in negotiations with both the federal government and the private foundations to provide support for research, and they pressured "scientists – physical, natural, and social scientists – to develop external support for their work."[257] Actually, at Stanford, other departments besides physics – statistics, electrical engineering, psychology, and philosophy – took an early lead in pursuing military patronage.[258] It was not just handed to them. They had to lobby for it, and after the war these mechanisms became more institutionalized.

These trends in the university had implications that went far beyond funding issues. The ideological make-up of the faculty was also shaped by these trends. Similar

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[253] Lowen, 8-9.

[254] Ibid., 9.

[255] Ibid., 44.

[256] Ibid.

[257] Ibid., 10.

[258] Ibid.

to the Progressive period, noted above, where corporate interests often became indistinguishable from what passed for science, in this epoch, the bottom line was an important consideration both in the screening of faculty and in the trajectory of scholarship within the academic disciplines.

> University administrators clearly had a stake in eliminating potentially controversial teachers from their campuses, sometimes for ideological reasons, but also for practical ones – they sought to avoid controversies that might alienate patrons of the university. They additionally had a strong stake in maintaining (or achieving) national prestige for their institutions. With respect to disciplines such as political science, these concerns dictated an emphasis on quantitative and behavioral methods, which were deemed both apolitical and scientific and for which generous external support was available. …administrators at Stanford sought to channel intellectual efforts to meet the concerns of trustees and patrons. This result was achieved not so much by coercing particular individuals (although this did occur) as by applying pressure in favor of quantitative and subsidized work at the departmental level through the exercise of administrative power over faculty hiring, promotions, and salaries.[259]

Another implication of these policies was that, for both institutional and ideological reasons, university administrators "stressed the production of knowledge over the education of students,"[260] which has been enforced in subsequent years through the "publish or perish" principle. It is through these somewhat hidden institutional mechanisms that corporate and militaristic interests are manifested within the ranks of the professoriate.[261]

The fourth epoch provided a briefly opened window for competing centers of power to emerge within the system of higher learning, parallel to those competing centers of power that emerged in the larger spheres of society at this time, as noted above, i.e., organized labor, the unemployed workers movement, etc. One might say that the

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[259] Lowen, 11.

[260] Ibid., 9.

reproduction of the structure of societal power within the educational system takes place not only in times of certain elite dominance, but it is also manifested in times when there is fluidity and flux with regard to power in society. Of course, it would be reductionist to use the concept of 'reproduction' simply as a kind of unidirectional, mimetic correspondence between the structure of power in society and the structure of power in the system of higher of education, and the fourth epoch makes abundantly clear that the process of reproduction is not simply a unilateral, top-down, one-dimensional, totalizing phenomenon, but that the concept itself, despite some of its more rigid purveyors, has ample room for multiple determinations, including resistance. It is a dialectical process.

The fourth epoch saw the military-industrial-academic complex emerge more fully, and, yet, it also witnessed the emergence of a more highly developed public university system that served to broaden education and to make it more available to those who previously could not afford it. At the same time, during this epoch much of the militant left was purged from higher education (see Chapter 3 on Rapp-Coudert hearings in New York), just as the New Deal was ultimately purged of its most radical elements. Rights, privileges, tenure, and academic freedom became more secure for those who remained by virtue of being ideologically compatible with the new growing elite power, or at least tolerable to them, and, of course, for those who were vitally needed, such as those eminent left-leaning scientists who served on the Manhattan Project during the war. Nevertheless, as the Cold War commenced, and due to his outspoken political opinions, even J. Robert Oppenheimer had his security clearance famously revoked in 1954. It was a new era.

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[261] See Richard J. Barnet, *The Roots of War* (Penguin Books, [1971] 1985), 41-47.

The fifth epoch that C. Wright Mills puts forth follows from World War II and continues through the time of publication of *The Power Elite*, in 1956. He died in 1962. This dissertation will extrapolate using Mills' general principles to project an extension of the epochs that he describes. The fifth epoch, I argue, came to an end in the mid-1970s, marked symbolically and historically by the fiscal crisis of New York City.[262] The rationale for the demarcation between the fifth epoch and a sixth epoch, centered around 1975, will become clear in due course. Suffice it to say for now that the outcome of the New York City fiscal crisis in the mid-1970s set the stage for a national political transformation that was the beginning of the end for the New Deal era and eased the way for the entrance of a new epoch characterized by such monikers as deindustrialization, post-Fordism, and neoliberal corporate globalization.

Mills characterizes the fifth epoch as being one where the military is ascendant and where "virtually all political and economic actions are… judged in terms of military definitions of reality."[263] It is an epoch where the long-time tendency of "business and government to become more intricately and deeply involved with each other has… reached a new point of explicitness."[264] Through a coincidence of interest between the corporate chieftains and the high military, the U.S. has developed a "permanent war economy and a private-corporation economy."[265] He calls it a military capitalism of private corporations.[266]

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[262] Numerous scholars have pointed to a break or shift of epochal proportions in the mid-1970s.

[263] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 275.

[264] Ibid., 274.

[265] Ibid., 276.

[266] Ibid.

As Mills explains,[267] it is in the area of foreign policy in which the power elite has shifted its attention during this epoch. Domestic policy by this point in time had over a hundred and fifty years of conflict and tradition which made for patterns and policies by which different groups in American life could participate, in varying degrees. Organized labor, for example, had gained significant leverage during the 1930s. But it is in the area of foreign policy where very little had been developed in terms of mechanisms by which the Congress, much less the people, could meaningfully participate in policy-making. It is by moving into this vacuum of political power through which the power elite was able to secure its ground for years to come. And it was in the institution of the American Presidency through which much of these newly focused corporate interests would be fulfilled. The post-World War II Presidency has an imbalance of power over U.S. foreign policy that could not have been anticipated by the founders, despite the open-ended vestment clause of Article 2, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution which leaves plenty of room for the President to carry out nearly unchecked "executive power," as opposed to the vestment clause for Congress in Article 1, Section 1, which places limits upon that authority to those powers that are "herein granted."[268] Thus, it was in this period that corporate elites set out to capture the institution of the Presidency, which was

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[267] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 275, passim.

[268] There are numerous books written on the manner in which Congress has neglected its role in foreign policy and, despite public posturing, often serves as merely a "cheerleader" for the President. See, for example, Louis Fisher, *Congressional Abdication on War and Spending* (Texas A & M University Press, 2000); and Barbara Hinckley, *Less Than Meets the Eye, Foreign Policy Making and the Myth of the Assertive Congress* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); for Mills' position on this "vacuum" of power, see *The Power Elite*, 275. This is not to say that the Congress has not been willfully providing an unending flow of funding for these policies.

by now not only the "manager" of the economy, but was also becoming increasingly "imperial."[269]

The post-war power elite benefited, as well, from the international system of capital which was designed at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944. The United States had a tremendous advantage over other countries after the war, and in the reconstruction of the "free world's" economic system, the new rules greatly favored its economy. The new arrangements established the U.S. dollar as the world's primary currency, as "good as gold," and the United States exerted considerable influence over the workings of the world economy. This arrangement helped the U.S. elite to greatly benefit from trade surpluses and to reap the rewards of power. These processes served to promote the expansion of the exploitation of cheap labor and natural resources in undeveloped and developing countries. If the need should arise, they could count on the backing of the U.S. military to protect their investments. It was in this convergence of the "interests" of the political order, the economic order, and the military order by which the post-war power elite purportedly represented American national interest around the globe. The threat to "our way of life,"[270] represented by the Soviet Union and the Cold War, served as a justification for a permanent military buildup and for occasional military interventions on behalf of U.S. corporate interests, not the least of which was the interest of the defense industry itself.[271] Of course, the obvious economic rationale for an

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[269] See Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973).

[270] See President Harry S. Truman, "The Truman Doctrine—Speech before Congress" (1947), in *Political Thought in America, An Anthology*, Second Edition, ed. by Michael B. Levy (The Dorsey Press, 1988), 531-533.

[271] See William Blum, *Killing Hope, U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions Since World War II* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 2004).

imperialistic policy became intertwined with more complex layers of ideology and political bureaucracy, having its own set of attitudes and justifications.[272]

The U.S. worker – working class and middle class, white collar and blue – to some extent benefited from this arrangement for awhile; that is to say, elites had to acknowledge the power of organized labor and grant them some concessions. Labor's success was at least partially due to the development, during the 1930s, of shared attitudes among the working class that facilitated their collective political mobilization.[273] After the protest and strikes of the 1930s, which led to significant gains, much of the unionized workforce obtained relatively good jobs and lived in relative security during the post-war period, but the political power acquired by labor was steadily, if unevenly, eroding. During this period, sometimes identified as the age of "Fordism," there was a kind of implicit social contract that promised a decent life in return for labor peace and for tacit support for a more extended, militant, and aggressive internationalism than had previously been the norm. Alan Wolfe describes how this agreement had its beginnings with the New Deal and the role that the President had in it:

> The new political formula that was developed in the first three decades of the present century, aptly termed the Roosevelt Revolution by Rexford G. Tugwell, was premised upon a political bargain: the people would give the President their support for the reforms necessary to insure the transition to advanced capitalism, and the President would offer the people security from the tensions induced by this transition. Specifically, the presidency became the focal point for two major features of contemporary economic modernization: first, a domestic economy rationalized through centralization and economic concentration; and second, a global free-trade system organized by American power. At the same time, the President

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[272] See Barnet, *The Roots of War* ([1971] 1985), 109-120, passim.

[273] Jeremy Brecher, *Strike!* (Boston: South End Press, 1972), xi-xii; Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed , How They Fail* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 3-5; James R. Green, *The World of the Worker,* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 139-140.

> provided the people with welfare to protect them from the dislocations of the first change and with a military apparatus to lessen the instabilities of the second. This bargain was not settled without considerable turmoil and many delays, and was culminated only after World War II.[274]

While some workers had obtained decent jobs, for others who were among the poor or just in-between, the welfare state would help to placate potential unrest.[275] For those who continued to resist the ideological and structural underpinnings of the new social order and to protest the expansion of U.S. interests, the repression of the McCarthy-era would serve to quell their voices. Military Keynesianism pumped up the economy, served the needs of elites, contributed to the growth of a middle class, and helped to hide, for a time, the desperate poverty and inequality of the urban ghettos and Appalachia.[276] The contradictions between the promise of American life and the reality of it for many created a growing tension, especially for the post-War civil rights movement which would soon explode onto the scene, but for now these tensions were suppressed.

The potential for labor unions to have a democratic influence on the American political scene was evident in Mills' writing when he wrote *The New Men of Power* in 1948, however his view became more subdued and critical of labor unions and their leaders by the time he wrote *The Power Elite*, as he felt that "the current crop of labor leaders is pretty well set up as a dependent variable in the main drift with no role in the

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[274] Alan Wolfe, "Presidential Power and the Crisis of Modernization," in *Democracy*, Volume 1, Number 2, (April 1981): 25.

[275] See Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971).

[276] See Michael Harrington, *The Other America, Poverty in the United States,* with a new Introduction (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., [1962] 1969); Also see Gabriel Kolko, *Main Currents in Modern American History* (New York: Pantheon Books, [1976] 1984), esp. Chapters 9 and 10, 310-398.

power elite."[277] He recognized, comparatively early, that the power attained by prominent labor leaders had become "status traps" that did not result in significant power.[278] The labor bureaucracy itself had become one of the problems – it did not harness labor's true economic power, but embraced, instead, a place at the table of politics and government in a bourgeois liberal political structure that was designed to protect the propertied classes. Thus, it came to be that labor union membership, which had peaked in the mid-1950s, has since been in decline, although the growth of public-sector unions in the 1960s and early 1970s offset the intensity of that decline.[279]

Interestingly, while labor's political power was being curtailed, most notably with the implementation of the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, social welfare in the form of job training, education, and other forms of public patronage was helping to keep potentially dissenting voices occupied, tending to favor those who mattered the most, politically speaking (i.e., the white middle and working classes). Thus, this period not only witnessed the growth of the "cold war university," but also the expansion of public higher education, perhaps as an extension of the implicit social contract noted above. That is, the implicit political bargain referred to by Wolfe can be viewed as being manifested within the system of higher education through, on the one hand, the federal government's investment in university-based research which was largely geared towards military applications, and, on the other hand, the concessionary increase of opportunities in

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[277] Mills, *The Power Elite*, n. 265.

[278] Ibid., 263-264.

[279] Green, 1980; David Lewin, "Public Employee Unionism and Labor Relations in the 1980s: An analysis of Transformation," in *Unions in Transition*, ed. by Seymour M. Lipset (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1986); Michael Goldfield, *The Decline of Organized Labor in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

education through an overall expansion, especially at the community college level, that, in part, fit in with the functionalist purpose of worker training so as to fit in with the new economy. This growth was encouraged by federal support for homecoming soldiers in the form of the G.I. Bill of 1944. From 1944 to 1951, approximately 8 million veterans received some kind of educational benefits such as tuition payments, vocational training, and on-the-job training.

Despite the federal largesse, Burton Clark asserted in 1961 that the community college served as a "cooling-out" mechanism and, thereby surreptitiously tracked the ambitions and desires of the working class into a manageable and more docile path – acting as a buffer to more rebellious attitudes in the face of social inequality.[280] Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, authors of *The Diverted Dream*, argue more explicitly:

> Alongside the idealistic impulse to extend to veterans unprecedented educational opportunities, there was also the fear that the nation's economy would be unable to provide work for the millions of returning soldiers. The massive unemployment of the Great Depression had, after all, been relieved only by the boost that war production had given the economy. The end of the war therefore threatened--or so it was widely believed at the time--to send the economy back into a terrible slump. With so many soldiers returning home, the possibility of such a downturn frightened policy elites and the public alike, for it was almost certain to revive the bitter social and political conflicts of the 1930s.
>
> Together with more idealistic factors, this concern with the effects of the returning veterans on domestic stability led to one of the major higher education acts in American history: the G.I. Bill of 1944. Designed in part to thank American veterans for their service during the war, the bill also had the goal of using the nation's colleges and universities to keep masses of veterans out of a job market that might not be able to absorb them.[281]

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[280] See Burton Clark, "The 'Cooling-Out' Function in Higher Education," in *Education, Economy, and Society*, ed. by A.H. Halsey, et al (New York: Free Press, 1961), 513-521.

[281] Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream, Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 67-68; for a good recent summary of the debates regarding functionalist, Marxist, and institutionalist accounts of the debates over the community colleges see: Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001[1994]).

Additionally, Brint and Karabel argue that the university presidents also had an interest in the expansion of the junior college (i.e., the community college) because it was a means to divert the growing college enrollment and assuage their fears that "their institutions would be overwhelmed."[282] Thus, the post-war expansion of education can be viewed as the expansion of the democratic impulse, but, also, as a means to redirect aspirations for higher education, widely viewed as a means to a better life, and to protect the upper ranks of the educational hierarchy from the increasingly restless hoi polloi.

At the other end of the spectrum were the elite universities. During the war, universities such as MIT, Caltech, Harvard, and Columbia received research and development contracts that "actually dwarfed those of the largest industrial contractors."[283] Federal dollars via the military poured into the elite universities at significantly higher levels than had previously been the case, even during World War I. The "cold war university" may have been born of national necessity during World War II, but after the war, what constituted "national interest" became a more subjective observation. According to Gabriel Kolko, it is undeniable that "by 1944 many big-business leaders temporarily in government increasingly saw postwar cooperation among industry, government, and the military as the key to prosperity."[284] The maintenance of U.S. military dominance had a rationale that was rooted in both foreign policy and in domestic policy. The "cold war university" fit in well with these new structures of power.

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[282] Brint and Karabel, 35.

[283] Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science, The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 6.

After the war, despite deep cuts in overall military spending by President Truman, "military R&D budgets fell off only slightly from their wartime peak, and then began to climb in response to mounting cold war tensions underscored by the Berlin crisis, the first Soviet atomic bomb test, and the 'loss' of China."[285] Leslie asserts that, "The Korean War completed the mobilization of American science and made the university, for the first time, a full partner in the military-industrial complex."[286]

In the early 1960s, the idea of university partnership with other institutions in society evolved into the idea of the "multiversity," envisioned most famously by Clark Kerr.[287] It became understood that the Cold War University had become a site of knowledge production – the knowledge industry. Kerr had a functionalist view of the university's fully integrated place in society, complete with the functionalist assumption of consensus and with little room for the articulation of differential power within the system. The analysis of social relations and of social inequality had little standing in this production process. While some welcomed this expanded role for the university arguing that it provided greater opportunity, others were critical arguing that democracy simply was "not in the picture."[288] Kerr's vision heralded the growing importance of administrators and bureaucrats who would become the managers of the university, and, on the other side of the coin, his vision relegated the faculty to being the Taylorized

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[284] Kolko, 311.

[285] S. Leslie, 8.

[286] Ibid.

[287] Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[288] See Hal Draper, "The Mind of Clark Kerr," (Originally published as a pamphlet by Independent Socialist Club, Berkeley, California, 1964), http://www.marxists.org/archive/draper/1964/10/kerr.htm.

"wage thinkers."[289] Kerr takes on the air of the "detached, uninvolved historian of the future" in that he portrays his model as the inevitable "wave of the future" that all must accept or have it imposed upon them.[290] However, what is de-emphasized in this model of higher education is the importance of teaching and "any liberal arts conception of that task."[291] Thus, it ignores the role that education plays in developing democratic citizens, the role of reason as opposed to instrumentalism, and the role of free inquiry – in sum, it ignores the humanistic tradition of the higher learning envisioned by Veblen, Dewey, and others. The corporate paradigm for higher education described by Kerr – the multiversity – has fundamental contradictions built into it, and these continue to be the source of much conflict.

Despite these transformations, or maybe because of them, the fifth epoch became the golden era for academic labor.[292] By the 1960s, the expanding university system made academic jobs relatively plentiful and the labor market was, for a time, a seller's market. The social status of faculty was rising, and, to some extent, so too was their pay and job security. Women began entering the academic labor force in greater numbers. Academic labor unions, mostly notably in the public sector (perhaps in response to the university being transformed into the knowledge *industry*), began to emerge from their

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[289] Jeff Lustig, "The Mixed Legacy of Clark Kerr: A Personal View," *Academe*, July-August, 2004, 53. This is Lustig's term, as he makes reference to Kerr's use of a limerick about a prostitute (wage worker) to explain the position of faculty "in an effort to reconcile his colleagues to becoming wage thinkers."

[290] Draper, "The Mind of Clark Kerr."

[291] Lustig, 53.

[292] See Jencks and Riesman, *The Academic Revolution* (1969).

status as professional associations to become bona fide collective bargaining agents.[293] However, the transition from the complacent '50s to the expansive '60s brought with it a new and turbulent role for the university. As it became a site of knowledge production, it renewed its role as being a site upon which social conflict would be fought.

Periods of great conflict have a kind of window-effect on the relationships of power in a society. When the struggles that have simmered beneath the surface finally erupt, the contours of the structure of power are brought into relief and the limits and possibilities of political and social transformation become more clarified. The great confluence of movements for civil rights, women's liberation, and sexual freedom, along with the anti-war movement, had radically transformed American society. The long-running tragedy of the Vietnam War served to keep the pressure on these movements and to keep them alive and growing. As the society came apart, people's lives were transformed in ways that had not before seemed likely or even possible. Perhaps it was the affluence, the ideology of democratic values, or the rising expectations that went along with these developments that caused the protestors of the '60s to feel so alienated while living within the institutions and processes that gave them so much, materially speaking. Or maybe the deepening chasm between the real and the ideal just became too much for the collective unconscious to bear.

The core values of society were being contested in ways that only a few short years before had seemed unlikely, unpatriotic, and impossible. This process of trans-valuation of values was expressed in the manifesto of the Students for a Democratic

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[293] The founding of CUNY's faculty unions and their development in the '60s are discussed in Chapter 3 and 4; the first independent Graduate Teaching Assistant's union – the TAA at the University of Wisconsin at Madison is discussed in Chapter 5.

Society (SDS), known as "The Port Huron Statement" (1962). In it, they openly criticized the racism, hypocrisy, and alienation of American life. Yet, they expressed hope:

> Some would have us believe that Americans feel contentment amidst prosperity—but might it not better be called a glaze above deeply-felt anxieties about their role in the new world? And if these anxieties produce a developed indifference to human affairs, do they not as well produce a yearning to believe there *is* an alternative to the present, that something *can* be done to change circumstances in the school, the workplaces, the bureaucracies, the government?[294]

They understood the important role that the university could play in changing these circumstances, and they provided a comprehensive critique of that role. They argued that the university's position of social influence is crucial in the formation of social attitudes; that it is the central institution for organizing, evaluating, and transmitting knowledge; that its resources are used to "buttress immoral social practice" in that defense contracts bring the universities into the arms race; that modern social science is used as a "manipulative tool" that serves corporate agendas at the expense of laborers by deluding them into believing that they "belong" when they are, instead, exploited; and, that the social uses of the universities' resources by "men of power," and the reliance upon the university by those men on these storehouses of knowledge… "makes the university functionally tied to society in new ways, revealing new potentialities, new levers for change."[295] As a site of social conflict, the university is one of the few places in our society where democratic participation has a chance to be meaningful, precisely because

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[294] Students for a Democratic Society, "The Port Huron Statement" (1962), in *Political Thought in America, An Anthology*, Second Edition, ed. by Michael B. Levy (The Dorsey Press, 1988), 461.

[295] Ibid., 465.

it is a place where the free exchange of ideas is held as a core value. No doubt, the dire circumstances of the '60s made that participation a more urgent matter for some.

The '60s was a time when the values and the authority of the epoch were questioned determinedly, and those who were willing to hear the answers found them to be deeply disturbing. As the not-so-great society waged war in Vietnam, the social fabric was unraveling at home and the "price of empire" was revealed by Senator J. William Fulbright:

> Standing in the smoke and rubble of Detroit, a Negro veteran said: "I just got back from Vietnam a few months ago, but you know, I think the war is here." There are in fact two wars going on. One is the war of power politics which our soldiers are fighting in the jungles of southeast Asia. The other is the war for America's soul which is being fought in the streets of Newark and Detroit and in the halls of Congress, in churches and protest meetings and on college campuses, and in the hearts and minds of silent Americans from Maine to Hawaii. I believe that the two wars have something to do with each other, not in the direct, tangibly causal way that bureaucrats require as proof of a connection between the two things, but in a subtler, moral and qualitative way that is no less real for being intangible.[296]

The "war for America's soul" described by Fulbright made it clear that not only was there no consensus about the Vietnam war, but that there were deep divisions about what were believed to be our core values.

On upper-tier campuses, such as Berkeley, Columbia, Harvard, Stanford, and MIT, there were, by the late '60s, numerous protests against the machinery of war and demands for divestment from defense-oriented research.[297] At places like CUNY – public institutions that served working class students – the protests for civil rights, for

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[296] J. William Fulbright, "The Price of Empire" (1967), in *Political Thought in America, An Anthology*, Second Edition, ed. by Michael B. Levy (The Dorsey Press, 1988), 565-566.

[297] See S. Leslie, 233-256; also see Mark Kitchell, Director, *Berkeley in the Sixties* (Film, Production Partnership, 1990).

women's rights, and against the Vietnam war had also disrupted business as usual. By the end of the decade, blacks and latinos were successfully demanding wider access to higher education – an extension of the post-war political bargain so that it would include those who had been left out (the open admissions struggle at CUNY is discussed in Chapter 3).

The open window generated by the conflicts of the Sixties revealed much, even though the curtains were quickly drawn closed. But it was too late as the limits and possibilities had already been revealed, even if it was not completely understood. There was another world out there underneath the one portrayed in the popular images, and the knowledge of both its good and its evil would not soon be forgotten. If the university was part of the implicit political bargain outlined above, then the protests of the '60s served as a conscious rejection of that pact, at least by the conscious objectors to the permanent war and to its economic and social foundations.

As democracy blossomed in the '60s, political and social countercurrents were building. The 1964 election was a harbinger of things to come. Barry Goldwater lost the contest for the presidency to LBJ, but he showed Republicans how to win in the South. Appeals to racial fears became a cornerstone of Republican success in the coming decades.[298] Nixon began the shift of policy away from the social advances of the 1960's with his form of Federalism, known as "revenue sharing." The Great Society programs, developed under Lyndon Johnson, had been implemented in such a way so as to circumvent the elites at the state level. Instead of giving block grants to the state leaders to distribute as they saw fit, LBJ's Creative Federalism distributed the resources directly

[298] See Thomas Byrne Edsall, with Mary D. Edsall, *Chain Reaction, The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, Inc, 1992).

to tens of thousands of community groups and municipalities through categorical grants. In addition to alleviating poverty, these programs had been intended to solidify the Democratic party by creating alternative sources of political power within the party's base of support. Nixon did not have the political capital to fully derail the Great Society programs, but his revenue-sharing modification to the federal grants-in-aid programs took a step towards altering the balance-of-power by its increasing the use of block grants so that state and local elites would have greater control of the allocations which they were able to dispense with greater discretion. This policy alone did not transform the state, nor did it overturn the progressive gains won by the protests and struggles of the 1960s. Indeed, much of the resources that could have been used to fight poverty had been drained off by the Vietnam War.[299] However, this policy did signal a clear shift against the progressive trends of the '60s, as well as a change in the national mood. In retrospect, it also presaged an epochal change in the structure of power in American society.

This epochal change would not have been possible if not for the concomitant changes in human geography that took place. Briefly, the political shifts initiated in the early 1970s were supported by shifting demographics that had been taking place for some time as the white middle-class left the urban centers in large numbers to stake out new lives in suburbia. By 1967, the Kerner Commission was describing the population as "Two nations, one black and one white."[300] Dennis Judd and Todd Swanstrom add that "they might as well have said, 'one urban and one suburban.'"[301] Along with this transfer

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[299] See Harrington, xi-xxx.

[300] Dennis R. Judd and Todd Swanstrom, *City Politics, Private Power and Public Policy*, Third Edition (New York: Pearson Longman, 2002), 136. Judd and Swanstrom give an excellent account of this transformation throughout *City Politics*.

[301] Ibid., 136.

of wealth and power came a concomitant fragmentation of political jurisdictions. That is, with post-World War II suburbanization came the incorporation of new municipalities. Even though many of these suburban residents worked in the city and benefited from its services, they were not living under its jurisdiction, thus diminishing the tax base of the cities. [302]

In addition to the flight from the cities to the suburbs, in the post-World War II period there was also a concurrent shift of population, resources and investment, both private and public, from the Frostbelt to the so-called Sunbelt, though this transformation was marked by uneven development. In time, these demographic shifts would break the back of the New Deal coalition and clear the way for a new epoch marked by shifts in resources and investments beyond the Sunbelt in a new global order, but the rapid growth of neo-liberal globalization would have to wait a few years until the political conditions were more ideal.

There were multiple reasons for the rise of the Sunbelt, all of them indicative not of "natural" market forces, but of public policies implemented by political actors. One important reason was that the "infrastructure of the older Frostbelt cities was geared to the high-density patterns of production and consumption characteristic of the industrial period," and, thus, the "Sunbelt cities had an advantage because they could start afresh to build infrastructure suited to the postindustrial economy."[303] Additionally, there were political reasons, as well. Firstly, the interests of labor unions and their members were hindered in the Sunbelt by the open-shop provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act, which were

[302] Judd and Swanstrom, 308.

[303] Ibid., 267-268.

taken full advantage of by about a third of the states, mostly those in the South and Southwest. Moreover, the Federal government played a pivotal political role in inducing this shift from the Frostbelt to the Sunbelt, and this was due to the continuing legacy of the "system of 1896," the political party system established in the national election of 1896 that consolidated Democratic party rule in the South.[304] Longstanding Democratic senators and representatives from the Southern states, reaping the benefits of uncontested one-party elections, controlled the key Congressional committees by virtue of seniority. They used their powerful positions as committee chairs "to steer defense spending and major infrastructure investments, such as dams and water projects, to their states and districts."[305] Federal subsidies for highways also disproportionately benefited the Sunbelt since the Frostbelt cities relied more upon railroads and mass transit.[306] In addition, the federal tax code favored the Sunbelt over the Frostbelt:

> In 1954, accelerated depreciation allowances deducted from corporate income taxes provided tax breaks for constructing new commercial and industrial structures but not for rehabilitating old buildings. Accelerated depreciation thus speeded up the flow of capital out of older industrial cities to suburban and Sunbelt locations… Between 1954 and 1980, this subsidy was worth $30 billion in reduced taxes. The Investment Tax Credit, introduced by President Kennedy in 1962, gave a dollar-for-dollar reduction on corporate taxes for new investment in plant and equipment. Thus the federal tax code encouraged companies to abandon older plants in the Frostbelt and build new plants in the Sunbelt. Between 1962 and 1981, this subsidy was worth $90 billion.[307]

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[304] See Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Why Americans Still Don't Vote, And Why Politicians Want It that Way*, 45-136.

[305] Judd and Swanstrom, 270.

[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid., 270-271.

Finally, another important aspect that favored the Sunbelt over the Frostbelt was the shift in war production after World War II. There was a shift from heavy industry, such as tanks and guns, to high-tech weaponry, such as missiles, jet airplanes, and sophisticated communications systems.[308] The modern infrastructure of the Sunbelt cities gave it an advantage in this shift. Most of the cold war military production spending went to the Sunbelt. Between 1950 and 1976, the number of defense employees increased nationally by "more than 35 percent but fell by 3 percent in the sixteen northeastern and upper midwestern states."[309] Thus, on many levels, the transfer of industry, the role of taxation, and federal funding policies supported this shift in power, population, and resources away from the liberal, highly unionized, Northeast and Midwest cities that had been the solid base of the New Deal coalition, itself rooted in the economic and social patterns known as Fordism. This did not mean in a simplistic way that the Sunbelt prospered while the Frostbelt faltered, especially given that the Sunbelt has been the subject of contentious debates over its geographical boundaries including both its external border as well as over the internal inconsistency (i.e., pockets) of development within the so-called Sunbelt. However, what is important here is that the growth of the Sunbelt drew political power away from the locations in the north that had been the bastion of the New Deal order, thus creating the foundation for a national political shift of epochal proportions, as we shall soon see.

These demographic and economic shifts, along with the fragmentation of jurisdictions, created overwhelming disparities that further marginalized the inner-city

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[308] Judd and Swanstrom, 269.

[309] Ibid., 269-270.

poor and also paved the way for a more favorable political climate for big business, which was seeking to renegotiate the tacit social contract it had not only with organized labor, but with the working class itself. Without a regional approach to common economic problems, municipalities were put into the position of being forced to make difficult choices. The cycle of slashing social spending so as to cut business taxes and thereby attract corporate enterprise to the city pits one municipality against another on a playing field that favors big business interests and works to the detriment of the poorest in the community. This type of set-up allows big business to play one jurisdiction off against another and to make the jurisdictions compete, as if they were players in a competitive market (and not the so-called night watchman). Thus, the competitive market model is now applied to government itself, which, in effect, has abdicated its responsibility to its citizens and has allowed for the downward spiral of governmental leverage vis-à-vis big business all across the country. To reiterate the importance of these transformations for national politics: the migrations to the suburbs by the white middle-class and the growth of the Sunbelt at the expense of the Frostbelt paved the political way for the ascendancy of capital over labor, i.e., the social contract between economic elites and the working class was undermined due to the weakening of the New Deal coalition, which was caused by the demographic and capital shifts within the United States in the post-World War II period.

As these trends were unfolding at the national and state level, the system of international capital was going through related epochal transformations. By the time of the Vietnam War, U.S. reinvestment abroad was taking its toll on labor-intensive U.S.

industries such as textiles and electronics assembly.[310] This was true even in Sunbelt. That is to say, while cities such as Houston and Oklahoma City were reaping the benefits of growth, other older, more rural areas of the South "were crumbling" as capital relocated internationally, most notably in the textile field.[311]

As the domestic political playing field was being transformed, monetary transfigurations would serve as the impetus of corporate capital's appetite for an unrestricted global reach. By 1968, economic growth had encountered serious limitations and the dollar, by now overextended, began to collapse.[312] The system established by the Bretton Woods Accords in 1944 was ended in 1971 when Nixon took the dollar off of the gold standard, i.e., "unilaterally suspending the convertibility of the dollar into gold at the fixed exchange rate."[313] Wolfe concisely explains the situation and its implications:

> The two most blatant economic realities of the Nixon years were stagflation at home, which required some restructuring of the domestic economy; and the transformations of the world economy (increasing oil prices, currency imbalances, Eurodollar speculation, and the drying up of grain reserves, for example), which demanded an alteration in foreign policy. To govern effectively, Nixon would have had to move the American people into a new position, all the while insisting that he was keeping the old verities alive. [314]

Wolfe's stark characterization of economic "realities" ignores the potential of other alternatives and assumes that elites had no other choice – a questionable assumption at best. However, his second observation, i.e., that in order to carry out these policies they

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[310] Bluestone and Harrison, 33.

[311] Ibid.; According to Bluestone and Harrison, "almost 60 percent of all the textile mill closings in the United States occurred in the South" during the 1970s.

[312] Wolfe, 29.

[313] William K. Tabb, *Economic Governance in the Age of Globalization*, 118-124.

[314] Wolfe, 30.

would need to "keep the old verities alive," deserves closer inspection. "Keeping the old verities alive" meant that the state (i.e., primarily the Executive branch), and the elite interests that it acts for much of the time, would no longer provide for the people with a growing welfare apparatus while promoting capital accumulation. Rather, it would seek to find a way to keep the legitimacy that social welfare conferred, diminish the welfare state, and, at the same time, carry out the class interests of economic elites. This meant imposing domestic austerity measures, while, at the same time, convincing the people that it was for their own good. Whether that constitutes "governing effectively" or not is obviously a subject for debate. However, this analysis is more concerned with his second observation and will argue that the university system, and the growing position of contingent academic labor within that system, play an important role in "keeping the old verities alive."

Though we can find evidence of these trends in the economic shifts from 1968-1975, the 1975 fiscal crisis in New York City seems an appropriate epochal marker because the political response to it served as a portent of what was to come. It should not be viewed, however, as the event that triggered this transformation. As Tabb points out, the New York City fiscal crisis was brought on, in part, due to "the decline of the industrial northeast and the transformation of its cities to suit the purposes of the corporations and service industries."[315] The outcome of it served as a kind of blueprint for austerity measures that would be implemented nationwide during the 1980s under President Reagan.[316] It would not take long for the changes outlined above to trickle

[315] William K. Tabb, *Long Default: New York City and the Urban Fiscal Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982), 1.

[316] Ibid.

down to the system of higher education, manifested, in part, through the transformation of the academic labor market from being a relatively loose labor market in the 1960s to being an increasingly bifurcated multi-tiered system that would shape the conflicts and problems in the university for decades to come.

> The linchpin of this process of corporatization is the overuse and abuse of adjunct faculty because it weakens the group within the university that has the most power to act as a counterweight to corporate values and as a leader in creating a new vision of the university.
>
> Richard Moser, "The New Academic Labor System, Corporatization and the Renewal of Academic Citizenship"

Chapter 2 / The Sixth Epoch

A central argument of this chapter is that the contingent academic labor *system,* i.e., the extensive use of part-time, temporary, non-tenure track, and graduate teaching-assistant faculty in higher education, not only saves the university scarce and contested budgetary dollars, but, more importantly, it undermines faculty rights *and* serves as a veil that legitimizes a corporate university system that is tiered along social class lines. It hides the hierarchy and inequality that exists in the larger society, and it succeeds at this, in part, due to the widely held conception of higher education as being the best hope for opportunity, equality, and democracy. However, as we have seen in Chapter One, the contradictions of social institutions do not allow for power to flow in only one direction. Despite the hidden inequalities, it may very well be that higher education *is* the best hope after all. Thus, it becomes a site of contention in the politics of class conflict. I will sketch out the demographic parameters of the academic labor system and explore the implications that this system has for teachers, students, and society, as well as introduce some of the most important organizing efforts that have been recently taking place. But first, it is necessary to bring the historical analysis of the structure of power initiated in Chapter One up-to-date.

By extending the framework initiated by C. Wright Mills, the mid-1970s can be classified as an epochal turning point because there had been a decisive shift in the

relationships of power in the United States at that time. The economic, military, and political orders remained in convergence, as they were in the higher circles of the fifth epoch, but it was the abrogation of the political bargain in the mid-1970s which inaugurated the sixth epoch. It marked, politically, the beginning of the end of the "social contract" represented by the New Deal, and those who had the greatest need for social services would be the prime targets. The cutbacks to spending on public goods due to fiscal crises in the cities of the U.S. during the 1970s amounted to a turning point in social class conflict. The social contract was unilaterally terminated, and New York City became the first major battleground of the sixth epoch in a war fought over the rules between the corporate capitalists and the American working class.[1] In keeping with this shift, numerous white Americans, both middle class and working class, came to believe that the price of social justice had been too high.[2] As their belief congealed, it smoothed the way for the dismantling of the social, economic, and political gains won by the disadvantaged and their allies during the defiant 1960s. Consistent with this trend, in 1978, California's voters passed Proposition 13 by a wide margin. This was a measure that limited property taxes and, as a result, California's public sector became less stable. Subsequently, it was viewed as the event that christened the emerging conservative movement, which advocated a platform of lower taxes, states' rights, and smaller government, and which eventually led to Republican party ascendancy, i.e., "the Reagan revolution." The deep schisms across the country along the lines of class, race and

[1] Chapter Three of this dissertation discusses the 1975 New York City fiscal crisis and the impact that it had on CUNY.

[2] See Thomas Byrne Edsall and Mary D. Edsall, *Chain Reaction, The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992).

ethnicity fed into political fragmentations represented by urban / suburban conflicts and sectionalism leaving the Left without an effectively mobilized base by which to mount a political response. The rollback of the New Deal Democratic coalition, and the unraveling of the social safety net that was its legacy, had begun.

The transformation that occurred during this period is often discussed in terms of the shift from a Fordist system to a post-Fordist system.[3] What was talked about as the "de-industrialization of America"[4] in the 1980s was marked by capital hypermobility and rapid economic shifts for the purposes of enhancing capital accumulation. Post-Fordism is characterized by a flexibility in the production process so as to lead to the quickest and most effective means of capital accumulation. The increased mobility of capital is matched by the pliability of labor: big business sought to make labor "flexible" so as to more successfully accumulate capital (characteristics: low wages, temporary status, few long-term ties), but the nature of the relationship is more accurately described as "pliable" rather than "flexible." "Flexible" implies consent, whereas pliable means that someone else is manipulating it. Thus, post-Fordism is marked by a more explicit labor segmentation that diminished the development of new good-paying union jobs, and developed a growing lower-tier of insecure labor.

The ideological shift that coincided with the political and economic shifts of this epoch found its embodiment in Ronald Reagan. The promotion of corporate elite interests required a president who could put forward those interests, and, all the while,

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[3] For a good discussion of this topic see *Post-Fordism, A Reader*, ed. by Ash Amin (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell Publishers, 1994).

[4] See Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America, Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982).

convince people that it was "morning in America." The "actor president in the age of fiction" fit in well with the needs of elites.[5] He would give speeches about getting big government off the backs of the people, and all the while run up the largest federal deficits in the history of the United States, largely as a result of defense expenditures and of a faithful adherence to supply-side tax cuts for his wealthy supporters. Reaganism thrived on the contradictions of the epoch: the simultaneous resurrection of Social Darwinism cloaked in the guise of the individualistic free-market myth of the self-made man, and, underneath it, the reality of a corrupt, oligopolistic, corporate culture that came to increasingly dominate the government and society.

Still, there were some checks on these impulses during the Reagan era. The use of U.S. troops still caused the American public to recoil, due to the memory of Vietnam. This does not mean that they could not use these troops, but that they had to pay close attention to public opinion while doing so. As evidence of this dynamic, the support for the Contras by the Reagan administration against the government of Nicaragua during the 1980s engendered a significant U.S. movement in support of the Sandinista leadership, and this developed hand-in-hand along with significant opposition by activists in the U.S. to brutal right-wing regimes in El Salvador, Guatemala, and throughout Latin America. Additionally, the 1960s had left a legacy of other powerful movements that provided some room for evolving progressive interests to have a voice during the 1980s, including the environmental movement, the nuclear-freeze campaign, the civil rights movement, the women's rights movement, and the gay rights movement. Unfortunately, organized

[5] James David Barber, "The Actor President in an Age of Fiction," in *American Government, Readings on Continuity and Change*, 2nd Edition, edited by Robert Harmel (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

labor was too interested in the bottom line to provide a much-needed cohesion for these groups.

Organized labor became a partner of big capital after World War II, actively supporting U.S. foreign policy and the defense buildup, in part, as a means of promoting job growth.[6] By the early 1970s, the liberal McGovern wing of the Democratic Party was attempting to mobilize support against the Vietnam war and in support of minorities, women, and environmentalists. The AFL-CIO under President George Meany was deeply involved with U.S. foreign policy and with the conservative Democratic establishment, and, thus, its leadership was reluctant to form what could have been a valuable alliance with the new social movements. This damaged workers' interests as an almost natural left-labor alliance was thwarted. Subsequently, by 1981 organized labor was arguably at its lowest point of the post-War period when President Reagan fired more than 11,000 air traffic controllers and knocked the labor movement back on its heels. Organized labor was unable to mount an effective challenge and throughout the Reagan years it was, for the most part, on the ropes, at least in terms of national politics. In 1988, organized labor joined the Democratic National Committee with fifteen seats, but in some ways this served more as a cooptation measure than as a voice at the table. As Mills understood decades earlier (noted above, 90-91), the power attained by prominent labor leaders had become "status traps" that did not result in significant

[6] For a cogent analysis of organized labor's role in relation to politics after World War II, see Stanley Aronowitz, *From the Ashes of the Old, American Labor and America's Future* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998). Some of the account here draws upon Aronowitz' work, esp. pp. 198-203; For a brief overview and an update on organized labor's role in U.S. foreign policy, see Kim Scipes, "Labor Imperialism Redux?: The AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy Since 1995," *Monthly Review*, Volume 57, Number 1, May 2005.

power.[7] This became evident in 1993, when, despite their place at the table and a strong opposition campaign by the AFL-CIO, the North American Free Trade Agreement passed with Democratic President Clinton's support. Due to the fact that organized labor was now part and parcel of the Democratic coalition, Clinton "foresaw, correctly, little chance of political condemnation from organized labor."[8]

> In the administration's calculus, labor had no place to go. On the other hand, major business groups were clamoring for the treaty, and Clinton knew they could ruin his re-election chances if he bowed to labor.[9]

The new men of power, i.e., the labor leaders, found themselves at a table where they were, at best, junior partners and, at worst, pawns in someone else's game. This dynamic prevented them from having much of an impact not only on free trade agreements, but also on the continued dismantling of the public sector. In some ways, Clinton was even better than Reagan at, on the one hand, presenting a positive image to the middle class, the working class and the poor, and, on the other hand, in then carrying out policies on behalf of big business. For example, in addition to his support of NAFTA, in 1996 he would institute Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and, thereby, "end welfare as we know it." Yet he still convinced oppressed minorities that he felt their pain. Thus, rather than being able to have a critical impact on public policy in coalition with social movement activists, organized labor in the sixth epoch served, inadvertently, to legitimate and to give working-class credentials to the big-business dominated Democratic National Committee. In return, they were treated as unwelcome relatives. As a further indication

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[7] Mills, *The Power Elite*, 263-264.

[8] Aronowitz, *From the Ashes of the Old*, 194.

[9] Ibid.

of the bizarre turn that the U.S. political system had taken, even though Clinton had supported free-trade economic policies, and did little to promote even modestly liberal social policies, he was still viciously attacked from the right and impeached.

The ideology of "new" Democrats such as Bill Clinton is embodied in a trend known as neo-liberalism. Its proponents can be characterized as having a global free-trade economic outlook, combined with a liberalism on social issues that is obfuscated and even negated, at times, by that same economic outlook due to the needs of globalization, viz., by the perceived need to cut the cost of the public sector and thereby make the world safe for global corporate capitalist investment and free trade. As the bourgeoisie searches the globe for profits, cheap resources, and cheap labor during the sixth epoch, it has been working to transform the whole world into its own vision of social relations, i.e., exploitation, and the specter of communism, it would seem, has been exiled into limbo. However, as in every epoch, new contradictions arise, and in the age of environmental degradation and global warming the need to understand them becomes more pressing with each passing day.

Vandana Shiva teases out some of the parameters of the dialectical contradictions of our age. She contrasts the idea of emerging global markets with local biodiversity. The food chain depends upon biodiversity. Monoculture, which is essential to neo-liberal globalization, promotes homogeneity and causes chemical and biological pollution (i.e., increased use of herbicides and pesticides, the creation of superweeds, unpredictable long-term consequences of genetically engineered organisms, etc.).[10] Rather than

[10] Vandana Shiva, *Biopiracy, The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1997) 38, 91-95, 101-103.; Also by Vandana Shiva see *Stolen Harvest, The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000) and *Water Wars, Privatization, Pollution, and Profit* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002).

connecting many different worlds and cultures, she argues that globalization, such as it exists, imposes one parochial culture on all the others and, furthermore, that this centralization necessarily destroys ecological biodiversity. The local ecology is transformed and reshaped based upon the needs of actors in the global market. This upheaval disrupts the local ecology as well as the local economy – the multiplier effect impacts soil, plants, wildlife, etc., as well as jobs, family life, cultural patterns and social practices.

The sixth epoch has, thus, witnessed the transformation of the world and the reach of corporate capital has become more fully globalized, but the effects of these shifts have been felt domestically as well, and in dramatic fashion. Cities struggle to find their niche in the new formations. Numerous major U.S. cities that had experienced deindustrialization in the 1960s and 1970s, have become reinvented as geographical nodes in the interconnected web of multi-national corporations that contend for power in the global network.[11] As this economic restructuring and internationalization of labor makes life difficult for millions of people in poor and developing nations, the subsequent migration to the more highly developed countries has shattered all previous records and history seems to have accelerated as lives are radically transformed. Neo-liberalism, thus, presents us with some disturbing contradictions. For some, the tale of two cities has become a cruel reality as they find themselves struggling just to survive under harsh working conditions; for others, it has become a realization of the American dream, but

[11] Joe R. Feagin and Michael Peter Smith, editors, *The Capitalist City, Global Restructuring and Community Politics* (New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1987), 3-5; They argue that these major cities are the "cotter pins holding the capitalist world economy together" (p. 4); Within *The Capitalist City*, especially see the introductory essay by the editors, "Cities and the New International Division of Labor: An Overview," 3-34, and the essay by Susan S. Fainstein, "Local Mobilization and Economic Discontent" 323-343.

only if they can sustain their denial of the growing disparities of wealth and of the imminent environmental collapse around them, caused, ironically, by the same capitalist system that had given them so much in this real-life Faustian drama.

The international division of labor has branded the sixth epoch with the familiar identifying mark of Taylorism. The managing of the world's labor force from above, characterized by the principles of labor segmentation, differentiation of functions, and the dollar before the man, constitutes a model that has been applied to most of the global economic system; free trade is presented as an undeniable benefit to humankind, and the individual is often characterized as being increasingly insignificant in the face of these gigantic processes.

Within the pre-eminent global cities, such as New York, we have seen the growth of certain sectors dominated by corporate firms in such areas as finance, law, media, information technology, and insurance. The service economy that has grown since the early 1980s has provided a boost to cities that were threatened by the effects of deindustrialization. New immigrants have helped to keep the city afloat by buying homes and filling in the jobs abandoned by those in the white middle-class who fled to the suburbs. They have opened restaurants, grocery stores, computer and other small businesses, as they paid taxes and revitalized neighborhoods. For those immigrants who came to the cities of the United States as undocumented workers, often fleeing the austerity and economic dislocation in their home countries that was caused by restructuring policies that were set in motion by the IMF, many are forced to serve the upper tier. There is a super-exploitative element with regard to the role that undocumented workers play in the economy. Their presence fulfills corporate needs by

keeping costs down, and it has the added effect of weakening the influence of organized labor.[12] This is a situation where federal immigration law regarding undocumented immigrants creates the impetus for a cheap work force for the global city. They serve the vital needs of the corporate employees in their capacity as food service workers, grocery workers, taxi drivers, delivery men, nannies for the young, and home care workers for the old. They work "off-the-books" and for well below the legal minimum wage. If they should complain or try to organize, they face the ominous threat of having their undocumented status exposed by their employers to federal authorities, thereby facing jail or deportation. This is the dirty little secret: that immigration law serves as the leverage by which labor law can be ignored. Meanwhile, the federal government looks the other way as corporate needs are being fulfilled. There have been a few successful efforts to fight against these practices by the immigrants themselves, supported by local activists, some union leaders, and a few enlightened state authorities. Notably, the successful efforts to protect undocumented workers' rights and to win back pay for them by the Office of former New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer shows that the state, in the right hands, still has significant power to offset the worst aspects of these shifts.[13]

In the mid-1990s, under the leadership of President John Sweeney, the AFL-CIO began to recognize the need for organizing the unorganized. There began to develop a

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[12] Immanuel Ness, *Immigrants, Unions, and the New U.S. Labor Market* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005). Ness provides an up-to-date account of these patterns and a comprehensive analysis of how these workers have fared at organizing themselves, as well as the response of established labor unions. He focuses on the green grocer, deliverymen, and taxi-driver movements in New York City.

[13] In particular, with regard to the green grocer movement, Ness shows how Mexican workers were able to work with the State Attorney General's office to implement a code of conduct for employers and some of them were able to retrieve some of the pay that they had been denied due to unlawful practices by employers and their agents. The massive peaceful protests by immigrants in April and May of 2006 demanding legal status in the face of pending legislation that seeks to criminalize them has been a remarkable example of how democratic upsurges can erupt unexpectedly.

recognition that discrimination against immigrants is unjust, counterproductive to the interests of organized labor, and has a negative effect on all workers. This realization is similar to that of the Jewish leadership of the garment worker unions who in 1910 found that they would have to help organize the Italian workers in order to prevent them from strikebreaking, which was undermining the efforts of organized labor.[14] The accents have changed, but the exploitation remains the same. In this regard, post-Fordism looks a lot like pre-Fordism. The expansion of immigration from every corner of the globe to the U.S. during the 1980s and 1990s has provided labor unions with potential opportunities, though they have only reluctantly stepped up to grab them, and there is still too much resistance to democratic unionism. Part of the resistance is, no doubt, due to the fact that some unionists and their leaders have a vested interest in the two-tiered system. Part of it is just ignorance. There is a portion of the white working-class that has been seduced by bigoted appeals – this is well-established in the annals of organized labor – and this lack of solidarity has contributed to a political ineffectiveness that has been compounded and reinforced, as noted above, by a labor leadership that still has a vested interest in imperialism.[15]

Thus, in the sixth epoch, economic, political, and military elites have further consolidated their power, and this has been eased by the demographic and economic shifts, jurisdictional fragmentation, misguided policies by organized labor, and by labor segmentation, which fragments not only the work process, but the power of the working

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[14] Edwin Fenton, *Immigrants and Unions, A Case Study: Italians and American Labor, 1870-1920* (Diss. Harvard, 1957; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1975), 496.

[15] Scipes, "Labor Imperialism Redux?" Scipes points to allegations that the AFL-CIO played a behind-the-scenes role in the Venezuelan coup of April 2002 through its American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS).

class, as well.[16] These factors, together, have worked to further the dismantling of the institutional foundations of democracy. However, though in this recent formation the structure of power favors elite interests, history has shown us that great social movements can arrive unexpectedly and serve the interests of justice. Each epoch is somewhat unique, i.e., there is no inevitability or pre-determined outcome. The fourth epoch saw the rise of workers' movements during the 1930s, despite the deprivation; and the fifth epoch saw the rise of the social protest and anti-war movements of the 1960s, despite the affluence. This chapter suggests that the political and social consciousness that leads to resistance to elite power is not simply the result of a mimetic reproduction of the structures of society. It is human agency that shapes these structures, mediated through a dialectical social process that surfaces at the moment of synthesis like lava bursting through the fissures of contradiction and reshaping the terrain. As the shape of the capitalist system has changed, so have the aims of elites, and therefore, so must our understanding of necessity and of the limits of freedom. And with these changes, as in every other epoch, the conflict over higher education has changed as well. At the center of these changing dynamics within higher education is the transformation of academic labor. Next, we will examine the conflicts over higher education during the sixth epoch, followed by a more detailed look at academic labor.

[16] See David M. Gordon, Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich, *Segmented work, divided workers, The historical transformation of labor in the United States* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982). It is a comprehensive and seminal work on the history and theory of labor segmentation.

The Corporate University

Higher education has gone through some sweeping transformations during the sixth epoch. It is frequently described as having been transformed into a "corporate" university, with numerous books being published on the topic with titles including such words and phrases as "the bottom line," "marketplace," "commercialism," "entrepreneurial," "corporate culture," "academic capitalism," "knowledge factory," "universities for sale," and, my personal favorite, "university, inc."[17] All of these titles refer to the influence that the corporate-capitalist incursion has had on higher education. The university system in the age of rising global corporate power has developed in numerous ways. In part, it is shaped by the structure of power in society. As noted above, the structure of power during the sixth epoch was characterized by the decline of the power of organized labor, accompanied by the unraveling of the New Deal order and the rise in the power of corporate business elites. This transformation has manifested itself at the national, state, and local levels of government, and the affect that it has had on the university system has been manifested primarily through shifts in funding. In some measure, this means that a business logic, which has been present in the university since its creation in the third epoch (as famously noted by Veblen), has grown and expanded its reach so as to threaten the gains that had been made by the faculty during

[17] Jennifer Washburn, *University, Inc., The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Eric Gould, *The University in a Corporate Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); David L. Kirp, *Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line, The Marketing of Higher Education* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003); Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace, The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Stanley Aronowitz, *The Knowledge Factory, Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Learning* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000); James L. Turk, ed., *The Corporate Campus, Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 2000); Neil Tudiver, *Universities for Sale, Resisting Corporate Control over Canadian Higher Education* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Publishers, 1999); Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie,

the fifth epoch.[18] As noted, multinational capital has gained power through destruction of the fifth epoch "social contract" between global elites and the rest of us. Consequently, the sixth epoch has resulted in dreadful consequences for higher education:

> [T]he concentration of university resources on areas where wealth is created, the marginalization of the liberal arts and all areas of research not conducive to the creation of wealth, increasing corporate funding and control over academic research, new ideas and technologies developed at public cost become the entitlement of the corporate sector, the privatization and outsourcing of university functions and jobs from food service to bookstores to instruction, more authoritarian governance practices, rising tuition and debt load for students, stagnant wages for faculty and poverty wages with low or no benefits for university workers.[19]

Higher education becomes more bluntly instrumental focusing on the lofty ends of serving industry and training employees for jobs. The anti-democratic nature of these trends in the university filters down into the sinews and joints of the educational process.

The outcome of these thrusts is a university system that has heretofore been, by most accounts, democratic, open, and accessible, no doubt to a degree never before seen in human history, and which, in the sixth epoch, on closer observation, has developed more sharply defined tiers which give weight to the argument that some aspects of the system of higher education serve to reinforce social inequality while simultaneously serving as a buffer to emerging class conflict. The extensive use of contingent academic labor, as described below, legitimates this system by weakening the strength of collective faculty power, and eases the way for a management-led corporatized university. And yet,

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Academic Capitalism, Politics, Policies, and the Entrepreneurial University (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

[18] See Jencks and Riesman, *The Academic Revolution* (1969).

[19] Richard Moser, "The New Academic Labor System, Corporatization and the Renewal of Academic Citizenship," American Association of University Professors, June 12, 2001. http://www.aaup.org/Issues/part-time/cewmose.htm

despite these tendencies, or perhaps because of the tensions that they engender, the university remains an important site of social class conflict. That is to say, we may be socialized by the institutions in which we live and work, but, in turn, we influence and shape those institutions as well. This is perhaps nowhere more true than in the university because education, as opposed to training, requires critical thinking, and so creates openings for resistance. For this reason, universities worldwide often serve as incubators of protest and as havens for dissent that spontaneously emerges, almost organically, and sometimes when it is least expected. In the 1980s, college campuses became bases of support for those protesting United States policies in Central America, and college students also became active in the movement to disinvest in the South African apartheid regime. In the 1990s, college students placed the anti-sweatshop crusade on the map and raised public awareness regarding these exploitive practices. The struggles continue to simmer around such hot-button issues as diversity on campus, free speech, racism, globalization, and war. Nonetheless, the corporate ascendancy in the sixth epoch has been reproduced in the system of higher education, and it is this tendency that currently dominates the institutional agenda. This agenda is not an abstraction, but it is put forth by real people making seemingly rational, non-political, decisions.

The entire administrative apparatus of the university is enlisted in this remaking of the higher education system. It is rationalized through the financial needs of the university (which are real) and actualized largely through budgetary mechanisms. It is implemented through the power of Boards of Trustees, Chancellors, and college Presidents, sometimes with the cooperation of department chairs, as well as some individual members of the faculty. Through these processes, a shadow is cast over

curriculum, over research, and over the very mission of the university itself. It is an old story, as we have seen throughout the narrative developed in this chapter, and a central conflict of that story revolves around the labor force, thus begging the question: Are faculty mere employees or are they professionals and scholars who collectively guide the academic direction of the university? This raises another important question: Are our students to be valued as charges of the university who are learning how to reach their full potential by being professionally guided to engage in free and critical inquiry, or are they just consumers, clients, and an investment in potential future productive forces? A better understanding of these questions requires further inquiry into the current state of higher education in America.

Following the successful struggles of the 1960s that led to open admissions and expanded enrollments, the economic restructuring of the 1970s led to the transformation of federal funding for university research. Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie argue that the emergence of global financial markets in the 1970s made possible "the financing of ever larger debts in western industrialized countries," which led to funding problems for higher education.[20]

> These moneys were used primarily for entitlement programs…, for debt service, and in the United States, for military expansion. As borrowing increased, federal shares of funding for postsecondary education programs, particularly research and development, decreased….
> As the share of federal funds for higher education decreased, the states picked up some of the burden, but not all, because the states, too, were spending the bulk of their moneys on entitlement or mandated programs such as health care and prisons.[21]

[20] Slaughter and Leslie, *Academic Capitalism*, 7.

[21] Ibid., 7-8.

The colleges and universities – at all levels – were struggling to find ways to shore up their funding as federal and state funds were not meeting the need. The promise of higher education had become so great and the funding crisis so real, that the universities and colleges had to look for alternative ways to make ends meet. The various levels of the higher education system dealt with it differently as they had different means at their disposal. At the lower and middle tiers, historically cost-free public institutions such as CUNY implemented tuition, increased class-size, hired increasing proportions of contingent academic workers at low pay, and allowed for their contingent of full-time faculty to shrink by attrition. At the upper tier universities, they implemented some of these measures as well, though not as severely because they had the greater potential to pursue a market-based remedy to their dilemma. At the extremes of the hierarchy, the community colleges relied increasingly upon part-time faculty as the elite four-year colleges institutionalized further their reliance on graduate teaching assistants. The significance of these distinctions will become clear later in this chapter.

The call for university-business research partnerships began to be heard as early as the 1970s. Jennifer Washburn explains:

> The old Cold War view that U.S. scientific and technological supremacy depended on a strong federal commitment to basic science and advanced education gradually lost its vitality. By the mid-1970s, a new preoccupation with economic competitiveness began to catch hold. On March 16, 1972, President Richard M. Nixon delivered a speech to Congress calling on the National Science Foundation and other federal agencies to foster industrial innovation by "stimulating non-Federal investment in research and development" and "improving the *application* of research and development results" (emphasis added). A year later, the NSF set up a series of experimental programs designed to foster university-industry research partnerships.[22]

[22] Washburn, 57.

The change of emphasis within the elite research universities from mostly public funding to a significant proportion of private funding, and from basic research to applied research, presented industry with the promise of a more immediate return on their investment in the university. These trends were made official with the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980.[23] This legislation, signed by President Carter, widely opened the door for university-business partnerships. That is, it allowed universities to patent and license the discoveries that were the outcome of federally-funded research, leading to the growth and expansion of deals with their new corporate-partner sponsors. Initially passed to promote U.S. industrial competitiveness, the Act "instantly altered the mechanisms by which billions of dollars in taxpayer-financed research would be delivered to the public."[24] The changes in the nature of university funding, along with advances in biotechnology (most significantly in genetic engineering), and the new development of a knowledge-driven economy "had converged to align the interests of universities and industry as never before."[25] The free-flow of scientific information would now be weighed against the interests of proprietary rights and secrecy, with the scale set to measure private profits as well as the public good. University research, most notably in biomedicine, pharmacology, and biotechnology, would become strongly influenced by their corporate benefactors.[26] Consistent with the interest of big business in funding research projects that would promise a quick return, applied research that had immediate prospects for

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[23] Officially called the University Small Business Patent Procedures Act; See Washburn, 57-72; Slaughter and Leslie, 44-48.

[24] Washburn, 60.

[25] Ibid., 59.

[26] Ibid., xviii.

profit became favored over longer-term basic research (or pure research) which makes no such immediate promise and which traditionally had provided the university professor with a wider latitude to independently determine the object, time-frame, and course of his or her investigation. The introduction of the profit-motive radically transformed the culture of the big research universities.[27] However, the cultural transformation was not simply imposed from above.

Similar to Lowen's thesis, noted above, which argues that the elite research universities, such as Stanford, played a crucial role in establishing the military-industrial-academic complex in the 1930s and 1940s with the aim of drawing military dollars to the university,[28] Washburn shows how the elite research universities in the 1970s and 1980s had actively sought out the relationship with the corporate sector to attract needed funding for the life sciences. She identifies a small group, the Society of University Patent Administrators, and a government bureaucrat from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Norman Latker, who, working closely together, navigated the Bayh-Dole Act through Congress.[29] Latker brought the political experience and knowledge, and the university lobbyists brought the credibility and the respectability that would garner the support of Congress. In the years that followed, the relationships between industry and the elite research universities became further intertwined.[30]

Federal funding for university research actually surged from 1981 to 1986 with an increase of 61percent. Many in the university, however, did not notice this because much

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[27] Washburn, passim.

[28] Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University*.

[29] Washburn, 64-69.

[30] Slaughter, 44-48.

of the funding was concentrated on large projects that were "critical to industrial and military competitiveness" (e.g., President Reagan's "star wars" program).[31] Washburn provides a clear overview of the shifts in funding:

> Although the federal government still supplies the majority of the funding for academic research (roughly $21 billion in 2003), the government's share of this support has fallen from a high of 73.5 percent in 1966 to below 60 percent today, even as the cost of doing research has risen sharply…. Federal support for the life sciences remains strong; it has doubled during the twenty-year period from 1978 to 1998 and then doubled again over the next five years from 1998 to 2003, rising to 70 percent of the total federal budget for academic research. However, over the same five-year period, every other science discipline, including the social sciences, saw its share of federal support shrink (the physical sciences and engineering taking the deepest cuts).[32]

Thus, the dollar amount of federal support for academic research has continued to grow, but the proportion of public versus private funding has changed and the bulk of the federal support for academic research – 70 percent – has gone to the life sciences. During the 1990s, as the share of federal support for social sciences and physical sciences decreased, the proportion of states' budgets going to fund *general* higher education had also declined.[33] State and local government's investment in large-scale research and development at universities rose from $1.6 billion in 1995 to $2.4 billion by 2002.[34] Thus, while state and local government's were expressing their fondness for research and development, university leaders found themselves seeking out revenues from non-state

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[31] David Sanger, "Research Sponsorship Soaring at Universities," *The New York Times*, Section B, 8, September 8, 1986.

[32] Washburn, 8. She cites several National Science Foundation publications: NSF 04-332; NSB 04-1; NSB 04-1A; NSB-02-01; see Washburn notes No. 17 and 18, p. 251, for further details.

[33] Washburn, 180; Also see Patricia J. Gumport, "Universities and Knowledge: Restructuring the City of Intellect," in *The Future of the City of Intellect*, ed. by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 49.

[34] Washburn, 180, citing National Science Foundation, NSF 04-330 and NSF 99-348.

sources such as tuition increases and alumni donations, as well as implementing cost-saving measures such as the consolidation of programs, the hiring of more low-cost part-time faculty, increasing class size, and providing incentives for early retirement for full-time faculty.[35]

In this way, political decisions by policymakers have dramatically reshaped the university, and this has been accomplished in a seemingly non-political manner, i.e., through budgetary mechanisms that are often treated as if they are part of the natural social order. Politics itself is privatized in that the genuine public debate over the education budget takes place not at the level where it could make a difference, but at the level where much of the public is unable to have much input or effect.

Some scholars of higher education have argued that it is not yet clear if these shifts in the relationship between academic research and corporate interests have had a negative effect on the university,[36] while other scholars accept the new regime as a foregone conclusion and appeal to their readers to find ways to protect some semblance of a humanistic liberal arts curriculum.[37] Among the latter, Derek Bok, former President of Harvard University (among his many titles), clearly explains the implications that these changes in higher education have for the university, and though he is probably the best among those whose writing, in the end, amounts to moral and/or pragmatic appeals

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[35] See Gumport, 49.

[36] See Walter W. Powell and Jason Owen-Smith, "The New World of Knowledge Production in the Life Sciences," in *The Future of the City of Intellect*, edited by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 125. They argue that "we do not hold that these alternatives are necessarily pernicious," but that they could be dangerous and have "unintended consequences."

[37] Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace, The Commercialization of Higher Education*. For accounts similar to Bok's, in this regard, see Eric Gould, *The University in a Corporate Culture*; Also see David L. Kirp, *Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line*.

on behalf of civic-mindedness, he too falls short in that his analysis does not go beyond the campus gates.[38] That is to say, he accepts the terms of corporate capitalism early on and dispenses with the notion that the issue can be discussed intelligently outside of a position which accepts these terms as unmovable reality. Such a critique of the university which explicitly avoids a serious critique of the capitalist social and political order in which it exists is facile and shallow.[39] This dissertation has argued that the problem cannot be understood independently of larger economic, social and political considerations. None of the works cited in this paragraph, for instance, give any serious consideration to the possibility that academic labor unions might play a role in the process. Acknowledging that we live in a corporate capitalist society, and that we probably will for a long time is one thing; subsequently failing to acknowledge the real consequences of such a state of affairs in one's evaluation of the contemporary university is an avoidance of the root causes of the problems faced by the university and by society. If one is seeking to propose a strategy or course, under the given conditions, for the university in isolation, then these approaches do a fine job. However, given the times in which we live, a deeper analysis is required – one which situates the university and all of its participants at the fulcrum of political and social life.

Washburn's powerful indictment of the corporate university is unsurpassed as an unapologetic critique. She argues persuasively that the changes in the relationship between industry and higher education have had such a corrupting influence on university

[38] Bok, see 15-17.

[39] In this regard, Gould, p. xiv, and Kirp, p. 6-7, share Bok's position.

research that it has tainted it to the core.[40] The faculty doing research in the life sciences, she argues, have become the "hired hands" of the drug companies.[41] She also points to numerous examples of conflict of interest regarding drug studies performed by academic researchers, with "a financial interest in the drug or therapy they would like to review."[42] She points to conflicts over studies where the authors, some from prestigious universities, "did not have access to the complete trial data," thus limiting their ability to make objective evaluations.[43] Conlicts over intellectual property rights have created a culture of secrecy rather than one of shared purpose.

Though Washburn does an excellent job of muckraking, when it comes to presenting an alternative vision of the university, her outlook goes only slightly beyond the campus gates. She correctly argues that the expansion of the uses of the university is the core of the problematic in that it constructs not a university, per se, but a multiversity, serving industry and a multitude of other groups in society, as per the vision of Clark Kerr. She, thus, views the problem today as being rooted in the decentralization of what was once a "close knit community of scholars and students" in the 1970s. American higher education has always been decentralized relative to its European counterparts, but the onset of the multiversity decentralized and functionalized the purpose of the American institution even further. As the argument goes, this decentralization created a culture which gravitated towards personal gain as opposed to core teaching and

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[40] Washburn, 116.

[41] Ibid., 84.

[42] Ibid., 109.

[43] Ibid.

independent research. She then argues, as follows, that those on the left, too, pursued "their own ideological and social agendas."[44]

> Many reformers of the 1970s sought to turn the university into an agent of social change to alleviate poverty in local communities, end racism, and accomplish other political and social objectives. In this regard, their mission was not unlike that of other external constituencies that were pulling the institution away from its core research and teaching functions to perform a public service.[45]

The difference, however, between those who took part in the "uses of the university" for private profits, or even for interests that served imperialism (such as research sponsored by the defense department), and those that sought to alleviate poverty and end racism is the difference between corporate capitalist functionalism and the pursuit of the common good through the promotion of egalitarian democracy, e.g., through such means as affirmative action and open admissions.

While it is true enough that it was the idea of the multiversity that created new openings for the corporate university which, in turn, made it difficult to protect the "university's autonomy," Washburn's alternative vaguely calls for a defense of "the old-fashioned concept of pursuing knowledge for knowledge's sake."[46] To be sure, her practical plan for achieving this aim is a useful one that would go far towards the reform of university-industry relations. It includes a proposal for a new federal agency to monitor clinical drug trials, an amendment to the Bayh-Dole Act that minimizes the rush to short-term profits, new federal regulations that apply strict conflict of interest guidelines, and third-party licensing bodies that "remove the profit motive" for the

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[44] Washburn, 47.

[45] Ibid., 47-48.

university and "facilitate the commercialization of federally sponsored research *while preserving academic autonomy*."[47] All of this is meant to achieve the goal of preserving "a public research sphere that is distinct from that of industry."[48] The fulfillment of these proposals would be a welcome change to the current system, but, nonetheless, Washburn underestimates the powerful interests that have shaped the contemporary university. These interests cannot simply be extracted by decree leaving the idyllic, supposedly value-free, ivory tower in its place. They are embedded much more deeply within every fiber of our culture.

Washburn's nostalgia for a return to the mythical golden age is reminiscent of Robert M. Hutchins critique of higher education during the fourth epoch (discussed above, 82-84). Like Hutchins, Washburn is critical of the fragmentation and differentiation of the university. The challenges to the traditional canon in each epoch are, of course, different in nature and in degree. Hutchins was critical of empiricism and of the specialization of disciplines within the university, whereas Washburn is critical of the multiversity in that it led to the influence that corporate money has on the integrity of academia and altered the processes of teaching and research. Dewey's response to Hutchins still has resonance for us today and bears repeating: He argued that "*educational reconstruction cannot be accomplished without a social reconstruction in which higher education has a part to play*" (emphasis added; see above, p. 84). There is no need for the higher learning to be "aloof" from contemporary social life. The ivory tower is not worth reclaiming if it means the cloistering of the virtuous learning from

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[46] Washburn, 48; For another expression of this concept see Stanley Fish, "Why We Built the Ivory Tower," *The New York Times*, May 21, 2004.

[47] Ibid., 228-229.

everyday life. A democratic university is not value-free, but, rather, it openly embraces democratic values, which include, in addition to fairness, tolerance, free inquiry and academic freedom, values such as openness to all, egalitarianism, and even social justice. Serving as a counter to these values is the deeply ingrained ideology of capitalism, which now confronts the tradition of democracy as an adversary, and the university has become, once again, an important battleground.

Having established throughout this narrative that the university has not been insulated from the conflicts surrounding the capitalist tradition, nevertheless, in some ways the ivory tower had been the exception to the rule. The longstanding practice of shared scientific discovery has been widely hailed as a boon to human advancement. The diminishment of these practices and their replacement by capitalistic competition within the field of academic scientific research has dubious consequences. We must develop a better vision for the boundaries of this growing conflict between capitalism and democracy, and a better understanding of the role that science, the university, and academic labor play in that conflict.

The star of science and the star of corporate capitalism have continued to rise together, as they have done since the third epoch. However, in this sixth epoch the relationship has become increasingly codependent. The instrumental appropriation of science to serve power is not always and immediately apparent, but it is often an insidiously powerful tool wielded by the few to subjugate the many. Though some scientists may imagine much of scientific research to be value-free, the social paradigm in which science operates is not. It is the scientists themselves, on behalf of their benefactors, who have created such things as laser-guided weapons, nuclear bombs, and

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[48] Washburn, 237.

genetically modified terminator seeds that do not regenerate themselves, thus allowing for a vital market to be cornered, though not without resistance.[49] The vaccines, the cures, and the hope of science are wondrous, but they do not preclude a critical debate of its nefarious outcomes and the uses to which they are put – a great many scientists would welcome that debate and some are already engaged in it.[50]

The research of corporate science is developed largely for profit, not for sustainability. This is part of the problem and it is this dynamic that has been reproduced, in part, in the university system, primarily due to the need for funding. Science and its methods have been a driving force in the university for more than a century. However, in the sixth epoch the quest for profits has had a more direct influence on academic research. As the not-so-invisible hand of the market reaches all over the globe, corporate capital has counted on science – the life sciences in particular – to be its servant.

Neoliberal corporate globalization is not a natural expansion of economic processes, but a coordinated effort to exert power and to gain wealth. Marx, in his own day and age, understood the process at its root:

> The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.[51]

Global capitalist restructuring has led to the reshaping of the entire world, including its major institutions, as elite corporations search for profits. Though the knowledge

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[49] Shiva, *Stolen Harvest*, 79-94; see Mario Osava, "Terminator Seeds Suffer Defeat at Global Biodiversity Conference," *Inter Press Service*, March 25, 2006, found at www.commondreams.org.

[50] See the case of NASA scientist James E. Hansen, whom the government tried to keep from publicly discussing global warming, as reported by Andrew C. Revkin, "Climate Expert Says NASA Tried to Silence Him," *The New York Times*, January 29, 2006.

[51] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Editon, ed. Robert C. Tucker, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1978), 476.

economy has supplanted traditional industrial production as the gears and wheels of capitalism, the class dynamics as well as the role of profit remain roughly the same. Within higher education, which might be considered as the ball bearings of the machine, there is ample direct evidence of this shift, as shown in the above account of the upper-tier research universities, and evidence can also be found, less obviously, in the lower and middle-tier campuses where budgetary exigencies have combined with a corporate capitalist cultural paradigm and led to the implementation of cost-cutting measures and privatization. In both cases, the university system is shaped in ways that do not promote egalitarianism.

The need for funding on the part of the research university has transformed it into the handmaiden of corporate capital. One might argue that this process represents the alienation of those scholars and students who participate in this scheme and, at the same moment, that it represents the commodification of knowledge. The implication of these relationships is that "scientific knowledge has become private property and the research university is sustained by its ability to sell its wares to the highest bidder, in which case it becomes itself a corporate entity."[52] Thus, through the logic of capital, the corporate paradigm has been reproduced within the university system. As Marx points out, the money system transforms the qualities and characteristics of all that it touches.[53] Everything is turned into a commodity in this system of exchange where money serves as

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[52] Stanley Aronowitz, "Subaltern in Paradise," in *The Subaltern Speak: Curriculum, Power, and Educational Struggles*, ed. Michael W. Apple and Kristen L. Buras (Routledge, 2005).

[53] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Edition, ed. Robert C. Tucker, "The Power of Money in Bourgeois Society," in *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, 101-105.

the universal medium of exchange that confounds and compounds "all natural and human qualities."[54]

The description of education as being "commodified" is not merely an abstraction. International trade agreements such as NAFTA and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) have included education "services" within their purview. [55] In these agreements, services are defined as a commodity, i.e., something to be bought and sold and subject to trade rules. As spelled out by Jim Grieshaber-Otto and Matt Sanger – a duo from Canada who have studied the issue in some detail – the GATS treats education "as just another service sector potentially available for commercial exploitation," as opposed to treating it as a "crucial investment in the social and economic health of any democracy."[56] The purpose of these trade agreements is to eliminate "barriers" to international trade and to promote the free flow of goods and services. One of the ways that they attempt to accomplish this is to see that nations that are party to it do not engage in practices that subsidize or favor the service providers of their own nation against others, i.e., that they do not "discriminate" against foreign

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[54] *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 105.

[55] Clyde W. Barrow, Sylvie Didou-Aupetit, and John Mallea, editors, *Globalisation, Trade Liberalisation, and Higher Education in North America, The Emergence of a New Market under NAFTA?* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003): This work provides a clear and concise account of the institutional development of globalization and how educational institutions in the United States, Canada, and Mexico are tied into these processes (See esp. pp. 1-21); They identify student mobility across borders and the fees they pay in host countries as the primary *current* source of trade in higher education, with international marketing of curricula, textbooks, and academic programmes, along with the establishment of branch campuses in foreign countries as being growing trends (See pp. 9-10). Additionally, education services have been "branching out into new institutions such as for-profit education and training facilities, and corporate-sponsored universities," while new methods of delivery (distance learning) and new activities (educational exchange services and educational testing services) have also been growing (See pp. 9-10).

[56] Jim Grieshaber-Otto and Matt Sanger, *Perilous Lessons: The Impact of the WTO Services Agreement (GATS) on Canada's Public Education System* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2002), 77.

corporations that provide such services. Does this "discrimination" include state support for the public sector?

GATS has the potential to seriously undermine the democratic and egalitarian benefits of publicly-funded education by subjecting some or all of the process to the authority of the WTO. Some observers believe that it could "entail an inexorable ratcheting-down of public policy options."[57] The language of the GATS is "cleverly crafted" and it has left it open as to whether public services are included.[58]

> GATS proponents frequently claim that the GATS does not force member countries to commercialize services. For example, the WTO Secretariat has stated that "[t]here is no obligation on any WTO Member to allow foreign supply of any particular service – nor even to guarantee domestic competition."[59]

However, though it is true that GATS "does not *force* governments to privatize public services," it is also clear that "by mandating repeated rounds of re-negotiations to expand the reach of the treaty, the GATS exerts constant, unrelenting pressure to open services to foreign commercial providers."[60] Thus, every service that is included in the Agreement is thereby, "in principle, perpetually on the negotiating table."[61] According to Glenn Rikowski, the GATS makes clear that the process of trade liberalization is "progressive," that is to say, it will be "deepened and strengthened over time" in such a way that

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[57] Greishaber-Otto and Sanger, 46.

[58] Glenn Rikowski, "Schools and the GATS Enigma," in *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, March 2003. http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=8

[59] Grieshaber-Otto and Sanger, 91; embedded quotation from: *GATS – Fact and Fiction* (WTO Secretariat, 2001), 7 (see http://www.wto.org).

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

"'public' services will progressively be turned into internationally tradable commodities."[62]

Treating educational "services" as a commodity has implications for curriculum and pedagogy. It inherently promotes a "monoculture" in education, encouraging a singularity of purpose, which favors high stakes testing and "accountability," as opposed to a multiplicity of purpose and a flexibility which allows for individual student needs to be met as they develop. This "accountability" gives the public the impression that the government is doing something to improve education, even while it is not spending significantly more on teachers and students, at least not towards the proper ends. Instead, it imposes a model of education that resembles a process of training or a simplistic imparting of information, also known as the bank-deposit method, i.e., the teacher-authority simply fills the student up, without the kind of dynamic experiential process of democratic development that Dewey understood would make for true growth and learning. The "objective" test scores measure mostly "inherited cultural capital" and thereby reproduce class stratification.[63] The scripted lessons and canned curriculum serve as labor-saving devices that promote deprofessionalization of the teaching work force as it takes curriculum control out of the hands of those professionals.[64] This means that the principles of corporate capitalism are extended to the institution which many would argue is most responsible for some of the most important democratizing processes

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[62] Rikowski, "Schools and the GATS Enigma." March 2003.

[63] Richard Brosio, "High-Stakes Tests: Reasons to Strive for Better Marx," *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, Volume 1, No. 2 (October 2003); http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=17.

[64] Patricia H. Hinchey and Karen Cadiero-Kaplan, "The Future of Teacher Education and Teaching: Another Piece of the Privatization Puzzle," *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, Volume 3, No. 2 (October 2005); http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=articles&articlesID=48.

of society. Of course, a teacher in the classroom can make a positive difference within the face-to-face interactions she has with her students, but the institutional forces can be overwhelming. Similar to what was found in the previous epochs discussed above, the process is one that turns education toward an instrumentalized, Taylorized, and rationalized mode that limits the possibility and potential of alternative processes where education could be cultivated as a means of social development and growth.

Also similar to the previous epochs, in order for elite interests to be realized, they must be supported by a widely-held set of beliefs. That is to say, just as Social Darwinism emerged as a supporting justification for the inequality of a previous epoch, corporate neoliberalism, too, requires an ideology that justifies its class character.[65] The overarching ideology of neoliberal trade policy is one which puts forth privatization as a cure-all for everything, including that which ails our schools and public institutions. Privatization implies cuts to public sector spending. However, hidden behind that construction is an ideology with a class interest of its own, as spelled out by Tabb:

> The drive for "market solutions" is not the result of some force of nature, as its proponents pretend. It is a policy decision to abandon the needs of the poor and leave them to shift for themselves. It is the same logic that forces the poorest countries of the world into the IMF's structural adjustment programs, with their drastic cuts in public services.[66]

Public sector spending is opposed by corporate elite interests, in part, because it increases the need for corporate taxes, but also because a highly developed public sector competes with private enterprise. Consequently, the ideology of privatization has been touted

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[65] See David Hursh and Camille Anne Marina, "Neoliberalism and schooling in the U.S., How state and federal government education policies perpetuate inequality," *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, Volume 1, No. 2 (October 2003); http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=12.

[66] William Tabb, "Essay: Globalization and Education as a Commodity," *Clarion*, Summer 2001; http://www.psc-cuny.org/jcglobalization.htm.

ubiquitously as a panacea for all that ails our economy. However, corporate elite interests cannot completely instrumentalize higher education because it depends upon it to develop and maintain a highly trained work force that can "repeatedly discover the right fit between particular technologies or services, specialized markets, and individual clients."[67] This requires some critical thinking. And, no less important, higher education is depended upon to maintain the legitimacy of elite power, i.e., the appearance of government concern for "excellence" in education, and the continued public belief that there exists fair access and opportunity to a democratically-based education, go a long way toward legitimation of the prevailing powers.[68]

The contradiction between elite need for effective higher education and elite interest in promoting its commodified form is played out in the shape of the contemporary university system and its work force. It is through the functionalistic and rationalistic tiering of the university/multiversity and the increasingly complex stratification of the faculty, the students, and the curriculum that this conflict of interest is resolved by the forces and logic of capital. Of course, this is not done without contradictions, nor without resistance, but to better understand the contemporary dynamics as they are represented in higher education, we turn now to the shape of the university system in this sixth epoch. Following that, we will take a brief look at some of the resistances which have formed within the contingent academic labor community.

The tiering of the different colleges within the university system is not unlike the transformation of the cities during this sixth epoch in that the capitalist movers and

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[67] Barrow, et al, *Globalisation, Trade Liberalisation, and Higher Education in North America*, 4.

[68] See Hursh and Marina, "Neoliberalism and schooling in the U.S., How state and federal government education policies perpetuate inequality."

shakers of both institutions seek to find a niche for their institution at a particular level in the new pecking order. The result is that we get yet another tale of two cities, core and periphery; rather than an open university, we have the functionalistic multiversity; rather than a community of scholars, we have segmentation and inequality. In this model of both the city and the university, the driving force is a capitalistic corporate model which shapes the institution through the power of the perceived needs that are dictated by the profit motive and not by such values as democracy, free inquiry, and sustainability. Such market-imposed functionalist differentiation is not simply about efficiency and opportunity – it is almost always about class division and stratification as a means to centralize control over decision-making. Of course, the motives and understanding of individuals who promote this scheme (or benefit from it) may vary greatly, but, taken as a whole, the shape and aim of the process can be understood in abstraction.

The Carnegie classification system of 1973 categorized the various functions of higher education as follows: research, served through the research universities; professional training, served through the doctorate-granting institutions; "occupational training of a polytechnic nature," served through the comprehensive colleges; and universal access, served through the community colleges.[69] Within these functional categories, specific tiers were identified as follows:

> …Research Universities (I and II), Doctorate-Granting Institutions (I and II), Comprehensive Universities and Colleges (I and II), Liberal Arts Colleges (I and II), Two-Year Colleges and Institutes, and Professional

[69] Clark Kerr, "Shock Wave II: An Introduction to the Twenty-First Century," in *The Future of the City of Intellect, The Changing American University*, edited by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 9. Kerr cites: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, *A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education* (Berkeley: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973).

> Schools and Other Specialized Institutions (such as seminaries, free-standing law schools, and business colleges).[70]

Clark Kerr views the classification of these institutions as moving towards even sharper forms of segmentation that will be driven by the educational technology revolution, by pressure from the states for changes in school of education policies, and by developments in biology.[71] Additionally, he predicts the expansion of those institutions that are "devoted to raising and expanding labor force skills."[72] However, he expects stability in the upper-tier liberal arts colleges that serve a "special group of youth" who seek a well-rounded (and well-connected) education in this "increasingly affluent society."[73] However, as noted above, Kerr's history of the future is functionalistic to the core, and it has no room for questions concerning inequality and social class conflicts.

This functional segmentation of higher education institutions has had an affect on faculty power. Richard Chait, in "The 'Academic Revolution' Revisited," wisely cautions that the "vast and varied enterprise" of higher education is not easily subject to "unchallenged generalizations," however, for our purposes, it is worth noting that he also argues that it has become a well-established proposition that "today, different tiers of the academy displayed different degrees of faculty autonomy."[74] Similarly, Burton Clark writes that,

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[70] Clark Kerr, "Shock Wave II: An Introduction to the Twenty-First Century."

[71] Ibid., 8-9.

[72] Ibid., 10.

[73] Ibid., 9.

[74] Richard Chait, "The 'Academic Revolution' Revisited," in *The Future of the City of Intellect, The Changing American University*, edited by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 294-295.

> …at the top of the institutional hierarchy, faculty influence is well and strong. Many individuals have strong personal bargaining power; departments and professional schools are strong, semi-autonomous units; and all-campus faculty bodies have dominant influence in personnel and curricular decisions. University presidents speak lovingly of the faculty as the core of the institution and walk gently around entrenched faculty prerogatives. As we descend the hierarchy, however, faculty authority weakens and managerialism increases. Top-down command is noticeably stronger in the public comprehensive college…. The two-year colleges… are quite managerial. Faculty then feel powerless, even severely put upon.[75]

Chait concludes by agreeing with some of those, such as Cary Nelson,[76] who argue that the faculty have lost power since Jencks and Riesman's "academic revolution," however, Chait further argues that the influence of administrators and even lay boards has also been compromised due to the influence of "external constituencies," such as the external control of necessary resources, the broader external trend that privileges market conditions and imposes them upon the system of higher education, and the 'external' change in the curriculum desired by students, which he calls "customer expectations."[77] He adds, acknowledging pessimism, that if the board, administration, and faculty "do not coalesce, and maybe even if they do, the 'market revolution' will supplant the 'academic revolution.'"[78] This coalition seems an unlikely avenue of change, though that

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[75] Burton Clark, "Faculty: Differentiation and Dispersion," in *Higher Learning in America, 1980-2000*, edited by A. Levine (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 170; cited by Chait, 295.

[76] Cary Nelson, "The War Against the Faculty," in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 16, 1999, Section B, 4; cited by Chait, 315.

[77] Chait, 315. Steven Brint, in his essay for this volume titled "The Rise of the Practical Arts," identifies these changed expectations of students as consisting of a "utilitarian ethos." See p. 232. It seems to me that pragmatism has always been a thrust in American life, as evidenced by "democracy's colleges" described above. The problem, however, is not one of too much practicality, but it is one of too much corporate-style control and too little democracy.

[78] Ibid., 316.

unlikelihood does not preclude change coming about as a response to broader social movements, including movements in which students participate.[79]

A brief account of the changing shape of the disciplines themselves may further bring into focus our image of the contemporary university. Steven Brint provides the lens for this snapshot in his essay, "The Rise of the Practical Arts."[80] Liberal arts includes the traditional curriculum "housed in colleges of arts and sciences – physics, chemistry, history, English, political science, and others."[81] Practical arts are the occupational and professional programs such as engineering technology, computer science, nursing, education, business, public administration and other career oriented fields.[82] As throngs of students entered the university since the early 1970s, it has shifted to a more practical orientation, and this has been a decisive shift. That the liberal arts have been able to maintain a foothold is due to the existence of distribution requirements and to their respected intellectual status, i.e., "they provide superior opportunities for the development of the thinking abilities that mark a broadly capable, rather than simply a technically proficient mind."[83] However, that respected status does not translate into numbers. For example, business has been the fastest growing field now garnering one-fifth of all undergraduate degrees.[84] Remarkably, as the system of higher education was

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[79] On this point, see Sheila Slaughter, "The Political Economy of Curriculum-Making in American Universities," in *The Future of the City of Intellect, The Changing American University*, edited by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 260 – 289.

[80] Steven Brint, "The Rise of the Practical Arts," in *The Future of the City of Intellect, The Changing American University*, edited by Steven Brint (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002), 232.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 242.

[84] Ibid., 233.

growing dramatically, "*almost every field which constituted the old arts and sciences of the undergraduate college was in absolute decline* [emphasis original]."[85] Brint explains that this striking transformation in the system of higher education means that the "university's relative autonomy from the occupational class structure… has been substantially reduced over the last thirty years."[86] That is to say, the determination of what constitutes "culturally significant forms of knowledge," as opposed to that which is directly influenced by the vicissitudes of the market, is no longer the primary focus of the university, as a whole:

> Administrators, at least those outside the elite institutions, no longer assume the unquestioned centrality of scientific and humanistic culture, and the old triumvirate of the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities have all experienced a declining appeal.[87]

One might ask if there is anything intrinsically wrong with the "practical arts" taking its turn at the top? After all, Brint points out that these programs have "modeled themselves on the arts and sciences," and many of them have adopted some of the critical techniques of the liberal disciplines.[88] And then, anyway, there are always a few subversives, such as Craig, an itinerant adjunct-office colleague of mine, a political theorist who was given a class to teach in public administration (i.e., the practical arts) as his only choice. When I offered my condolences that it was not a political theory class, as he preferred, he shot back, "It is when I teach it!"[89] But there are distinctions to be made that have to do with

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[85] Brint, "The Rise of the Practical Arts," 235. Brint points out that in 2000-2001 more than 1.1 million students obtained bachelors' degrees, whereas in 1970-1971 about 840,000 achieved this goal.

[86] Ibid., 237.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid., 238.

[89] "Craig" is a pseudonym.

the greater emphasis on critical thinking skills learned in the liberal arts as opposed to the emphasis on a more technical proficiency learned in the practical arts – distinctions that are not necessarily in the nature of the separate arts, but are more a matter of traditions.

Recall Ralph Waldo Emerson's distinction between being a farmer and being Man on the farm, i.e., the delegated intellect, or a scholar in one's own right.[90] We can elaborate on that human distinction he identified by asking whether we are creating potential future workers or helping students to reach their potential? Are we promoting training or education? To what end? My personal experience in deciding about college and work helped me to frame this issue: I can vividly recall back in the mid-1970s when I told my Uncle Charlie, a taxi-driver, that I would be going to college, and he replied only half-jokingly, "If everyone goes to college, then who's going to pick up the garbage?" If he were alive today, I would answer him that there is a qualitative distinction between the garbage-man and the Man who picks up the garbage. The construction of the former is alienated and objectified, whereas the latter is human and free, even noble in the act of labor. In the former construction he is a faceless drone, a commodity, worth the price of his labor, nothing more – what the Beatles called a "nowhere" man; and in the latter, a Man, or a Woman, with a critical will of one's own, more fully developed as a free, authentic human being – a mensch. I am confident that Uncle Charlie would have understood this distinction, if given the opportunity. It is not so much the difference between manual (or technical) labor and intellectual labor that is the cause for concern, as Emerson made clear, but it is the nature of the relationship that a man or woman has to their work that matters.

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[90] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar"; see p. 63 above.

The aim of liberal arts, properly conceived, is to develop the person, not to train them to be a better worker. For those who see the rise of the practical arts over the liberal arts as being problematic, their concern is likely due to this question regarding the ends of education, i.e., that in the process, Emerson's distinctions between the mere worker and Man thinking will be lost, to the detriment of Man thinking. As noted above (p. 62), there is a distinct difference between the *education* of a people so as to reach their potential and to live as democratic citizens, and the functionalistic social engineering of them toward the ends of an instrumental division of labor under capitalism. Intellectual labor, in and of itself, may seem to be above all of this, but it too can come to resemble the alienated and the commodified, and this can be true in the humanities as well as in human resources.

Today, more people go to college than ever before, and this presents great potential for democracy and freedom. However, the fragmentation of the disciplines, and the functionalization and segmentation of knowledge, such as it exists, also bespeaks a tiered society and reinforces social class distinctions. Of course, the structures in which we live cannot by themselves repress our inner, most authentic self, but the ubiquitously increasing corporatization of these structures do limit the alternatives that are available, i.e., it limits the institutionalized means and possibilities to grow, learn, and develop freely. This becomes more evident when we look at the demographics of the university a bit more closely.

In further discussion of the question as to whether or not the arts and sciences have been dethroned, Brint suggests that it "depends on where one looks."[91] At the most

[91] Brint, "The Rise of the Practical Arts," 239.

elite and prestigious research universities the liberal arts model has remained strong, although at the second-tier research universities, especially the public land-grant institutions, the institutional décor tends to resemble the model of the multiversity more closely, i.e., though the liberal arts still have a place, the practical arts are strong also. However, at the comprehensive and doctoral granting universities there have been "impressive changes that favor the practical arts."[92] Certainly at the two-year colleges the focus is concentrated more on the practical arts.

The distribution of the liberal arts and the practical arts in the tiers of the university system roughly and unevenly correspond to the distribution of faculty autonomy and influence as described above by both Richard Chait and Burton Clark. Keeping in mind Chait's wise caution against over-generalizing about the varied and vast system of higher education, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that the upper tier, which favors the liberal arts and has the greatest degree of faculty autonomy and influence, and the lower tier, which favors the practical arts and has little faculty autonomy, as well as experiencing the "managed" university most "severely" (as phrased by Clark), along with the middle tiers having some variation of the two extremes, all together make for a corporate system of higher education in the United States that is designed to have the public relations face that is all things to all people, in their allotted spaces. For some, it is the face of the inspirational teacher who encourages students to think about the big questions in life and to aim high (perhaps the face of Mr. Chipping, from *Good-bye Mr.Chips*?); for others it is the opportunity to gain the credential that can help them to advance up the occupational ladder; for many more it is the chance to learn skills in a particular field, hopefully before it becomes obsolete; and for others, still, it is

[92] Brint, "The Rise of the Practical Arts," 239.

a ticket to a professional career, and so on. Underneath the façade, however, the structure more resembles Bentham's *Panopticon*.[93] How does this admittedly embroidered, but not completely unfounded depiction of the changing character of the university stay hidden from public view? This begs the question of how the part-time faculty, as well as the other categories of contingent academic labor, fit into the equation.

Nearly completely absent from *The Future of the City of Intellect*, edited by Brint, is a discussion and analysis of the elephant in the living room. The role of part-time faculty or of contingent academic labor, more generally, is for the most part, not discussed in anything more than a passing fashion in this entire collection, which focuses mainly on students and on curriculum. It is a glaring blind spot in an otherwise exceptional work. Randall Collins' work in the same volume, "Credential Inflation and the Future of Universities," is the only essay in this volume, other than Richard Chait's piece, that addresses the issue of contingent academic labor, though neither gives it more than just a brief and passing consideration. Collins asks if there will "be a revolt of the professorial proletariat?" His answer: "It seems likely that there will be little overt resistance as the disciplines become much more severely stratified."[94] It seems that the author has allowed himself to get locked into the very structures he is studying, leaving little room for optimism and no way out. Brint, Chait, and Collins, at least in their works discussed in this dissertation, all perform a great service in spelling out the trends in higher education and pointing, either implicitly or explicitly, to the inequality inherent in

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[93] See James Hilton's classic sentimental novel of an inspirational teacher, *Good-bye Mr. Chips* (1934); Bentham's *Panopticon* is discussed in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[94] Collins, "Credential Inflation and the Future of Universities," in *The Future of the City of Intellect*, 44-45.

the segmentation of higher education, however, even more so than Bowles and Gintis in *Schooling in Capitalist America*, none of them seem to have an eye for the place of resistance.

As far as being able to see the "invisible faculty," i.e., the contingent academic laborers, it is worth noting that in several places in his own essay for *The Future of the City of Intellect*, Brint cites Martin J. Finkelstein, Robert K. Seal, and Jack H. Schuster, *The New Academic Generation, A Profession in Transformation*.[95] In this formidable demographic analysis of academic labor the authors explicitly *exclude* part-time faculty and only study the "core" faculty. In a more recent demographic tome by Jack H. Schuster and Martin J. Finkelstein, *The American Faculty, The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers*, the use of part-time faculty has appeared on the radar, but, for the most part, only as an adjunct to the full-time faculty statistics.[96]

These approaches, and, it seems, most of the semi-functionalist analyses, either ignore the growing use of contingent academic labor altogether or do not see much hope for any kind of resolution to the issues and problems presented by it. Yet, this obvious reconfiguration of academic labor raises serious concerns about faculty prerogative, about justice for academic workers, regarding academic freedom, and, more broadly, about the changing shape of the university, which includes the expansion of the administrative apparatus. Moreover, it raises questions about power and control in higher education. The ways in which contingent academic labor fits into these concerns ought

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[95] Martin J. Finkelstein, Robert K. Seal, and Jack H. Schuster, *The New Academic Generation, A Profession in Transformation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[96] Jack H. Schuster and Martin J. Finkelstein, *The American Faculty, The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2006).

to be prominently considered in any book that talks about the future of the university or the changing nature of the professoriate. In placing these changes in a broader context, it is hoped that the framework presented here can provide a paradigm that better explains these shifts and points in a more hopeful direction.

In bringing up to date this extension of C. Wright Mills' approach, one might observe that the shifts in the structure of power from the fifth epoch to the sixth epoch created a dilemma for the interests of elites. That is to say, the expansion of the university during the fifth epoch, which served elite interests, and the concessions that were necessary to bring that about, led to new demands for democratic participation that elites had to deal with in the sixth epoch. How would it be possible for elites to appear to keep the social promises that were made in response to the movements for open admissions, which had been successfully fought for during the 1960s and early 1970s, while effectively keeping costs down, tamping down expectations, and, in the process, transforming the nature of the enterprise of higher education? The advent of the sixth epoch saw the rise in the use of contingent academic labor as one of the central means of addressing this dilemma, along with larger classes, increasing tuition, and efforts to use technology as a labor saving device.[97] These means were among the limited options available to the university managers during a time of fiscal crisis and declining state support for public higher education. From the perspective of the managers of the multiversity, the availability of a contingent work force also provided flexibility for a changing curriculum and fluctuating enrollments, i.e., just-in-time "production," but more

[97] The new on-line technologies present possibilities for expanding opportunities for education, but they also present new avenues for administrative control of the process, for private profit, and for new restrictions on intellectual freedom. See David F. Noble, *Digital Diploma Mills: The Automation of Higher Education* (Monthly Review Press, 2001).

insidiously it works against the control and influence of the university by faculty. With regards to the poor and the working class, these changes were a breaking of those earlier promises for greater freedom through education. One might view it as a promise of citizenship that was betrayed. As the sixth epoch advanced, the shift to a more corporatized university also led to the rise of high stakes testing, greater standardization, and an increasing reliance on seemingly objective measurable outcomes, reminding us of Taylor's "one best method," as well as of Veblen's image of a "house of correction."

As the university's identity became more and more intertwined with a corporate business paradigm, the contingent academic labor system has also come to serve as a legitimation mechanism for the broader social system due to the widely held belief in access to college as a means of social mobility. That is to say, in "keeping the old verities alive," as Alan Wolfe phrased it,[98] the sixth epoch has given rise to an open door to higher education; however, while, on the one hand, social mobility is seemingly extended, with the other hand, the system of higher education has been transformed in a way that has placed new fetters on the quest for social equality. I argue that the growing and extensive use of contingent academic labor is the keystone of this contradiction-laden restructuring, and this is not due to budgetary arithmetic (i.e., low-paid faculty save the university money), but it is because of two other important consequences of the contingent academic labor system. Firstly, the growth of contingent academic labor as a significant proportion of the instructional and research staff in institutions of higher education fragments the work force. Sometimes this has undermined efforts of university faculty to mobilize effectively in academic labor unions. But this need not be the case if

[98] See Chapter One, p. 109.

effective organizing strategies are employed. Effectively mobilized, academic labor unions are potentially the most formidable foes of the corporate university. Secondly, the contingent academic labor *system* provides a human face to the mechanistic, functionalistic, and corporate transformations of the American university system, thereby presenting the public with the *image* of a democratically expanding fully-stocked system of higher education, and, thus, placating egalitarian impulses, i.e., because the full-time/part-time distinction is lost on the general public. Together these two aspects place our just-in-time faculty at the center of the conflict, dialectically situated between the antipodes of democratic labor power and automaton conformity. Though in the corporate scheme these scholar-laborers may be mere "cogs in the classroom factory," the fact is that without the cogs, the wheel does not work.[99]

The Hired Learning in America

Who are these scholar-laborers? One of the earliest scholarly studies on part-time faculty appeared in the *The American Sociologist* in 1978, by economists Howard Tuckman, Jaime Caldwell, and William Vogler.[100] They described the formation of the faculty and the shifts that were taking place in the 1970s, and they classified the different types of part-time faculty based upon the AAUP national survey from Spring 1976.[101]

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[99] See Deborah M. Herman and Julie M. Schmid, editors, *Cogs in the Classroom Factory, The Changing Identity of Academic Labor* (Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2003). It is a collection of thoughtful essays that examine the conditions of contingent academic labor, and it also provides some interesting and useful case studies of labor organizing campaigns.

[100] Howard P. Tuckman, Jaime Caldwell, and William Vogler, "Part-Timers and the Academic Labor Market of the Eighties," *The American Sociologist*, Vol. 13 (November, 1978): 184-195.

[101] Ibid., 185-189; The authors derive their data from "The AAUP part-time study: An overview of the sample," *AAUP Bulletin*, December 1978.

The classifications of part-time faculty which they established show the percentage of part-time faculty for each category in relation to the total population of part-time faculty, as summarized in Table 1. The classifications which they have devised have become important as they, or some variation of them, have been part of the justice-for-adjuncts debate. That is to say, if the categories show a high percentage of part-timers to be retirees or maybe full-time teachers at other institutions (e.g., community colleges sometimes employ a percentage of moonlighting high school teachers), then it does not seem so unjust (or at least it seems less unjust) if they do not get benefits, job security, or a fair rate of pay because it is not the primary means of their livelihood nor are they seeking to establish a career in this position. On the other hand, if teaching part-time is

Table 1: Who are the Part-time Faculty? Tuckman et al's 1976 Taxonomy. [102]

Part-timer Category	Explanation	Percentage of Part-Timer Total
Semi-retired	(working part-time because semi-retired)	2.8
Students	(employed as part-timers rather than as graduate students)	21.2
Hopeful Full-timers	(those who could not find a full-time position)	16.6
Full-Mooners	(those who held a full-time job elsewhere)	27.6
Homeworkers	(working part-time to have time to care for a relative/child)	6.4
Part-Mooners	(those holding 2 or more part-time jobs)	13.6
Part-Unknowners	(unknown classification)	11.8
Total		100.0

performed by a large cadre of dedicated teachers who, if not for the relative dearth of full-time positions (despite the need), would, for the most part, be teaching full-time themselves, then the contingent academic labor system does not seem to be so just, after all. The numbers show a significant proportion of part-time faculty in both categories

[102] Tuckman, et al, 189-191. The table presented here is a brief summary derived from their analysis.

and some in-between, depending on how they are counted.[103] Thus, which category the part-time faculty member falls into is an important consideration, however, to repeat the argument presented here, of greater importance is the role of the contingent academic labor system in both undermining faculty labor power and in helping to sustain the legitimacy of the corporate university. Some further identification of these scholar-laborers and where they are located is necessary so as to clarify this point. The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has collected data through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), as well as through the comprehensive National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) conducted in 1988, 1993, 1999, and 2003. It amasses a mountain of data and has become the primary source of information about the teaching work force in higher education. NCES has also periodically conducted other less extensive studies of the faculty. These particular figures – i.e., faculty figures – do *not* include graduate teaching assistants despite the fact that about half of them have full responsibility for one or more courses.[104] Overall, according to NCES,[105] from 1970 to 2003 the national percentage of part-time faculty, as a proportion of the total population of full-time and part-time instructional faculty in Title IV degree-granting institutions, jumped from 22 percent to 46.2 percent. Perhaps most significantly was the dramatic shift that took place during the five-year

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[103] The counting of part-time faculty is not an easy task, even for experts such as those at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The numbers of part-time faculty fluctuate from semester to semester, institutions have an interest in undercounting them, and there are differences among demographers regarding which categories of contingent academic labor to include in the classification and which to exclude, as well as differences in how to construct the categories themselves.

[104] Ernst Benjamin, "Editor's Notes," *Exploring the Role of Contingent Instructional Staff in Under-graduate Learning*, edited by Ernst Benjamin (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Number 123, Fall 2003), 6.

period from 1972 to 1977, when the increase in the percentage of part-time faculty grew from 24 percent to 33.9 percent. In Table 2, below, these changes are shown for selected years. As shown, as of 2003, full-time faculty make up 53.8 percent of the teaching work force. However, this is true only if we consider full-time faculty and part-time faculty exclusively. When graduate teaching assistants are included, the numbers look even more interesting. As mentioned above, graduate assistants contribute "substantially" to undergraduate instruction.[106] Almost three-fourths of graduate assistantships awarded in the humanities and social sciences are for teaching.[107] According to Ernst Benjamin, when we include graduate student appointments in the distribution of faculty (using 1999 figures), this changes the overall percentages considerably. By employing this revision, full-time faculty make up 46.6 percent of the instructional staff, part-time faculty consists of 34.5 percent, and graduate assistants comprise 18.9 percent of the total.[108] Hence, the ranks of contingent academic labor are growing. It should be noted that graduate teaching assistants are overwhelmingly concentrated at the four-year colleges and are rarely found at the community colleges, and, also, that "the large public doctoral and comprehensive universities rely heavily on graduate assistant instruction."[109]

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[105] Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2004*, Table 227: Full-time and part-time instructional faculty in degree-granting institutions, by employment status and control and type of institution: Fall 1970 to Fall 2003.

[106] Benjamin, "Editor's Notes," 6.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid. Benjamin derives this data from the U.S. Department of Education, *Digest of Educational Statistics, 2001* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2002), Table 226.

[109] Ibid. According to Benjamin's analysis, the public four-year institutions tend to make greater use of graduate assistants (32 percent graduate assistants; 18.7 percent part-time faculty; 49.3 percent full-time faculty) than do the private four-year institutions (11.5 percent graduate assistants; 36.5 percent part-time faculty; 52 percent full-time faculty). His research also indicates that at the two-year institutions graduate assistants comprise *a mere 1.5 percent* of the teaching work force.

On top of all of this, one must also consider the changing shape of tenure. It is undeniably in decline. Full-time non-tenure track faculty are on the rise. As the number of faculty have risen dramatically, overall, the percentages of tenured and tenure-track faculty have gone down. From Fall 1987 to Fall 1998, the percentage of tenured

Table 2: Full-time and Part-time Instructional Staff in degree-granting institutions by employment status: Selected years, 1970 – 2003.[110]

	Full-Time Faculty		Part-Time Faculty	
	(in thousands)	(as a percentage)	(in thousands)	(as a percentage)
1970	369	77.9	104	22.1
1972	380	76.0	120	24.0
1977	448	66.1	230	33.9
1987	523	66.0	270	34.0
1993	546	59.6	370	40.4
1999	591	57.5	437	42.5
2003	632	53.8	543	46.2

full-time faculty as a portion of all full-time faculty dropped from 58 percent to 53 percent. Concurrently, the percentage of tenure-*track* faculty dropped from 21 percent to 19 percent. Not surprisingly, the percentage of those full-time faculty *not* on the tenure-track increased from 12 percent to 18 percent, while the percentage of those who are employed at an institution that has no tenure system at all has risen from 9 percent to 10 percent.[111] These figures point to a weakening of faculty power, assuming that a high percentage of tenured positions is an indicator of such power (which is a reasonable

[110] All data in this Table are derived from National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2004*, Table 227. Later studies by NCES adjusted the part-time faculty percentage for Fall 2003 to 43.7.

[111] AFT Higher Education, a division of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, *The Growth of Full-time Nontenure-Track Faculty*, item number 36-0700, 9; Original source cited in this publication is U.S. Department of Education, NCES, NSOPF, 1988 and 1999.

assumption). Consequently, it represents a threat to academic freedom in that so few teaching faculty (roughly 25 percent) have the protection that tenure affords.

It has been shown here that part-time faculty, and contingent academic labor, more generally, have been increasing as a percentage of the overall faculty during the sixth epoch. A closer inspection of the types of colleges and disciplines where they are most concentrated will give us a better look at the changing shape of the distribution of academic labor. Working off of estimates provided by NCES in 1976,[112] Tuckman, et al, have determined that, during the 1972-73 to 1976-77 academic years – a time of economic crisis and of transition to the new epoch – the distribution of part-time faculty by type of college is revealing of deeper trends. As noted above, this five-year period, most especially, experienced a dramatic overall increase in the use of part-time faculty. More specifically, at the university level (e.g., doctoral and/or research institutions), the number of part-timers increased, but not significantly as "part-timers remained a minority and the labor market exhibited signs of stagnation."[113] At the four-year institutions, the number of part-time faculty positions rose by 56 percent, while the number of full-time faculty positions rose by only 19 percent, though the part-timers still only represented 27 percent of the teachers employed at these colleges.[114] At the two-year institutions, however, there was a more significant increase of part-time faculty during the same period that measured approximately 80 percent, resulting in an increase in the proportion

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[112] Tuckman, et al, 185; The authors cite the National Center for Education Statistics, *Higher Education Information Survey (HEGIS XI), Employees in Institutions of Higher Education* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office). They also indicate that these figures may "tend to underrepresent occasional part-timers."

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

of part-timers, in relation to the total number of teachers, from 40 percent to 51 percent.[115] Since these early studies, the data gathering has become more systematic and sophisticated, and the data is (likely to be) more accurate. Nevertheless the trends identified early on by Tuckman and his associates have been unmistakable and have since been amplified.

The two-year community college – the institution of higher education that has expanded the most in the post-war period, that has been the most managed, that serves the most disadvantaged students, and that is the most devoted to the practical arts and to a vocational curriculum – it is here where the use of part-time faculty has overwhelmingly been the greatest. In Fall 1992, of the 376,660 part-time faculty members included in the NSOPF 1993 report, 44 percent of *them* worked at public two-year institutions.[116] These part-timers made up 60.2 percent of the overall faculty at the public two-year institutions. Conversely, full-time faculty made up 39.8 percent of the overall faculty at public two-year institutions. At the other end of the spectrum, at public research institutions, the part-time faculty comprised only 19.1 percent of the faculty. Table 3, below, shows the distribution of part-time and full-time faculty in all institutions for Fall 1992.

These trends have continued at the public two-year colleges (i.e., community colleges), with part-time faculty in Fall 1998 increasing to 62 percent, as well as increasing in almost every type of institution.[117] The only type of institution that had a

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[115] Tuckman, et al, 185.

[116] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 93), Part-time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think*, NCES 2002-163, by Valerie M. Conley and David W. Leslie, Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler, (Washington, D.C: 2002), Table 1, p. 33.

[117] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2002), *A Profile of Part-time Faculty: Fall 1998*, NCES 2002-08, by Andrea Berger, Rita Kirshstein, Yu Zhang, and Kevin Carter,

decrease in the percentage of part-time faculty from Fall 1992 to Fall 1998 was the private not-for-profit research institutions (private research) which showed a decline from 34.9 percent part-time faculty in Fall 1992 to 27 percent part-time faculty in Fall 1998.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of instructional faculty and staff in postsecondary institutions by employment status and institution type: Fall 1992.[118]

Institution Type	Employment Status	
	Full-time	Part-time
All Institutions	58.4	41.6
Public Research	80.9	19.1
Private Research	65.1	34.9
Public Ph.D	71.8	28.2
Private Ph.D	61.4	38.6
Public Comprehensive	66.8	33.2
Private Comprehensive	51.4	48.6
Private Liberal Arts	64.6	35.4
Public two-year	39.8	60.2
All Other	51.7	48.3

For the 2003 NSOPF survey, the categories were revised, but the overall trends remain in a similar range with the percentage of part-time faculty in "public associate" institutions (formerly classified as public two-year) rising to 66.7 percent.[119]

American Institutes for Research, Linda J. Zimbler, Project Officer (Washington, D.C. 2002), Table 2.1: Percentage distribution of instructional faculty by employment status, by type and control of institution and by program area: Fall 1998, p. 9.

[118] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 93), Part-time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think*, NCES 2002-163, by Valerie M. Conley and David W. Leslie, Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler (Washington, D.C: 2002), Table 2, p. 34. Detailed notations on the categorization and methodology can be found in the report. They have been excluded here to achieve brevity.

[119] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 04) Report on Faculty and Instructional Staff in Fall 2003," *Education Statistics Quarterly*, Volume 7, Issues 1 & 2, Topic: Postsecondary Education, by Emily Forrest Cataldi, Mansour Fahimi, and Ellen M. Bradburn, Table 1, Percentage distribution of all faculty and instructional staff, by employment status, institution type, and program area: Fall 2003.

Overall, the upper-tier research and doctoral institutions are likely to use the fewest part-time faculty, ranging from about 20-32 percent; the comprehensive institutions are in the middle range, using about 35-50 percent part-time faculty (with the private comprehensive institutions at the upper end of this range); and the community colleges, as indicated above, make the most use of part-time faculty, averaging in the region of 66-67 percent. These ranges are based upon an examination of the tables from the 1993, 1998, and 2003 NCES datasets, and are rough approximations. There are enormous variations in higher education, and the configurations of the categories are not always perfectly reflective of what institutions really look like – thus Carnegie revised its classifications in 2000. This problem makes longitudinal analysis more difficult and precise outcomes over long periods of time less reliable because the data is not always exactly comparable. Nevertheless, what is certain is that as postsecondary institutions have expanded and the faculty increased in number, the disproportionate growth in the percentage of part-time faculty has been one of the central trends in higher education during the sixth epoch, and that trend has been most decisive at the lower tier institutions, primarily, the community colleges.

As if to reinforce this disparity, even among *full-time* faculty at the two-year institutions, a high percentage of them are at the instructor or lecturer level, as opposed to the professorial ranks.[120] This is not only true in the vocational fields (65.6 percent), where that might be expected, but, to a lesser degree, it is also true overall (39.3 percent),

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[120] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 93), Part-time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think*, NCES 2002-163, by Valerie M. Conley and David W. Leslie, Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler (Washington, D.C: 2002), Table A – Percentage distribution of instructional faculty and staff by academic rank, employment status, institution type, and program area: Fall 1992, page v.

including in the Humanities (33.4 percent), the social sciences (29.7 percent), and in the natural sciences and engineering (38.3 percent). This is *not* true in the 4-year institutions where only about 10 percent of the full-time faculty are at instructor or lecturer levels, and the rest are dispersed among the professorial ranks, i.e., assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.[121]

Though in community colleges part-timers are used extensively in *all* programs, the best demographic studies show that if we examine other types of colleges we will find that part-timers are most commonly found there in the fine arts, education, business, and the humanities.[122] It will also be found that they most commonly teach the "basic, lower-division core courses of the undergraduate curriculum," such as introductory English, and Mathematics.[123] They are found in high percentages in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and in basic composition programs which has led to a groundswell of organizational activity amongst teachers within these disciplines, both on their home campuses and at their professional conferences. Judith M. Gappa and David W. Leslie, authors of what is probably still the best demographic study on the topic, *The Invisible Faculty* (1993), help to bring the picture into a clearer focus when they say, "The more an institution 'looked like' a community college, the more likely it was to make extensive use of part-timers. For example, part-timers were commonly used to staff evening

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[121] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 93), Part-time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think*, NCES 2002-163, by Valerie M. Conley and David W. Leslie, Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler (Washington, D.C: 2002), Table A – Percentage distribution of instructional faculty and staff by academic rank, employment status, institution type, and program area: Fall 1992, page v.

[122] See Judith M. Gappa and David W. Leslie, *The Invisible Faculty: Improving the Status of Part-Timers in Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 118. Their analysis is based on the 1988 National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF:88), and supplemented with extensive interviews with part-time faculty from around the country. The data from subsequent years continues to support the general thrust of their analysis.

division and extended education programs."[124] This picture lends support to the argument that hierarchy and social inequality are entrenched in the system of higher education in the United States. The part-time faculty are invisible and the disparities are hidden.

The humanities, arguably, have been the area of higher learning most adversely affected by the growth in the use of part-time faculty. Given the place of the humanities in a liberal arts education, this is unsettling. Sometimes, though, the affect is subtle and not so visible to the occasional observer. For instance, at 4-year institutions, 62 percent of humanities part-timers have as their reason for part-time employment that full-time employment is unavailable, whereas, in the category of "business, law, and communications" for example, only 32 percent are part-time for that reason.[125] In the 2-year institutions, the percentages are similar to their 4-year counterparts for humanities part-timers, with 61 percent working part-time due to the unavailability of full-time employment, whereas in the category of "business, law, and communications" there are 40 percent who are part-time for that reason. If we sharpen our focus within the humanities, we find that freestanding composition programs have been greatly affected, using a percentage of part-time faculty – 28 percent – that when combined with an even

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[123] Gappa and Leslie, 118.

[124] Ibid., 113.

[125] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 93), Part-time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think*, NCES 2002-163, by Valerie M. Conley and David W. Leslie, Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler (Washington, D.C: 2002), Table 19 – Percentage of part-time instructional faculty and staff, by reasons for holding a part-time position, institution type, and program area: Fall 1992, page 51.

higher percentage of graduate teaching assistants – 45 percent – leaves needy students with a relatively small percentage of experienced full-time faculty.[126]

At the other end of the humanities, it is noteworthy that the American History Association reports that the number of full-time history faculty at 4-year institutions has seen "modest but steady growth," reportedly increasing from 57.6 percent of the teaching faculty in fall 1998 to 62.5 percent in fall 2003.[127] Concomitantly, the percentage of part-time faculty teaching history at 4-year institutions has fallen from 32.4 percent to 25.1 percent "reversing a trend that extends back more than two decades."[128] However, this good news was met with bad news at the two-year institutions, where the number of full-time history faculty dropped from 36 percent to 32 percent, and the number of part-time faculty rose from 64 percent to 68 percent.[129] Again, though there is wide variation, we can see that the overuse of part-time faculty, especially at the two-year institutions, has been a decisive characteristic of the sixth epoch.

The distribution of part-time faculty by type of program is significant because it is reflective not just of a "market" for academic labor, but of a set of values and priorities that are more dictated by a business-oriented outlook among trustees and university

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[126] Coalition on the Academic Workforce, "Summary of Data from Surveys by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce," Table 1: Percentage of Instructional Staff of Type [sic] in Department/Program. http://www.historians.org/caw/cawreport.htm.

[127] Reported by Robert C. Townsend, "Federal Faculty Survey Shows Gains for History Employment but Lagging Salaries," From the *News* column of the March 2006 *Perspectives*, American Historical Association. He relies on the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty from fall 2003. http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2006/0603/0603new1.cfm?pv=y.

[128] Ibid. Presumably, graduate teaching assistants comprise the remainder of the percentage.

[129] Ibid. That is to say, the full-time history faculty at the 2-year institutions decreased from 2,970 in 1998 to 2,721 in 2003 and the number of part-time faculty increased from 5,190 in 1998 to 5,769 in 2003, as reported by Townsend. I then calculated the percentages based upon these numbers of faculty, i.e., assuming only full-time and part-time faculty as the entire population since graduate teaching assistants typically are not found in any significant numbers at the community colleges.

managers than by sound educational policy and good pedagogy – a legacy of the ideological nature of the school of scientific management, handed down to the university by Frederick Winslow Taylor via the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations. These values and priorities are part of an outlook that has influenced higher education since, at least, the Progressive Era, circa 1900, but have re-emerged in new forms.

This broad geographic description of higher education faculty by type of institution and by program (*see Table 5 and Table 6, Appendix*), though incomplete, provides a necessary frame for the picture, however the landscape would be empty without an examination of what it all means for the faculty and for the students. As for the part-time faculty, the litany of their grievances are by now legendary, so I will only summarize them here. Even if they teach approximately a full-time load they often get paid very low, perhaps comparable to "the lower grades of clerks and salesmen," as Veblen described in his day.[130] For the most part, they lack any type of job security, and typically they lack any significant benefits. The substandard working conditions often do not include an office, or if there is an "adjunct office," it is frequently shared by more than a few co-workers, making office meetings with students less beneficial, as well as creating an unprofessional atmosphere. They often lack a phone, voice-mail, an adequate computer, a desk, or a drawer that locks. They teach at multiple campuses with little or no advance notice of reappointment. Often they do not qualify to apply for faculty research grants, and mostly they do not get funding for professional development or to attend conferences so as to participate in one's professional field. To round out the list, though I am sure it is incomplete, they typically are not included in departmental decision-making, in curricular development, and in the extra-curricular life of the

campus. Given their numbers, this all speaks to a campus culture that is not well-depicted in the college brochure.

Why should any of this matter to anyone except to the low-paid faculty themselves, and perhaps to their labor representatives, if they have any? After all, the expansion of higher education is widely viewed as one of the most democratic aspects of modern United States history. Might not the exploitation of part-time faculty simply be justified by the counter-argument that this expansion of higher education opened the doors for many more people than could have even been imagined just fifty or sixty years ago? Might it not be justified in that the staffing of the lower tiers with part-time faculty was simply a fortuitous means of subsidizing this expansion, though not without its contradictions and, which, unfortunately, left a large group of intellectuals in second and third class positions? After all, this predicament experienced by a high percentage of the faculty is not exactly a new development, outside of the "academic revolution" of the 1960s, as this narrative shows.

Aside from the unjustness of this state of affairs for the part-time faculty, which is not an insignificant matter, the contingent academic labor system also has drawbacks for full-time faculty, and, more importantly, for the students on these lower tiers of the multiversity. The system itself is an adjunct to tracking and to social stratification. That is to say, this dissertation agrees with those scholars who argue that the tiering and the stratification of the university have had negative consequences for social and economic equality, and *it further suggests that the contingent academic labor* system *serves to*

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[130] Veblen, 162.

reinforce those consequences and to legitimate them.[131] Given the distribution of the various categories of contingent academic labor throughout the system of higher education, as will be shown, one could conclude that there is a class-based bias in the multiversity and the contingent faculty system is at the heart of it. This needs further clarification. The place of part-time faculty in this equation will become clear shortly, but a brief review of some of the important literature on inequality in higher education is necessary to buttress this argument.

As noted in Chapter 1, the conflict theory school of the sociology of education has argued broadly that inequality in society is reproduced in the schools. More recent studies lend support to this argument,[132] and, in any case, as pointed out by David Karen and Kevin J. Dougherty, despite the fact that enrollments in higher education have grown dramatically at all levels, societal "differences by race and social class are actually increasing."[133] Additionally, as college attendance has increased for all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups during the 1980s and 1990s, nevertheless, the "racial gap in college access got larger and the class gap did not shrink."[134] Longitudinal data from

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[131] For an earlier version of this argument, see Vincent Tirelli, "Adjuncts and More Adjuncts: Labor Segmentation and the Transformation of Higher Education," *Social Text* 51, Vol. 15, No. 2, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, Summer 1997), 75-91. Subsequently, this article was published in *Chalk Lines, The Politics of Work in the Managed University*, edited by Randy Martin, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1998), 181-201.

[132] See Brint and Karabel, *The Diverted Dream* (1989); also see Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College, The Conflicting Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College* (2001 [1994]).

[133] David Karen and Kevin J. Dougherty, "Necessary but Not Sufficient, Higher Education as a Strategy of Social Mobility," *Higher Education and the Color Line, College Access, Racial Equity, and Social Change*, edited by Gary Orfield, Patricia Marin, and Catherine L. Horn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 33.

[134] Ibid., 37; Notably, in terms of gender, females have surpassed males in overall postsecondary attainment during this period. See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Coming of Age in the 1990s: The Eighth-Grade Class of 1988 12 Years Later*, NCES 2002-321, by S.J. Ingels, et al, (Washington, D.C.: March, 2002), 20 – 21.

NCES shows that socioeconomic status and race are both still powerful indicators as to outcomes in college, i.e., as to the level of attainment in postsecondary institutions.[135] Moreover, Gary Orfield, a professor of education and social policy at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has argued that institutions are "quietly implementing policies that will almost certainly increase social and economic stratification."[136]

> Most states are implementing cutbacks in higher education that are likely to limit the opportunities for young black, Latino, and American Indian students—restricting capacity on four-year campuses, raising tuition faster than aid, shifting aid to more affluent students on the basis of test scores rather than need, cutting outreach programs, and increasing the importance of tests in college access.[137]

As will be shown in Chapter 4, conflicts over the implementation of just such policies have generated fierce political battles at the City University of New York.

These increasing class and racial gaps have also surged up at America's most *selective* institutions:

> First, it is clear that an increasing percentage of college entrants are attending two-year colleges; this increase is particularly apparent among blacks and those with lowest SES. Second, students from the most affluent backgrounds have become increasingly likely to attend the most selective colleges.[138]

This is nothing new. Jerome Karabel, in *The Chosen*,[139] meticulously chronicles the historical exclusion of Jews, blacks, ethnic minorities, and women from Harvard, Yale,

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[135] See Table 7 in Appendix for statistical evidence to support this claim.

[136] Gary Orfield, "Introduction," *Higher Education and the Color Line, College Access, Racial Equity, and Social Change*, edited by Gary Orfield, Patricia Marin, and Catherine L. Horn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 7-8.

[137] Ibid., 8.

[138] Karen and Dougherty, 38.

[139] Jerome Karabel, in *The Chosen, The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005).

and Princeton, through much of the twentieth century, and calls for a more class-based criteria for admission. He examines the idea of "merit" as the basis for admission and finds it to be lacking, in that it seems to be "heavily concentrated among the scions of the privileged."[140]

> The problem with a "meritocracy," then, is not only that its ideals are routinely violated (though that is true), but also that it veils the power relations beneath it. For the definition of "merit," including the one that now prevails in America's leading universities, always bears the imprint of the distribution of power in the larger society. Those who are able to define "merit" will almost invariably possess more of it, and those with greater resources – cultural, economic, and social – will generally be able to ensure that the educational system will deem their children more meritorious. In this specific sense, the ideal of a meritocracy – a system in which power plays no role in defining "merit" and in which rich and poor alike enjoy genuinely equal opportunities to succeed – is inherently unattainable.[141]

So-called equality of opportunity, then, provides a powerful argument to the lower classes that they had every chance, and that their failure is due "to their own deficiencies."[142] The ideology of opportunity, thus, plays a role in legitimating inequality. It plays the same role that Social Darwinism played in another epoch.

There is reason to be concerned for those among the disadvantaged who *do* go to college,[143] in that the distinction between two-year institutions and four-year institutions

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[140] Karabel, 549.

[141] Ibid., 549-550.

[142] Ibid., 555-556. In these passages Karabel is attributing this outlook to the proponents of meritocracy, and he draws on Michael Young's satire *The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1870-2033: An Essay on Education and Equality* (New York: Penguin, 1961) to drive home the point that the very idea of meritocracy is fraught with hidden inequalities.

[143] See Table 7 in the appendix. The high proportion of those from the lower quintiles of socioeconomic status who do not attain any degree in higher education speaks to a far greater inequality that undermines possibilities for democracy, and points to deeper social problems, not the least of which is the problems we face with regard to primary and secondary schooling.

has a significant "impact on students educational and economic attainment."[144] The community college is less effective in helping baccalaureate aspirants to succeed at achieving the degree that they ultimately seek. All things being equal, a person who seeks a bachelor's degree has a statistically better chance of attaining it if they begin their studies in a four-year institution than if they begin in a two-year institution and then attempt to transfer later on. On top of this, the community colleges are attractive to low-income students who aspire to the baccalaureate, in part, due to its serving as a "substitute" for the first two years, which is appealing to many because of the lower cost, the open access, and, often, the proximity to home which is an easier commute, thus eliminating the added expense of room and board.[145] These factors draw students to the community colleges who would otherwise go directly to four-year colleges, and the outcome of this is that it "keeps baccalaureate attainment rates lower than they might otherwise be" due to the institutional characteristics of the community college, i.e., due to the lower level of student integration into academic life and culture that one finds at the community college as compared to the four-year college.[146]

For those who do not have aspirations to go further, the community college fulfills its role, often admirably. Even the critics of the community college have acknowledged its positive contributions, such as its open door admissions policy, and the democratic opportunity that it offers to the disadvantaged, however these critics have also recognized that this positive depiction, on its own, is too one-sided:

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[144] Karen and Dougherty, 37.

[145] Dougherty, *The Contradictory College,* 51.

[146] Ibid., 51, 53, 83-106.

> The community college opens the door to opportunity for many, but also closes it for others. It dances to the music of the labor market, but does so only clumsily. It is a Janus-faced institution, but its critics and defenders each looking from different perspectives, have wrongly insisted that it had only one profile.[147]

Thus, aside from the democratizing interest that there was in expanding education, there was also a non-democratizing interest regarding the community colleges: the state universities "supported the founding of the community colleges not just to expand college opportunity, but also to keep the universities academically selective by channeling less prepared students away from their doors."[148] Additionally, state governors, legislators, and education departments understood that by building community colleges "rather than expanding existing four-year colleges," the state government would save money.[149]

In examining the community college with regard to stratification, Karen and Dougherty ask, "why has equality of opportunity eluded us?" Their answer focuses on the politics of access, which requires a brief further explanation before we move on to the role that contingent academic labor plays in this drama.[150] They identify two tendencies that have served to undermine democratization. They call the first tendency a "structural" one that is rooted in the broader system of inequality, i.e., in that "those already advantaged by family background secure other advantages as well, including advanced education and more attractive jobs."[151] The common belief is that education can help to equalize these conditions, but, in fact, "education for specific jobs are often

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[147] Dougherty, *The Contradictory College*, 44.

[148] Ibid., 42.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Karen and Dougherty, 41-43.

[151] Ibid., 43.

only vaguely related to skills," as many skills are learned on the job.[152] The reason that high status jobs have high educational requirements is "because employers are looking for people well socialized into the dominant culture, and elite colleges and universities provide that."[153] Thus, the deep-rooted lack of the appropriate cultural capital creates an underestimated obstacle for those in the lower strata which hinders them from rising above their station.

The second tendency that Karen and Dougherty identify as undermining the democratization function of higher education involves "efforts by elites to counterbalance the successes of subordinate groups in increasing access to higher education."[154] The success that these subordinate groups have had, such as the winning of open admissions in the 1960s and early 1970s, were met by rollbacks in the 1980s and 1990s. Included in the efforts by elites to counterbalance such successes have been the attacks on affirmative action, a renewed emphasis on so-called merit-based aid for students, and, conversely, a weakening commitment to need-based aid "marked by a failure to raise Pell Grants at the same rate as college costs."[155] More broadly, they view the "political and social construction of the fiscal crisis of the state," and the subsequent calls for higher education expenditures to be cut, as being part of the powerful ideological thrusts that have served to undermine the democratization function of higher education.[156] All of these trends and tendencies have led to greater inequality of access in higher education by race and by

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[152] Karen and Dougherty, 43.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid., 45.

[156] Ibid., 43-46

class.[157] Karen and Dougherty make several suggestions for reducing this inequality, such as improving academic preparation for the disadvantaged and improving need-based financial aid, most notably "a recommitment to funding Pell Grants more adequately."[158] They recognize, however, that such recommendations are no substitute for a massive social movement that is directed towards alleviating social inequality in all of its forms.

What is missing from these insightful analyses on inequality in higher education is an evaluation of the impact that the extensive use of contingent academic labor has had upon this hierarchy. Given that part-time faculty makeup about two-thirds of the faculty at the community colleges, and, on average, about one-third at the four-year colleges, it would seem that any study of student outcomes ought to take this factor into consideration. Ernst Benjamin points out that although there are many studies that suggest ways to improve the conditions of part-time and GTA faculty, that "none of these studies has directly examined the effects of the increasing reliance on contingent staff on student learning."[159] What we do know, firstly, is that there is a well-established literature that shows "that there is a significantly enhanced impact upon student advancement when there is greater interaction between faculty and students."[160] Secondly, in tandem with this, as I have argued elsewhere by drawing upon the work of

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[157] Karen and Dougherty, 46.

[158] Ibid., 46-52.

[159] Ernst Benjamin, "How Over-Reliance on Contingent Appointments Diminishes Faculty Involvement in Student Learning," *Peer Review*, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Volume 5, Number 1, Fall 2002, 4.

[160] Tirelli, "Adjuncts and More Adjuncts," (1997), 82; Among the more prominent scholars who have established the importance of student contact with faculty, as well as with peers, and whose works are cited in this article, are the following: Vincent Tinto, "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections On the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving," *Journal of Higher Education*, 59, (July/August), 1988, 438-455; Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

Gappa and Leslie, "outside of paid classroom hours, part-timers have a limited amount of time for their students, and… in those colleges that rely on them to do a high percentage of their teaching it is left to the full-timers and a growing administrative staff to shoulder the committee work and other departmental responsibilities, thus leaving them, too, with less time to meet with students."[161] Finally, from here it is a simple deduction to recognize that the *need* for student-teacher interactions, combined with the relative paucity of such interactions within the scope of the contingent academic labor system, along with all of the other relative deprivations noted here and suffered by those on the *lower* rungs of the university system, all add up to an insidiously class-based system. This argument requires further explanation that looks more closely at 1) the working conditions of part-time faculty and 2) at the distinction between the use of contingent academic labor at four-year and at two-year colleges.

Regarding the working conditions of part-time faculty, the most important factor, that is intuitively obvious to many experienced college teachers, is that the limited student accessibility to the part-time faculty serves to narrow the chances for the development of students' potential. Following from this, the disparity in the level of accessibility by students to part-time versus full-time faculty, which is borne out by the available empirical evidence, becomes a damning piece of evidence. Briefly, NSOPF data shows that in almost every category where the time of a faculty member would benefit his or her student, the part-time faculty member, who is usually only paid for classroom time, has significantly less of it to give than does the full-timer.[162] For

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[161] Tirelli; Sources cited within the article: Gappa and Leslie, 1993; David W. Leslie and Ronald B. Head, "Part-time Faculty Rights," *Educational Record*, 60, Winter (1979), 46-67.

[162] NSOPF 98. "A Profile of Part-Time Faculty," 23.

example, with regard to office hours, NSOPF 98 reports that full-time faculty average 6.6 hours per week, whereas part-time faculty only average 2.0 hours per week.[163] With regard to paid institutional activities overall, full-time faculty put in 46 hours per week, whereas part-time faculty put in only 14 hours per week.[164] Of course, these figures, which only offer some clues, do not speak to the commitment of the faculty member, but to the commitment of the college to its students, a dynamic which has given birth to the popular academic labor campaign slogan, "our working conditions are student learning conditions."

Karen Thompson, a leading figure in the part-time faculty movement who teaches English as a part-time lecturer at Rutgers, and who is also active within the AAUP, provides a viewpoint of part-time faculty working conditions from the trenches. [165] Undergraduates in their first two years, whether at a two-year institution or a four-year institution are most in need of advising and attention, and the contingent academic labor system, she explains, diminishes and fragments part-time faculty time, thus undermining the learning process. The frequently short lead time for classes (i.e., being hired at the last minute), the time spent commuting between multiple institutions (i.e., different part-time jobs at different colleges), and the lack of support for professional development (i.e., including institutional support to attend conferences) all work against the kind of

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[163] NSOPF 98, "A Profile of Part-Time Faculty," 29, Table 4.3.

[164] Ibid., 23, Table 4.1.

[165] Karen Thompson, "Contingent Faculty and Student Learning: Welcome to the Strativersity," *Exploring the Role of Contingent Instructional Staff in Undergraduate Learnin*g, edited by Ernst Benjamin (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 41-47.

academic community that could be fostered by having a stable professional workforce with decent pay and benefits.[166]

Regarding the distinction between the use of contingent academic labor at four-year and at two-year colleges, I argue that the distinctions are significant and suggest a need for a deeper analysis. Critics and observers almost uniformly suggest that when we include the graduate teaching assistants into the equation that it shows that the problem is endemic to all undergraduate instruction, thus implying that everyone suffers from this system and thereby precluding the possibility of a political analysis based upon class divisions, though perhaps unintentionally.[167] *I have argued here that the overuse of contingent academic labor suggests a need for a class analysis that includes a searching look at inequality*. *The fact of the extensive use of graduate teaching assistants in the four-year colleges does not diminish the legitimacy of the argument that there are insidious class divisions in the system of higher education*. I came to this position due to a conversation that I had with my advisor for this project when I was first trying to figure it out. I argued that there was an important difference between the ubiquitous use of part-time faculty in the lower-tier and the merely extensive use of graduate teaching assistants on the upper rungs of the university hierarchy. He protested, and, remembering his days at Harvard, said that even then an undergraduate was "about as likely to get close to one of his star professors as he was to get close to Mick Jagger at a Rolling Stones concert." I was sure that that was true, but I also was sure that something else was going on and that I was on to something important. Finding out more about that "something else" has been

[166] Thompson, "Contingent Faculty and Student Learning: Welcome to the Strativersity," 41-47.

[167] Ernst Benjamin (2002, 2003), an important contributor to the literature on contingent academic labor, is one who makes this point emphatically.

one of the motivating forces that has compelled me to write this dissertation. Graduate teaching assistants are taken advantage of, and one of the motivators of their organizing into labor unions is that they have their eye on their academic future and on the bleak labor market that awaits them.[168] This analysis that I am making is not arguing that graduate teaching assistants do not have it so bad, but it is arguing that their presence at the upper-tier institutions and at the four-year institutions does not have the same depth of effect on students as does the overuse of part-time faculty on the lower tiers, primarily at the community colleges.[169] I am not considering here distinctions between the quality of teaching. Suffice it to say, on this count, that whereas part-time faculty, as a whole are older and have more experience as teachers, the graduate teaching assistants probably make up for some of this lack of experience with a youthful energy and exuberance. Additionally, as graduate students, it is likely that the graduate teaching assistants are more integrated into the life and community of the campus than are the part-time faculty, which is perhaps an obvious observation when we recall that the part-time faculty, as shown here, often come to teach their class and soon after leave for their next assignment elsewhere. When we consider the social class make-up of those who attend the lower-tier colleges as compared to those who attend the upper tier institutions, it is logical to infer that the four-year and upper-tier students get the best of both worlds (i.e., prior advantage in life and the greater likelihood of interaction on campus), and, conversely, that the

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[168] The graduate teaching assistants' problems are discussed in Chapter 5.

[169] Serendipitously, as I write, I have just come across an article, in today's newspaper, by Dan Jacoby, "Uneven Labor Standards Undermine Community Colleges," *The Seattle Times*, October 12, 2006; Jacoby explains that a study which he conducted will be reported in the November/December issue of the *Journal of Higher Education*, and in it he demonstrates "that institutions with higher part-time faculty ratios have substantially lower graduation rates."

lower tier students get the worst of both worlds. A study by Pascarella and Terenzini found the following:

> [T]he frequency of informal contact with faculty to discuss intellectual issues and the perceived quality of interaction with faculty and peers had their most positive influence on persistence for students with low initial and subsequent commitment to the goal of graduation or who came from families where parents had relatively low levels of formal education. As level of family education and graduation commitment increased, interaction with faculty and peers became less important for persistence.[170]

Pascarella and Terenzini's study strongly suggests that students on the lower tier would benefit significantly more from faculty and peer interaction than would those on the upper rungs. Man is a social animal, and learning is a social process. The methods of Frederick Winslow Taylor are not a good fit for education at any level, but they have a most pernicious effect on those who are least prepared to deal with it, i.e., those who come into higher education with the least chances to succeed due to their prior socialization and economic standing.

In summary, I am arguing that the contingent academic labor system has its roots in politics, rather than economics, and that it reinforces a class-based division in higher education. In support of this latter claim, I have argued that the contingent academic labor system has a different, less unfavorable impact on the students at elite institutions than it does on students in the lower tier. The more developed cultural capital of those at the upper-tier institutions makes them less in need of the time and attention of their teachers, and when we add to this the limited time and attention received by those on the lower tier, who need it more, together these attributes serve to reinforce class differences.

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[170] Pascarella and Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 412. For this insight they cite E. Pascarella and P. Terenzini, "Interaction Effects in Spady's and Tinto's Conceptual Models of College Dropout," *Sociology of Education*, 52, 1979, 197-210.

Segmentation of the labor force is as old as industry itself. This is no less true for academic labor. The titles of faculty have changed, and the mission of higher education has changed, but the principles of labor segmentation have, at root, remained the same. The main difference between the oppressed tutors of the 1930s and the contingent academic workers of the modern age is the role that academic labor plays in the production and/or reproduction of social power. The pitiful salaries, the dedication, and the great expectations remain, but the political, economic, and social contexts have changed. The fragmentation and the functional differentiation resolves, for the time being, the need of capital to have it both ways – it provides critical thinking, and it also provides a means of stratifying the work force and of providing a commodified form of work. In the process, it also provides a legitimation mechanism in that it opens wide the doors to higher education, which is uniformly viewed as an avenue of social mobility and as evidence of a democratic society. Many "outsiders" cannot tell the difference between having a faculty staffed mostly by part-timers instead of full-timers. These practices ease the way for the managers of the university to gain power over governance from the full-time faculty. It is not dramatic, and all at once, but an encroachment that is uneven, but steady. As in other industries, labor segmentation dilutes the power of the labor unions by fragmenting the work force and diminishing the potential for solidarity. Academic freedom is not even on the agenda. For part-time faculty without any job protections, it is merely a chimera.

In looking at the effect of academic labor segmentation, one cannot help but be reminded of the unanimous Supreme Court decision in *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950). This was a case in which a black postal clerk named Herman Marion Sweatt

applied to the University of Texas Law School and was denied consideration because of segregation laws rooted in the 1896 "separate-but-equal" decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. He was, instead, to attend a "black" law school, which was constructed while Sweatt's appeal was pending. *Sweatt v. Painter* did not overturn the *Plessy* decision – that honor would belong to *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 – but it took a step closer to it in deciding that the Texas law schools were not, in fact, equal. The opinion of the court provides us with some insight. Chief Justice Vinson wrote the following:

> The University of Texas Law School, from which petitioner was excluded, was staffed by a faculty of sixteen full-time and three part-time professors, some of whom are nationally recognized authorities in their field. Its student body numbered 850. The library contained over 65,000 volumes. Among the other facilities available to the students were a law review, moot court facilities, scholarship funds, and Order of the Coif affiliation. The school's alumni occupy the most distinguished positions in the private practice of the law and in the public life of the State. It may properly be considered one of the nation's ranking law schools.
>
> The law school for Negroes which was to have opened in February, 1947, would have had no independent faculty or library. The teaching was to be carried on by four members of the University of Texas Law School faculty, who were to maintain their offices at the University of Texas while teaching at both institutions. Few of the 10,000 volumes ordered for the library had arrived; nor was there any full-time librarians. The school lacked accreditation.[171]

Of course, the racist system of segregation in the South under Jim Crow was most brutal and cruel, but the disturbing parallel is that in the contemporary form of segregation the most disadvantaged in society are tracked into schools without proper funding and with, primarily, a disenfranchised, marginalized, and proletarianized part-time faculty, and it is all done under the rubric of equal opportunity. The faint echo of Homer Plessy's protest resonates in the distance. Now the question is whether the academic laborers and their

[171] *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950)

allies will allow elites to continue to shape the university in the image of capitalism and class division or will they learn to resist. There are signs of hope.

Legitimation or Resistance?

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s there has been labor activism by part-time faculty and graduate student teaching and research employees. This activism has not been a secret to those in the university system for these years – especially to those who have been most directly affected by it. However, after the dramatic 1995 Yale GESO grade strike, and the subsequent decision by the NLRB General Counsel in 1996 (discussed in Chapter 5), the issue of the exploitation of contingent academic labor exploded onto the wider public stage. Maybe it was because it was Yale, a pillar of elite power and prestige, but, for whatever reason, GESO's strike and its outcome brought together a critical mass that inaugurated a new level of conflict that has continued to this day. It was not *only* the Yale strike that brought us to that point, as restlessness and activism had been building, both in the public and in the private institutions, but clearly the Yale strike served as the trigger that brought national media attention to this issue and inspired many of the contingent academic laborers. No more lonely suffering for the beleaguered adjuncts and teaching assistants. The literature which had grown during this period, as well as the media coverage of the contingent academic labor conditions, reflected the extent to which their activism had developed into a vibrant force. For many who had been active locally on behalf of part-time faculty since early in the sixth epoch, it seemed as if a sea change had taken place.

Nevertheless, one might still get the impression that many adjunct activists today feel as if the situation is so overwhelming and difficult that there seems little chance of a

serious mobilization taking shape. A selective, brief, and incomplete chronology of resistance, and of some of the literature that accompanies it, will show that, though there is a long way to go, there is much reason for hope. There have been graduate teaching assistant and adjunct activists organizing as early as the late 1960s and the 1970s (discussed in Chapters 4 and 5). Compared to today, it was a relatively underground affair organizing workers who toiled in obscurity. Each of these local efforts would attract a relatively narrow swath of attention with few exceptions, though even small gains could mean a lot to those who benefit by them.

The 1980s were not easy years for organized labor. The broader social context for this epoch has already been discussed, but there was one important event that has not been mentioned that had a critical impact on academic labor during this period. In the same year as the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act, and as if to foreshadow the mass firing of the PATCO workers by President Reagan, the private college academic labor organizing efforts were dealt a major blow with the Supreme Court decision in *National Labor Relations Board v. Yeshiva University* 444 U.S. 672 (1980) which held that, among the private sector colleges, "the University's full-time faculty members are managerial employees" excluded from the coverage of the National Labor Relations Act, i.e., due to their role in such activities as determining curriculum and in the hiring and evaluation of other faculty, including part-time faculty. This presented a major blow to a substantial group of faculty, and though part-time faculty were explicitly excluded from the decision, an anti-union climate affects everyone in that it affects the labor market, eliminates potential alliances with full-time faculty unions, and diminishes the culture of organizing.

During the bleak years of the Reagan Administration, when organized labor was on the ropes and taking a beating, there were a few bright lights guiding the way. One of these lights came in the form of a an isolated early study of part-time faculty work by Emily Abel, titled *Terminal Degrees* (1984).[172] Through interviews with 43 part-time and temporary full-time college teachers who had been displaced from various institutions, as well as through the use of data derived from numerous other sources, Abel paints a vivid picture of the dashed hopes and fragmented lives caused by the job crisis in higher education. Her insight regarding the possibilities for collective action, and the obstacles which it faces, was for many years a lonely beacon in a landscape that had been fairly grim. In her extensive interviews with part-time faculty and with temporary and untenured full-time faculty she provides a look into the underground lives that they lead. Her interviews provide knowledge of a common experience that is often hidden from view in the isolated world of the part-time teacher – the dashed expectations, instability, fragmented lives, shattered relationships, burdensome student loans, self-blame, and dislocation. She points to both an individualistic ideological orientation and the transient nature of the job that are among the factors that help to foster a sense of alienation among the part-time faculty.[173] Instead, she puts forward collective action, strategic alliances, and consciousness-raising as ways of prevailing over these demoralizing feelings. Her perspective emphasizes collective action as a means to overcome the individual isolation of part-time faculty who work as part of a fragmented work force. In this respect, she has been a pioneer in the contingent academic labor movement literature.

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[172] Emily Abel, *Terminal Degrees: The Job Crisis in Higher Education* (New York: Praeger, 1984).

[173] Ibid., passim.

This is not to say that during the early years there had not been continuous, though sporadic, efforts at labor organizing, as well as numerous writings about contingent academic labor in union newsletters, locally published narratives and accounts, articles in higher education journals, various publications on the topic coming from disciplinary associations, from ad hoc groupings, and from other sources, as well as some notable reports and pronouncements from organized labor unions, such as the AAUP and the AFT, however, though all of these kept the embers smoldering, at times they seemed as nickel-and-dime operations that would only amount to minor levels of response and awareness. Of course, consciousness-raising often seems like that, and it is a vital precursor to political and social movements.

With the onset of the 1990s, the intensity of both the literature and the activism began to grow. Gappa and Leslie's work, *The Invisible Faculty* (1993), cited above, was an important piece of demographic research that provided a good look at the distribution of part-time faculty and at their working conditions. This data is crucial to activists in that reliable descriptive data helps them to dispel many of the myths about part-time faculty and also to refute many of the specious arguments which are used to justify their exploitation. *The Invisible Faculty*, ultimately, is an appeal to the university managers, on behalf of the part-time faculty, to act according to the principles of wisdom and justice, and, as well, it argues that their suggestions for better treatment of part-time faculty would fit in well with a more effective and fairly managed university system. However, in their appeal they avoid any political or social conflict type of analysis. Nevertheless, for what it does, it does it very well, and it has been a very valuable resource.

A special issue of *the Anthropology of Work Review* (Spring 1994) devoted to part-time faculty issues has several worthwhile articles, including one, in particular, by the late Jagna Sharff and Johanna Lessinger. Sharff was an anthropologist who worked as an adjunct at the City College of New York's Center for Worker Education. In their article, "The Academic Sweatshop: Changes in the Capitalist Infrastructure and the Part-Time Academic," they help to provide a theoretical framework for the changing structure of academic work. They were among the first to examine the problem from the perspective of Saskia Sassen's thesis on globalization and the casualization of work.[174] They argued that the ongoing changes in the funding of university research led to contradictions that favored research over teaching, and that "teaching… is increasingly transferred to an underpaid academic underclass."[175]

As the Yale graduate employee strike was getting the attention of national headlines in the mid-1990s, other academic labor conflicts were brewing around the country. Graduate employee unions, mostly in the public sector, had been organizing, some since the 1960s, with some successes, as well as some setbacks, but there had been only sporadic activity through the 1980s and early 1990s, and none of it had received the kind of press coverage that the Yale strike did. A few of these unions were collective bargaining agents, but many were unrecognized unions and associations that aspired to collective bargaining status, including Yale's GESO. Most notably, among the actions that took place in the years immediately after the grade strike by Yale GESO was the

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[174] Saskia Sassen, *The Global City* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).

[175] Jagna Wojcicka Sharff and Johanna Lessinger, "The Academic Sweatshop: Change in the Capitalist Infrastructure and the Part-Time Academic," *Anthropology of Work Review*, edited by June Nash, 15 (Spring 1994), 4.

campaign by the graduate employees at the University of California. Teaching assistants affiliated with the United Auto Workers (UAW) at UCLA, UC-San Diego, and UC Berkeley engaged in a "rolling" strike across the UC system in November 1996 that entailed a short strike that was in protest of the UC administration's refusal to implement a California PERB judge's order to recognize the collective bargaining rights of the teaching assistants.[176] These activities, as well as more conventional means of consciousness-raising (leafleting, forums, etc.), served as a lengthy education campaign that preceded what would be the largest strike ever conducted nationally by graduate student employees, which took place in early December 1998 at eight UC campuses.[177] On December 14, 1998, the graduate student activists won a major legal victory when California's PERB ruled that the University of California's teaching assistants, readers, and tutors are employees with union rights.[178] By the Fall of 1999, the University began bargaining with AGSE/UAW Local 2165, which by now represented graduate employees at all eight teaching campuses, and by late Spring 2000 they had their first contract.

Graduate teaching assistants, researchers, and graduate student employees in administrative employment have continued to build networks and solidarity through the Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions (CGEU), founded in 1992.[179] It has brought graduate employee union leaders and activists from the U.S. and Canada together for a yearly conference that renews old contacts and establishes new ones, provides a much-

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[176] Press Release, AGSE (Association of Graduate Student Employees)/UAW, Local 2165 (Berkeley), November 22, 1996.

[177] Kenneth R. Weiss, "UC Teaching Assistants Strike on 8 Campuses," *Los Angeles Times*, December 2, 1998.

[178] Press Release, AGSE/UAW, Local 2165, December 14, 1998.

[179] http://cgeu.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/cgeu-list.

needed continuity for a group that has a relatively high turnover rate, and, along with this, there are workshops offered that promote skill development in such areas as contract bargaining and organizing. In addition, and most importantly, perhaps, at the yearly conference they work to develop common strategies for dealing with developing trends in the ongoing struggle.

The part-time faculty have not been as well-organized as the graduate student employees, but they, too, have come a long way. In late December 1996, just six weeks after the NLRB's General Counsel decided that graduate students were employees and that Yale had violated labor law (discussed in Chapter 5), the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL), or rather, its predecessor, the First National Congress of Part-Time, Adjunct, Non-Tenure Track, and GTA faculty, met for the first time. Graduate students and part-time faculty at George Washington University (GWU), who had been engaged in local conflicts and had lost a recent battle when a vote by English department full-time faculty had gone against a proposal for GTAs and part-timers to be granted nonvoting attendance at department meetings, were the hosts of this first convocation.[180]

Jonathan White was the leading spokesperson and organizer who established the National Congress, along with Patrick McGann, also from GWU, as were several others on the planning committee. The meeting was held in Washington, D.C. Due to some last minute commotion, the organizers were prevented from having the conference on the campus of GWU, but the plenaries took place at a local church, which perhaps gave the

[180] Jonathan White, "Report on the National Congress," distributed by e-mail, February 20, 1997. This conference was designated, after the fact, as the first conference of the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL I).

attendees a divine sense of mission. There were fewer than fifty participants at this event, but they were among the leading activists of this growing resistance. There were participants from as far west as Hawaii, as far north as Toronto, and as far south as Florida. Among the attendees were Karen Thompson from Rutgers, Ernst Benjamin from the AAUP, and Vicky Smallman from McMaster University in Toronto, who would become one of the leading staff organizers of the Canadian Association of University Teachers. Marc Bousquet, a student from the CUNY Graduate Center English Program who was then the President of the Modern Language Association's (MLA) Graduate Student Caucus, was also present, and he would later become a founder and editor of the online journal, *Workplace*, which focused on higher education politics and contingent academic labor. I was also there from the CUNY Graduate Center, along with Eric Marshall, who would become a leading adjunct activist in the New Caucus at CUNY (discussed in Chapter 4). Jon Curtiss, who had written several important articles and was active in the CGEU, and who worked, at the time, for the Teaching Assistants' Association at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, the first GTA union in the country, also spoke at the conference.

Interestingly, much of the energy and vitality of the First National Congress was due to another event taking place in D.C. at the same time, the MLA annual convention (the MLA was a far larger affair, but it lacked the holy ambiance). Quite a few of the National Congress attendees were active in the Graduate Student Caucus of the MLA, and they had their own problems in fighting to be heard within the MLA. There were several up-to-the-minute reports that came to us from the MLA via graduate TAs who were moonlighting at the National Congress, and they described the conflicts brewing

there. Jonathan White's report shows that the First National Congress served to exert a modest gravitational pull on the brouhaha at the MLA:

> [T]he assembled participants discussed the example of the highly ambiguous responses of the MLA to Yale University's illegal reprisals against GESO activists…. Vicky Smallman pointed out that the MLA wields considerable influence in shaping the opinions of many regular full-time faculty, and that its profound ambivalence towards the struggles of marginalized faculty can have very negative effects on the ability of local activists to build coalitions with their regular full-time colleague…. The plenary was paid a surprise visit by representatives of the MLA Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee, who addressed the National Congress before collective discussions could begin. These representatives assured audience members that the MLA Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee is greatly interested in the issues facing marginalized faculty, although some observers felt that their principal reason for appearing was to defuse criticism of the MLA…[Later that weekend, the MLA Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee led the opposition to several proposals before the Delegate Assembly which aimed at making the MLA more responsive to the needs of marginalized faculty.] Panelist Eric Marshall debated with the Organizing Committee representatives their contention that any formal inclusion of the graduate student or marginalized faculty constituencies would be impossible, because then every constituency – the areas of study, demographic categories, etc. – would have to be included. Ironically, these guests' responses confirmed precisely that which they vocally denied – that the ranking MLA leadership has yet to demonstrate a commitment to marginalized faculty within the organization, and that in effect at the highest levels the MLA remains the professional association of tenured and tenure-track faculty only, a minority of its dues-paying membership.[181]

Thus, COCAL was born in the midst of an active conflict over power within the professional association whose members are arguably more seriously affected by the growth of contingent academic labor than are those in any other disciplinary body within the liberal arts and sciences. It is the offspring of the power elite and the corporate university – a bastard child, orphaned at birth, and left at the church.

[181] White, "Report on the National Congress."

It might have ended there, but at one of the last workshops it was hastily decided that the next National Congress should be in New York City, and being the only person in the room at the time from the Big Apple, it fell to me to see that it did. Thankfully, back in New York at a later date, my CUNY colleague Eric Marshall agreed that we would coordinate it together.

The Second National Congress (i.e., COCAL II) took place in April 1998 at the CUNY Graduate Center on 42nd Street in Manhattan. It was supported primarily by the Doctoral Students' Council (DSC) and implemented through the DSC's Adjunct Project, in which Marshall and I had been involved. We established a committee with activists from various New York City-area colleges. I reconstituted the e-mail list that the GWU contingent had established informally, and began to publicize it through word-of-mouth/e-mail, and it soon grew into ADJ-L, which became the virtual home of COCAL.[182]

There were approximately 140 participants at the Second National Congress. Among the speakers were Barbara Bowen, who would go on to become the president of the PSC as the candidate of the New Caucus, and Cary Nelson, who gave the keynote speech on the first day, and has recently been elected as president of the AAUP. Stanley Aronowitz gave a rousing keynote speech on the second day. But it was the adjunct activists and organizers – the rank and file – who brought it all to life. The activists in the New Caucus and in CUNY Adjuncts Unite! participated in the panels and workshops, and the event helped to energize the local activism. Additionally, the online journal, *Workplace*, was "launched" on the first evening of the Second National Congress.

[182] http://adj-l.org/mailman/listinfo/adj-l_adj-l.org.

Also among the participants were Gary Zabel (Philosophy) and Harry Brill (Sociology), who were active in the part-time faculty organizing at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. After some consultations with the rest of us, Marshall roped them into becoming the hosts for the next conference. The final plenary formed an ad-hoc steering committee. By now it was understood that the conference could serve to energize the local activities, and this point was not lost on Zabel. What we accomplished was that we established continuity, set the association on a more solid footing, which would be further stabilized at the Boston conference the next year, established a communications network, and provided a venue that helped to keep alive the critical tone of the First National Congress, as well as keeping up the solidarity. Shortly after the conference, the ad hoc steering committee pulled together the list of attendees and other known activists and began a two week period of discussion on ADJ-L to name the group, a process authorized by the plenary. Some felt it was too time-consuming, but the discussion about our name proved fruitful in that not only were we coming up with a name, but an identity as well. COCAL was officially given its name. On ADJ- L, our continuing discussions help us to gain a better understanding and to strategize in a more coordinated manner. We share contract language, and have found system-wide similarities, as well as local differences in term of how the system affects us, but, more importantly, a basic underlying solidarity has emerged.

The Third Annual Congress of COCAL took place in Boston in April 1999. Zabel and others who had been engaged in academic labor organizing for many years at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, had recently won significant improvements in pay and benefits for part-time faculty that sent ripples of excitement through adjunct

activist circles around the country.[183] These gains included full medical, dental, and pension benefits, as well as prorated pay – a significant increase. In this drive, Harry Brill, a tenured sociology professor who had attended COCAL II, was instrumental in obtaining the much-needed support of the full-time faculty at UMASS Boston by organizing a widely-publicized petition drive among them, thus exemplifying the importance of such alliances. It was soon after this victory that we gathered for COCAL III, which was filled with enthusiasm and hope. It was co-hosted by adjunct activists from Suffolk University, the AAUP, the Campaign for Contingent Work, and Education Workers Industrial Union 620, IWW. At a regional organizing workshop, 35 contingent faculty from 15 Boston-area colleges formed The Boston Project of the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor, frequently referred to as Boston COCAL.[184]

Boston COCAL was rooted in the assumption that since part-time faculty work is done in an environment that does not lend itself to the kind of daily face-to-face interactions with one's fellow workers as does work on the factory floor, then "if collective bonds are to come into being, they must be forged, at least initially, not in the process of work, but in the course of struggle."[185] As noted by Gottfried and Zabel, the Supreme Court's 1980 decision in *National Labor Relations Board v. Yeshiva University*, though it did not apply to part-time faculty, had the effect of taking "from part-timers the larger faculty unions in which they might organize caucuses, and so develop the

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[183] See Barbara Gottfried and Gary Zabel, "Social Movement Unionism and Adjunct Faculty Organizing in Boston," in *Steal This University, The Rise of the Corporate University and the Academic Labor Movement*, edited by Benjamin Johnson, Patrick Kavanagh, and Kevin Mattson (New York: Routledge, 2003), 207-220.

[184] Newsletter of Boston COCAL. "Boston COCAL: A Short History," *Adjuncts UNITE!, Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor*, Winter 1999/2000.

[185] Gottfried and Zabel, 210.

collective bonds necessary to assert their interests."[186] Boston COCAL was an attempt to resolve the problems presented by the *Yeshiva* decision in Boston, where the overwhelming majority of the colleges and universities are private, and thus fall under its jurisdiction. They made alliances with various unions as well as social justice groups, and "[t]hrough citywide meetings, pickets and other demonstrations, local organizing committees, and a regular newsletter, COCAL activists hoped to create the sense of community and solidarity that is an indispensable precondition for combating the exploitation of adjuncts."[187] The AAUP saw this experiment as a worthy opportunity and provided support, including a staff member to help coordinate activities, Rich Moser.

Boston COCAL showed some modest degrees of success, including, in 2001, successful outcomes where they supported union organizing campaigns of Continuing Education instructors at the University of Massachusetts, and, that same year, the campaign of part-time faculty activists at Emerson College who won a union election and formed the Affiliated Faculty of Emerson College (AFEC-AAUP), an AAUP local – the first unionization victory by faculty on a private campus in Massachusetts since the *Yeshiva* decision of 1980. The administration at Emerson College would prove to be tough negotiators. Eventually, in May 2004, the AFEC-AAUP won a contract that included significant wage increases, partial contribution by the College to a medical plan, and a grievance procedure, though some of the other terms were less than ideal. Most glaring is the no-strike provision, section 11.2 of the contract, which provides that "Part-time faculty and the Union, its representatives, agents and members will not strike,

[186] Gottfried and Zabel, 210.

[187] Ibid.

picket, leaflet, handbill, sympathy strike or in any way or manner interfere with the work and business of the College."[188] In the debate over this broadly defined no-strike provision, Moser said that "Some people call it the 'no-bad-thoughts clause.'"[189] More recently, in November of 2005 the adjunct activists at Suffolk University, Emerson College's neighbor, petitioned the NLRB to have the AAUP represent them in collective bargaining. In January of 2006, the Suffolk Affiliated Faculty/AAUP was successful at winning the votes of part-time faculty by a vote of 194 to 89 in favor of union representation.[190]

COCAL IV took place in San Jose in January of 2001, and Mary Ellen Goodwin (ESL) was the primary coordinator. Immediately after the conference she was told that she would not be rehired at San Jose City College, where the conference took place and where she otherwise had a solid teaching record for six years. This was the most expansive COCAL conference to date with more than 250 attendees. The host of the conference was the California Part-time Faculty Association (CPFA), which had been established in 1998. On the weekend of the conference, California's Governor Gray Davis announced that more than $50 million dollars would be set aside specifically for California's part-time faculty to be used for categorical expenditures covering office hours, health care, and allocations to achieve pay parity with their full-time counterparts. The Faculty Association of the California Community Colleges (FACCC), established in 1953 and primarily focused on lobbying efforts for all of California's community college

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[188] See http://www.emersonafec.com/contract.htm.

[189] Quoted by Scott Smallwood, "A Union Without a Contract," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 21, 2003.

[190] See http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/01/27/suffolk.

faculty, had a central role in gaining these categorical allocations for the part-time faculty, with the support of CPFA, which was important in getting the State Community College Chancellor and the district Chancellors on board.[191] The announcement of the allocations gave those at the conference a feeling of empowerment. Since 2001, the categorical allocations have been supported on a yearly basis and have helped to improve the livelihood of part-time faculty.

One of the accomplishments of COCAL IV was to initiate plans for Campus Equity Week (CEW), modeled after the successful grassroots Action 2000 (A2K) public awareness campaign, which they had implemented in California the previous year to draw attention to the inequities of the contingent academic labor system (A2K T-shirt: "Part-Time Faculty: 100% Commitment, 37% Pay!"). Campus Equity Week, sometimes called Fair Employment Week, has been carried out in the Fall of 2001 and then on a regular basis in subsequent years. It consists of public awareness campaigns focusing on contingent academic labor issues and has been conducted all over the U.S., Canada, and more recently in Mexico. The AFT, AAUP, NEA, and numerous other organizations have provided support, resources, and materials for the campaigns. At CUNY, for example, during Campus Equity Week 2005 there were displays of huge "seniority" scrolls which displayed records of individual part-time faculty members' time-on-the-job. There were also forums, poetry readings, and soapbox speeches. The events of CEW have been reported widely in the academic union journals, as well as in local newspapers from coast-to-coast.

Chris Storer (Philosophy, De Anza College), who was Chair of the Executive Council of the CPFA at the time of COCAL IV, and who would become a coordinator of

[191] Conversation with Margaret Quan during COCAL IV, January 2001.

Campus Equity Week, explained to me the importance of the CPFA. California's 107 Community Colleges are divided over 72 autonomous districts, each with a separate Chancellor and Board of Trustees. There are approximately 75 union locals representing all community college faculty in a patchwork pattern across the state, primarily under the umbrella of the California Federation of Teachers/AFT, the California Teachers Association/NEA, and a loose coalition of independent unions, the California Community College Independents (CCCI). With all of these fragmentations and with collective bargaining taking place at the local district level, the part-time faculty interests were getting lost in the mix. The CPFA is an organization that is not a union, and that fact allows it to cut across these lines and form a kind of broad alliance that serves the purpose of energizing the locals. This helps to break down the bureaucratic and rigid barriers within the unions, thus prodding them to act together. To some extent, the FACCC served this purpose, though its focus was on lobbying the state legislature on behalf of all the community college faculty. The CPFA's presence (which included some overlapping membership with FACCC) has caused the unions to pay more attention to part-time faculty interests and has motivated them to act by politicizing and highlighting part-time faculty issues.

Since San Jose, COCAL conferences have taken place in Montreal, Chicago, and Vancouver. In Montreal, the Concordia University Part-Time Faculty Association (CUPFA) was the host and Maria Peluso (Political Science) was the primary coordinator. In Montreal we discovered a new awareness of globalization and of our international position as contingent academics. There was a spotlight on the international trends that are shaping academic labor, and this focus included a plenary on globalization, as well as

participation by academic labor leaders from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). There was also simultaneous translation into French, Spanish, and English for the first time at COCAL. At this conference, interest was expressed by the AFT and NEA staff to provide extensive support for the next conference, which they wanted to bring to Washington DC, but we decided to go to Chicago instead. The big labor federations were taking notice, but we made a conscious decision to remain independent of them and to keep COCAL loosely structured.

Also at the Montreal COCAL, during a breakout session on regional organizing the participants from California decided to form COCAL California, and this has grown into a vibrant statewide coalition which includes numerous unions and associations from all three of California's public higher educations systems – the Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California. They even have a theme song with words set to the music of The Eagles famous hit "Hotel California."

In the Summer of 2004, Chicago-COCAL hosted COCAL VI at Roosevelt University. Joe Berry (Labor Education) was the Chair and Jocelyn Graf (ESL) was the coordinator. [192] COCAL VI helped to generate insights about the mid-west and the problems that they face, which are even greater in terms of labor organizing than are the problems faced by the unionized faculty on the east and west coast. This was also the first COCAL where there was a prominent rank-and-file presence from the Mexican contingent academic labor movement. The most recent gathering, COCAL VII, took place at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver in summer 2006, and organizing tactics and strategies, as well as discussions about the future of the organization, were carefully

[192] Joe Berry has since come out with a book which promotes an organizing strategy for contingent academic labor: *Reclaiming the Ivory Tower* (Monthly Review Press, 2005).

considered. Most recently, a COCAL chapter has formed out of the local part-time faculty activism in Oregon, perhaps inspired by the Vancouver meeting. There was much hope that COCAL VIII could be in Mexico, but due to the difficult labor conditions there and the concomitant logistical problems, it is now scheduled to be in San Diego, organized by COCAL California. This was decided as a fallback position in the hope that the proximity to Mexico will allow from there a more numerous rank-and-file delegation.

Part of the vibrancy of COCAL has been its flexibility and ability to remain apart from the bureaucratic machinations of the mainstream labor organizations. The creative chaos that has ensued, I would argue, is the most vital part of the COCAL gatherings. The hope is that these local COCAL groupings will go beyond the sharing of information, education, inspiration, and solidarity, and emerge as part of a social movement. Another aspect of the COCAL conferences is that its participants have learned about similar struggles that are taking place in different locations, and this has led to greater awareness, to a geographically expanding network of activists, and to greater possibilities for the coordination of campaigns. Unions are vitally important, but groups like CPFA and COCAL can also be beneficial in that they can create an alternate center of gravity that can give the local movements some leverage, even if it is merely a short-lived burst of alternative perspective. Also, it can place a "national" spotlight on local issues. Coordinated activities help activists and contingent faculty to feel more as if they are a part of something more meaningful. We frequently hear talk about "social movement unionism," and it is necessary that places such as COCAL be able to develop these ideas because within the union structures – especially at the level of the federations, there is a bureaucratic inertia that, at times, keeps new ways of thinking and of

participating from emerging. COCAL can potentially be a more vibrant and fluid place. It is not a substitute for labor unions, but it can complement them, in some ways similar to the old ethnic labor councils of the 1930s and 1940s that were able to bring together groupings that did not readily fit into the union structures that existed at the time, thus providing greater flexibility of action.

In these first two chapters, we have traversed the history of the changing structure of power in the United States, since the founding, and examined the role that higher education has had within each of the epochs. In doing so, it has been established 1) that class conflict has been a central component of higher education politics since the earliest days, 2) that the shape of higher education is somewhat reflective of the state of class struggle within any given epoch, i.e., higher education has become a terrain upon which classes in society struggle for power, and 3) that the continuing struggle is the mechanism through which social class difference is mediated within the structures of the university. The participants of the contingent academic labor movement, if it is to grow beyond its embryonic stage, must come to understand the socio-historical forces that have led to its creation. The class-based foundation of these forces need to be understood in order to move in a positive direction. This means that we must develop a sociological imagination, push the limits towards a seventh epoch, and not fall prey for too long to those distractions that will hinder the search for greater human freedom. We will return to these ideas more explicitly in the conclusion.

Chapter 3/ The View From New York City

The historical review of the political development of higher education in the previous chapters suggests that elites have always played a crucial role in the shaping of the college and the university, that in order to understand these processes we need to understand the shape of power in any given epoch, and that elite power, though influential, is clearly not the last word on the subject. At every moment, conflict and resistance emerges, and, consequently, there are possibilities for the process to be influenced from below. In this chapter, class relations and the role of political power with regard to the system of public higher education in New York City are the focus. It examines the expansion of public higher education in New York City and the manner in which it fits into the broader shifts in the structure of power. By examining five aspects of the history of CUNY – the struggles over the founding of the Free Academy, the conflicts of the Progressive Era, the initial formation of academic labor, the fight for open admissions, and the effect that the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s had on CUNY – this chapter will delve more deeply into the role of class conflict and into the politics of higher education. These struggles have shaped the trends that still mark everyday experiences at CUNY. Knowledge of the history of these developments can help us to better understand how the circumstances facing academic labor today are rooted in the changing relationship between the academic world and the broader trends of our own epoch. Most notably this history shows how the politics of higher education is rooted in class conflict that is intersected and overlapped with ethnic and racial conflicts. Thus, this chapter provides a closer look at the claims of the previous chapters and it sets the

stage for the first case study in the chapter that follows, i.e., contingent academic labor at CUNY during the sixth epoch.

The Free Academy

As noted in Chapter One, educational opportunity in the United States was expanded, along with the expansion of the franchise in the form of universal white male suffrage, during the era of Jacksonian Democracy. This era included the beginnings of the industrial revolution, which went hand-in-hand with the growth of urbanization and with the growth of the organized labor movement. No small part of this process of democratization was the founding of the Free Academy, which took place in 1847.

S. Willis Rudy's *The College of the City of New York: A History, 1847-1947* provides a detailed narrative history of this founding. The Free Academy was formed through a democratic process that expressed a profound belief in human potential. Townsend Harris, a popular merchant elected President of the Board of Education on June 10, 1846, was "determined to sponsor the establishment of a free college."[1] The act that authorized the establishment of a free academy had mostly followed the recommendations made by Harris and his colleagues at the Board of Education.[2] This act, signed on May 7, 1847 by Governor John Young, a member of the Whig party, authorized the city to raise money through taxation, and it came with the proviso of limitations on expenditures for construction and support.[3] It also set the date for the

[1] Willis S. Rudy, *The College of the City of New York: A History, 1847-1947* (New York: The City College Press, Inc., 1949), 10-11.

[2] Ibid., 17.

[3] Ibid.

popular referendum. As the referendum neared, the debate ensued and the Whig newspapers lined up against the Academy.[4]

> The Whig editors argued that there was no need for the proposed institution since existing educational facilities and free scholarships could take care of all who desired a higher education. In no case did they state frankly their distrust of free higher education for the masses, since such a forthright pronouncement would have furnished invaluable ammunition to the supporters of the Academy. But this point of view was voiced openly in letters printed in their papers at the height of the controversy.[5]

One anonymous correspondent wrote the following to the *Journal of Commerce*:

> A calm observer of the signs of the time… must distinctly perceive in many of the passing events of the day unerring indications of the spread of that Agrarianism which preceded the decline and fall of the Roman republic. The determination on the part of the pauper class among us to levy upon the active, industrious (and, if you please, affluent) portion of the community, the expense of furnishing to the sons of the former, a college education (through the Free Academy project), must be viewed as one of the most shameless acts which disgrace these corrupt and degenerate times.[6]

Despite this vitriolic disdain for the poor, the majority of the editorial pages in the city supported the Free Academy.[7]

On June 7, 1847, the citizens of the city of New York overwhelmingly voted affirmatively on a popular referendum that authorized the establishment of a Free Academy. The Tammany Hall Democratic machine had mobilized its forces to bring out a favorable vote.[8] Had they opposed it, as did the Whigs, they would have "surely been

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[4] Rudy, 19.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 19-20.

[7] Ibid., 20.

[8] Ibid.

voted down on election day."[9] Placards which read, "Free Academy for the poor man's children," were posted all around the city.[10] The official count was 19,305 in favor of the proposed Academy and 3,409 opposed.[11] It was "the first municipal institution for free higher education to appear on this globe."[12]

The purpose of establishing the Free Academy was to extend the benefits of education freely "to persons who have been pupils in the common schools of the said City and County of New York."[13] The principal of the Free Academy, Dr. Horace Webster, formally inaugurated the school on January 29, 1849 with these words:

> The Free Academy is now to go into operation. The experiment is to be tried, whether the highest education can be given to the masses; whether the children of the people, the children of the whole people, can be educated; and whether an institution of learning, of the highest grade, can be successfully controlled by the popular will, not by the privileged few, but by the privileged many.[14]

To be sure, Rudy indicates that it was not the working men (and certainly not the working women) who managed and controlled the new institution of higher education, but, rather, the "affairs of the Free Academy… were in the hands of business and professional men who favored free education for the masses."[15]

The Free Academy, it should be understood, was not open to all. Free education was not being offered to all levels of the "masses," but rather to those who were qualified

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[9] Rudy.

[10] Ibid., 21.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 2.

[13] Ibid., 22.

[14] Ibid., 29.

[15] Ibid., 23.

academically.[16] Economic limitations may have been diminished, but intellectual ones were not. Indeed, the intellectual standards from the beginning were rigorous. The curriculum was designed to be "both practical and liberal," including bookkeeping and drawing, but also including the more traditional courses, such as Latin, Mathematics, and History.[17]

Soon after the end of the Civil War, in 1866, the name of The Free Academy was changed to the more "imposing" name of The College of the City of New York (CCNY).[18] This was intended to enhance its reputation. In these early years, the majority of the student population were native-born citizens of the United States, predominantly of Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, or Huguenot descent.[19] There were only a few Irish and German, and even fewer Jews.[20] In terms of social classes, the student population was representative of the city—it was comprised of a cross-section of New York society, neither exclusively rich nor wholly poor.[21] Sherry Gorelick sheds some light on the composition of the student body when she points out that until the beginning of the 20th Century, "when it began to serve the Russian Jewish poor, City College was mainly a school for the sons of prosperous but not really wealthy and well-established families."[22] A New York boy "whose family was not immediately dependent on the

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[16] Rudy, 459.

[17] Ibid., 28.

[18] Ibid., 88.

[19] Ibid., 68.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Sherry Gorelick, *City College and the Jewish Poor: Education in New York, 1880-1924* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1981), 67.

income from his wages… [was able to] obtain free public schooling from 'common school' through the sub-freshman year of the Free Academy," and on to a baccalaureate.[23] However, she adds, that as late as 1911 this "possibility became a reality for an extremely small proportion of the population and an even smaller proportion of the working class."[24]

The Progressive Era: Centralization and Expansion

In the later years of the Nineteenth Century and the early years of the Twentieth Century there was not a more significant influence on the direction and development of our schools than the struggles surrounding the Progressive movement. The big business white Protestant Progressive Republicans successfully sought to shift control of the public schools from the elected local school boards to an appointed central School board for Greater New York.[25] The most prominent advocates of the centralization of urban schools, in general, were university presidents, and it was they who were at the forefront of the reform movement.[26] The Progressives were interested in centralizing decision making over the schools and instituting differentiation, hierarchy, and a system of career ladders for both faculty and students. Centralization of the schools, along with the mandatory establishment of the high schools, were policies that had a significant impact

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[23] Gorelick, 70.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., 74-75.

[26] David B. Tyack, "City Schools: Centralization of Control at the Turn of the Century," in *Power and Ideology in Education*, edited and with an introduction by Jerome Karabel and A. H. Halsey (NewYork: Oxford University Press, 1977), 397.

on the development of City College, and, eventually, on the ability of academic labor to mobilize support in their communities.

Control of the school system was necessary to promote the Progressive vision of society, and to promote their class interests. Prior to 1896, the New York City public schools operated on a decentralized basis with a twenty-one member central Board of Education which made "basic educational policy for the city and provided more general administrative supervision for the system as a whole… But most responsibility for the primary and grammar schools that served the overwhelming majority of the children was given over to the ward trustees."[27] The Public Education Society was one of the first groups that sought the centralization of the school system and developed a proposal towards that end.[28] The reformers charged the boards of ward trustees with being subservient to Tammany Hall and, thus, corrupted. David Hammack, however, documents the support that the trustee system had among numerous political and religious groups and it went well beyond Tammany Hall.[29] These opponents of centralization fought vigorously against the Progressives and their charges of corruption. Although there was some truth to the reformers complaints of the constant disputes and wrangling over budgetary matters between the central and local boards, Hammack argues that "the reformers chief objection was that the wrong sort of people managed the decentralized schools and managed them in the wrong sort of way."[30]

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[27] David C. Hammack, *Power and Society: Greater New York at the Turn of the Century* (United States: Russell Sage Foundation, 1982), 262.

[28] Ibid., 261.

[29] Ibid., 268-269.

[30] Ibid., 270.

Many of the European immigrants who flowed into New York City at the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century brought with them an openness to forming labor unions, to engaging in strikes, to struggling with the capitalist system of industry, and to applying socialist ideas to their new country. The Progressive paradigm called for a centralization of power, ostensibly to make government and its institutions less corrupt and more efficient, but having the effect of removing power from the "unwashed masses." Progressivism had numerous strands, but clearly running through it was a bias against the culture of the immigrants, as discussed in Chapter One.

At the center of the struggle, as far as it pertained to schooling, was Nicholas Murray Butler, the long-time president of Columbia University from 1902 to 1945. Thomas Bender explains that Butler understood the role of knowledge in modern society and its relationship to power, and, furthermore, that he "early appreciated a central fact of modern society… that the university helps create the class structure." [31] As a means of mapping out the lower tier of that structure, Butler was in favor of the expansion of the City College. Bender goes on to explain that Butler viewed the University system as a new social force:

> …[It] would regulate both social mobility and professional standards. Different universities, he realized, would feed different levels in the structure of the professions. He wanted Columbia with its potentially decisive metropolitan location to be the premier national academic influence. Other, lesser colleges and universities could facilitate more modest levels of social mobility and more intermediate levels of professional authority. If Columbia, for example, educated Wall Street lawyers and city and state school administrators, NYU and CCNY could supply neighborhood lawyers and public school teachers.[32]

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[31] Thomas Bender, *New York Intellect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, From 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 286.

[32] Ibid., 288.

This hierarchy was not simply a merit-based system. In the 1910s, "[w]ith 40 percent of the public high school graduates in the city Jewish, mostly the children of Eastern European immigrants, [Butler] …began to worry that Columbia was too accessible."[33] His policies of "selective admission" at Columbia limited Jewish enrollment.[34] His plan was not to exclude Jewish students from Columbia altogether, but to channel most of them to the public college – CCNY.[35] He, thus, provided strong support for the expansion of City College, and then, in the 1920's, when the immigrant threat "seemed to be coming from Brooklyn, he urged the creation of a City College campus there."[36] City College had an Evening Session branch for men at Boys High School as of 1917, and Hunter College had an Extension Center for women as of 1925.[37] These merged in 1930 to form Brooklyn College, the first public coeducational liberal arts college in New York City.

Expansion of education and the opportunities it afforded went side by side with the segmentation of society. Bender points out the implications of this national system of educational hierarchy:

> The simultaneous homogenization and nationalization of the student body of Columbia College was part of a more general development in which, as E. Digby Baltzell has shown, Eastern elite schools, emphasizing shared values and social experience as well as professional skills, participated in the making of a national elite. The whole phenomenon, Protestant at its

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[33] Bender, 288.

[34] Ibid., 289.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid., 288.

[37] Thomas Evans Coulton, *A City College in Action: Struggle and Achievement at Brooklyn College, 1930-1955* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), 18.

> core, was at once forward-looking in its commitment to professional standards and reactionary in its fears of immigration as subversive of the values of Anglo-American civilization.[38]

Education in the Progressive era had come to be a central battlefield within the broader terrain of class conflict and CCNY was an important component of that battle.

The steps required to transform education included both the integration of the City College into the national hierarchy of higher education and the centralization of the administrative authority over the public schools in New York City.[39] These two goals were not mutually exclusive, but were, in fact, related. The lack of a separate system of high schools in New York City prior to 1896 meant that City College and its sister school, the Normal College (renamed Hunter College in 1914), were the only public institutions that could prepare the youth of New York for college.[40] City College and the Normal College each had preparatory schools that served as the educational "ladders" in New York City. They included a curriculum for sub-freshman year that preceded the four-year baccalaureate.[41] Gorelick argues that the lack of high schools and the preparatory role served by City College and the Normal College was "a fact which impeded their integration into the developing national system of higher education."[42] It was part of the Progressives' strategy to change this.

The Progressives' plans to reshape the school system gained momentum in 1896 with the state legislature's passage of the Pavey bill, which centralized control in an

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[38] Bender, 289.

[39] Gorelick, 74-77.

[40] Ibid., 74.

[41] Ibid., 70.

[42] Ibid., 74.

appointed Board of Education and empowered that Board to establish high schools.[43] These structural changes reinforced the Progressive agenda. The State Board of Regents was now able to "require modifications in CCNY's curriculum and admissions requirements."[44] Most notably, the Board of Regents introduced what is known as the "Carnegie contingency." It required that in order "to be ranked as a college in New York it must not only have a course of four full years of college grade in liberal arts and sciences, but must also require for admission four years of high school…"[45] Thus the legislation of the ladders coincided with and reinforced the Progressive agenda. By establishing the middle rungs, i.e., the high schools, the Progressive dual agenda of expanding education and making the climb steeper was achieved.[46]

In addition to the development of structural changes in the educational institutions, the Progressive reforms also included a strategy to deal with faculty, and Gorelick explains how this was implemented with regard to City College. The Carnegie Foundation's national pension plan, discussed in Chapter One, gave grants to colleges so that they might provide pensions to older, more traditional, professors.[47] However, there were strings attached to these grants. Gorelick identifies four major objectives achieved by this plan:

> …the establishment of elective systems at numerous colleges, the weakening of religious control, the redefinition of college entrance requirements, and the reorganization of high school curricula to prepare

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[43] Gorelick, 77.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 78.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid., 56.

> youngsters for college, effectively making the high schools an intermediate link in a "ladder of success."[48]

And, of course, the pensions themselves were used to retire the older, more traditional professors and replace them with younger ones who were more accepting of the elective system, thus smoothing the way for these reforms.[49]

The funds were given directly to colleges, but only to those that fit the Carnegie criteria. These were institutions that would follow a specific structure as well as a specific curriculum and have a minimum endowment of at least $200,000, among other requirements.[50] Gorelick argues that such a generous and ambitious plan had serious implications:

> The Carnegie Foundation concentrated its funds in about twenty colleges and universities, and these major institutions were generally the ones that produced (and still produce) a major proportion of the Ph.D's who taught at the rest of the colleges and universities across the country. Influence on the character of higher education would henceforth trickle down. The foundations thus provide the material underpinnings for the academic prestige hierarchy, at the bottom of which schools such as the College of the City of New York—serving poor and minority students—customarily get short shrift. The "lead system" ensured the continuance of a structure of institutional inequality.[51]

CCNY was administratively reorganized by means similar to those used by the Carnegie Foundation on the national level: "Pension funds were created to entice conservatives to retire, and the faculty… was expanded and 'democratized' to increase the proportion of liberals."[52]

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[48] Gorelick, 58.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., 58-59.

[51] Ibid., 57.

[52] Ibid., 78-79.

This democratization can be viewed as a welcome modernization of the curriculum, the faculty structure, student governance, and student requirements, however, as it was practiced it had a dual meaning. On the one hand, the reforms were "responses to protests by tutors and students."[53] On the other hand, the Progressives used these protests as a means to implement their own agenda—greater differentiation, hierarchy, and steeper career ladders.[54] Democratization, in this case, "meant both greater individual freedom and greater centralized control."[55] By skillfully teasing out the major ideological cleavages that animated this period, Gorelick expresses these contrasting views as follows:

> To the Progressives democracy meant the philanthropic administration of wealth by the capitalist class as opposed to redistribution of wealth between the classes. Democracy meant individual opportunity for mobility as opposed to working class organization; democracy thus required the removal of policymaking from the public and its centralization in Progressive hands. Democracy meant a college education for rich and poor in which opportunity for the poor would not undermine advantage for the rich. Finally, democracy meant closer articulation between education and industry, to provide individual choice among alternative career paths within a given structure.[56]

These transformations affected the total education process from the national structure of the higher education system to the teaching in the classroom. A "professional" pedagogy had developed and it "was the Progressives who defined professionalism."[57]

> They endowed it with an ideology favorable to business, hostile to socialism, and scornful of immigrant cultures. Perhaps more than anyone

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[53] Gorelick, 83.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., 83-84.

[57] Ibid., 93.

> else it was Nicholas Murray Butler who defined professionalism… In creating Teachers College of Columbia University, Butler and his associates institutionalized a professional ideology that favored management's side of the dispute with labor over manual training.[58]

Manual training included such programs as drafting, mechanics, wood and metal shop, i.e., vocational skills. Training vocational teachers to inculcate "management's side" was fundamental to the professional ideology that would later be adapted and have an influence on the idea of professional unionism, a model of academic unionism discussed in greater detail further on in this dissertation. At City College, which in the 1890s had "produced *all* of the manual training teachers for the New York City public schools," management's side of the conflict with labor "had become part of the assumed training of New York City teachers."[59]

In addition to the "professional" pedagogy that developed after 1913, the school management movement also began to develop. This was an attempt to turn administration into a "profession."[60] It was engendered by the "high cost and high failure rate in the schools."[61] This movement had "efficiency" as its watchword and was rooted in the principles of Taylorism. Gorelick explains it as such:

> Taylorism in education, like Taylorism in industry and Taylorism in the office, was fundamentally an effort at labor control and at reduction of the wage bill. In education, as in industry, scientific management involved measurement fetishism and increased work loads for each employee. In education the efficiency movement was motivated by the desire to cope with school overcrowding, continually aggravated by burgeoning immigration, while simultaneously reducing the amount of money spent on school buildings and teachers' salaries. Moreover, scientific

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[58] Gorelick, 93.

[59] Ibid., 95.

[60] Ibid., 99.

[61] Ibid., 98.

> management in education reflected the desire to control the rapidly expanding teaching force, including the recruitment of women, lower-class men, and the children of immigrants—that is, people who were culturally suspect, an especially serious matter when their job was the transmission of culture.[62]

As might be expected, the school management movement coincided with the movement to unionize teachers in the schools, which was "well under way by 1906."[63] In 1916, the New York Teachers Union formed and "the American Federation of Teachers became the first group of professional public servants to affiliate with the AFL."[64]

The social engineering put forward by the proponents of the Progressive movement met with a great deal of success in terms of institutional transformation, however, things do not always turn out exactly the way they are planned. Gorelick's study provides a strong example of this tendency. She points out that City College was modernized at the turn of the century by business-oriented reformers, but the students, mostly Russian Jewish boys at this time, were not simply matter to be shaped by the pedagogy of the reformers.[65] The free tuition, the reformed curriculum, and the expanded size made "Jewish mobility through education possible and set the framework for that mobility."[66] However, it was not simply a matter of the institution being made available and the Russian Jewish students taking advantage of that opportunity. The Russian-Jewish students changed "the school's social and cultural atmosphere and helped, at least

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[62] Gorelick, 99.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid., 61.

[66] Ibid.

indirectly, to transform it into an instrument for the assimilation of the immigrant poor."[67] The reformed curriculum that they endured contained a "heady brew of racism and contempt for socialism," however, Gorelick argues that what was "remarkable" was not the "Jewish propensity towards education," which was institutionally encouraged, but rather "the persistence, despite equally intensive efforts at discouragement, of Jewish radicalism."[68]

Thus, the Progressive institutional agenda may have claimed the day, but not without being shaped and influenced by countervailing forces. Gorelick captures the dialectical turns of this process:

> For the rise of the Jewish teacher was made possible by the militancy of Jewish labor, which, with other immigrant and immigrant-descended labor, created the problems of worker control and political strife, which in turn inspired the business class to solve those training and social control problems by expanding the schools and hiring the sons and daughters of immigrants to socialize the sons and daughters of immigrants. The class consciousness of immigrant labor became the condition for the upward mobility—and embourgeoisement—of immigrant children.[69]

The history of City College shows us how people can go far beyond the structures that are "designed" for them. During the reign of John H. Finley, President of City College from 1903 to 1913, (and the favored choice for that position by Grover Cleveland and by Nicholas Murray Butler), City College began a "new era" of technological, pedagogical, and business schools.[70] In changing the emphasis of the curriculum, "Finley moved to increase City College's 'service to society' (which tended to get confused in his mind

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[67] Gorelick, 61.

[68] Ibid., 192.

[69] Ibid., 111.

[70] The Newt Davidson Collective, *Crisis at CUNY* (Unpublished, but widely distributed manuscript, printed by group of CUNY faculty identified only by their first names or initials, 1974), 51.

with service to industry)."[71] But despite these trends to train and stratify the workforce, during the ensuing decades City College became a place where anti-capitalist radicalism and anti-fascism blossomed.[72] The struggles over fascism in the 1930s found the City College campus to be a site of battle. In 1934 when City College President Robinson gave an official reception for 350 Fascist students from Mussolini's Italy, it was met by "a sea of hissing, anti-Fascist students [who] disrupted the celebration."[73] Twenty-one leftist student leaders were expelled for being discourteous to guests.[74]

The changes to structure, curriculum, and to the composition of the faculty may be designed to reinforce a hierarchical class structure, but it does not mean that the real human beings affected by these structures will comply. The expansion of the university that would soon be underway, brought with it new problems and new opportunities. In 1926 the Board of Higher Education (BHE) was created. In 1929, when the entire corporation administered by the BHE became known as The College of the City of New York, the college on the hill in Hamilton Heights became officially known as The City College of New York.[75] In the 1920s and 1930s the growth of the College proceeded apace. In 1929, a branch of Hunter College was established in the Bronx, which later, in 1968, became Herbert H. Lehman College. The BHE established Brooklyn College in 1930, as noted above. Also in 1930, a business school branch of City College was founded on the old site for City College at 23rd Street and Lexington Avenue. This

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[71] The Newt Davidson Collective, *Crisis at CUNY,* 51.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Rudy, 386-387.

college would later, in 1969, become Bernard M. Baruch College. And in 1937 Queens College was formed. It was within this context of expanded educational opportunities that academic labor at CUNY began to organize.

Union Formation

As indicated in Chapter One, the situation for college teachers has never been very good in terms of earnings – the rewards have always been tilted towards the personal fulfillment side of the scale. And the collective sense among faculty as being part of an organized labor force has been an identity that is often called into question. As Thorstein Veblen points out, teachers tend to "balk at rating this work as a frankly materialistic and pecuniary occupation"[76]; thus their aversion to organized labor unions and to the piece-wage demands for which they bargain. But not all college faculty have shared this antipathy.

Academic labor organizing in the New York City colleges started long before the advent of the contemporary contingent academic labor system. In the fall of 1935, shortly after the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, the New York Teachers Union, Local 5 of the AFT, formed a college section.[77] By early 1938, this "section" became Local 537 of the AFT – The New York College Teachers Union.[78] The events of this tumultuous decade influenced the shape of the faculty hierarchy. Abraham Edel,

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[76] Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America*, 117.

[77] Abraham Edel, *The Struggle for Academic Democracy: Lessons From the 1938 "Revolution" in New York's City Colleges* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 41; Thanks to Jean Weisman, author of "CUNY Faculty and Staff – Struggling for Democracy from the 1930s to the 1990s," (Unpublished manuscript, circa 1998). The Teachers Union, Local 5, was founded in 1916 by Henry Linville and Abraham Lefkowitz.

[78] Edel, 56.

chair of the Educational Policies Committee of the Teachers Union during the 1930s, describes this process:

> The growth of the city colleges and the faculties in the period of the Great Depression had serious economic consequences. To save money, teachers were employed in the very lowest ranks. If they had doctorates, they could be instructors, the rank below assistant professor. If they had not completed the doctorate, they were appointed as tutors. Full-time tutors carried a full-time schedule (fifteen hours of classes per week); they were not, as in many other institutions, simply graduate discussion assistants. They thus did regular jobs at substandard salaries. Indeed, below tutors was the rank of fellows, also doing regular teaching. The net result was that about two-thirds of the faculty consisted of teachers in the rank of instructor and below.[79]

The titles have changed, but the inequities remain. The progressive faculty activists of the 1930s are the ancestors of the current crop of radical teachers. The lessons call to us.

In April of 1936, Morris Schappes, a popular tutor and an activist who sought to improve the working conditions for teachers, was fired after eight years in the English department. This was a few weeks after the Chair of the department, Professor Charles Francis Horne let him know in no uncertain terms that he did not appreciate Schappes reading Karl Marx to his class (though it was Percy Bysshe Shelley that Horne had heard him reading, not Marx).[80] Twelve others, all activist in the union or in the Anti-Fascist Association, had also been fired.[81] There was a groundswell of protest by faculty, students, unions, and by the Instructional Staff Association.[82] A massive public campaign ensued that was initiated by the Teachers Union. It was recognized by faculty

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[79] Edel, 38-39.

[80] Stephen Leberstein, "Morris U. Schappes at City College," *Jewish Currents*, September-October, 2004, 22.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Edel, 41.

and by students "that academic freedom was at stake."[83] Just weeks after Schappes was fired, he was reinstated and the following occurred:

> …the City College Administrative Committee of the board passed a resolution notifying department heads that "it was a wise and proper policy to continue in their position tutors classed as probationary or temporary who had served more than three years unless their exist strong compelling reasons based on teacher-qualifications, for their separation from service." This not only led to the dropping of the action against Schappes but saved the jobs of eleven other men who were to be dismissed as part of a move toward retrenchment by a policy of rotation.[84]

Thus, it was in the 1936 battle that tenure was, in principle, first established for the lower ranks.[85] This had been "the object of the 'democratization plan' put forward by the Teachers Union."[86] The push for academic democracy included such reform measures as giving faculty a role in the selection of presidents, deans, and directors, as well as being able to organize their departments as they see fit, and electing departmental chairs, instead of having them be appointed, these being crucial characteristics of professional academic life.[87]

The avenues of participation available to academic unions during these years did not include the collective bargaining that we know today, but through public pressure, lobbying, and education, the faculty organizations made their voices heard. Marjorie Murphy characterizes the tactics and activities of the Teachers Union as being rooted in

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[83] Edel, 41.

[84] Ibid., 42. Leberstein (2004) writes that it was thirteen, in all, whereas Edel accounts for twelve.

[85] Edel, 42.

[86] Stephen Leberstein, "Purging the Profs: The Rapp Coudert Committee in New York, 1940--1942," in *New Studies in the Politics and Culture of U.S. Communism*, edited by Michael E. Brown, Randy Martin, Frank Rosengarten, and George Snedeker (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1993), 97.

[87] Edel, 53-60.

the community-based organizing style of the Communist party.[88] The influence of the Communist party upon the Teachers Union was one source of their strength, but, ultimately, it was also the grounds for the attacks upon them that led to their demise. The issue of communism in the unions would pretty much get resolved in the transition from the fourth epoch to the fifth epoch (i.e., pre-war and post-war), and the TU was a casualty of this resolution. Though the Teachers Union contained a number of different radical left factions that were active at the time – among them, Trotskyites, Lovestonites, Socialists, Musteites – the role played by the Communist party represented a legacy that the Teachers Union would never live down.[89] It represents a complex layering of the issues for the Teachers Union, and it requires a brief explanation if we are to understand later formations of teacher unionism and how they developed.

As of 1935, the Communist party had about 30,000 members in the United States.[90] With the formation of the CIO (1935), and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (1935), the Communist party organizers were able to have an important impact on the militant industrial workers movement. Given this context, and the decision of the Comintern in August 1935, which called for a broad popular front to oppose fascism – meaning that the Party, with the blessings of Moscow, could ally with other parties and organizations, even centrist or liberal organizations – the Party began to grow in strength and numbers. By 1938 Party membership had grown to more than 80,000. The Teachers Union, not surprisingly, also had its heyday during this period.

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[88] Marjorie Murphy, *Blackboard Unions, The AFT and the NEA, 1900—1980* (Ithaca and London. Cornell University Press, 1990), 170.

[89] Ibid., 156-157.

[90] James Ciment, "Communist Party," *The Encyclopedia of Third Parties in America*, edited by Immanuel Ness and James Ciment (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 2000), Volume 1, 206-220.

The U.S. Communist party has a mixed legacy for many of those on the left of American politics. On the one hand, its demise was rooted in its own errors and misguided principles. It was organized around orders received from Moscow and for Moscow, and it did not tolerate any dissent from within its ranks; those who would dissent would often find themselves expelled from the Party and sometimes vilified in varying degrees. On the other hand, many of its adherents were dedicated activists and had high ideals, and they were attracted to the Party for the same reasons they were attracted to trade unionism: they were mostly the children of poor immigrants, or poor immigrants themselves, and the Communist Party became, among other things, a vehicle for their local and immediate concerns.[91] These circumstances helped many of them to become skilled organizers.

> The Communist party, indifferent to the largely professional goals of the teachers' union leadership, was most active in pursuing alliances with parent and community groups. Projects in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem were particularly successful. In 1935 the Communist Party successfully launched the Harlem Committee for Better Schools, a coalition of parents' associations, churches, community groups, and teacher-union members… The committee succeeded in getting two new schools built in Harlem in 1938, a remarkable achievement at that time.[92]

Within the Teachers Union, there was, in part due to the factionalism, a "new energy, new militancy, and a broadened social consciousness" that had emerged.[93] They organized and advocated for civil rights, for the poor, for the unemployed, and, for a time, they were among the most adept advocates for social justice. As long as these community organizing practices and activities (which helped the Teachers Union to grow

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[91] E-mail correspondence with Stephen Leberstein, November 16, 2006.

[92] Murphy, 157.

[93] Ibid.

in stature and in political power) also benefited the broader aims of the Communist party, then the union and the party were able to flourish simultaneously. However, when their interests diverged, then there was a problem. For example, there was a time in 1937 when many members of the Teachers Union were considering breaking from the AFL and bringing the AFT with them to join the CIO, but the order from the communist party leadership was that they wanted the Teachers in the AFL to provide a platform for the party so as to gain leverage in the AFL. Some argued that this was to the detriment of the teachers, and that in the long run, the Teachers Union would have been better off and better protected in the more left-leaning CIO.[94]

The radical activism of the Teachers Union that led to the tenure provision of 1936 had paved the way for the concessions on tenure which the Legislative Conference – a lobbying group from the municipal colleges – later brought to fruition. During this period, the Teachers Union made other significant gains as well. For example, by the time of the 1940 AFT convention, it had played an important role in getting the state legislature to restore 80 percent of a $10 million cut in school aid which had been finagled the previous year by taxpayers' associations, and it had also "helped defeat proposals for salary cuts and the freezing of salary increments."[95]

The victories of the Teachers Union would come under a grey cloud with the advent of two lines of attack, both of them related to the Union's ties to the Communist Party. One was the formation of the Rapp-Coudert Committee in the New York State

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[94] Bella Dodd, *School of Darkness* (New York: P.J. Kenedy and Sons, 1954), Chapter 8. Similar point made by Marjorie Murphy in *Blackboard Unions*, but she claims that this conflict occurred in 1936.

[95] Celia Lewis Zitron, *The New York City Teachers Union, 1916—1964, A Story of Educational and Social Commitment* (New York: Humanities Press, 1968), 32.

legislature, established with the dual purpose of examining the financial situation in public education and to root out subversive activity, meaning, of course, communists. The other line of attack came from within the AFT, and it ended with the expulsion of the Teachers Union (Local 5), as well as its offspring, the College Teachers Union (Local 537), and a Philadelphia local (Local 192) from the AFT. The tandem attacks kept the radical unions busy and it diminished their power.

The problems for the Teachers Union and their college counterpart were complicated by external events, most significantly, the Hitler-Stalin pact of August 1939. Prior to the pact, the Communists were among the leaders in the anti-fascist popular front, but after the ill-fated agreement was made the U.S. Communist Party did an infamous about-face and its followers became advocates of peace, which many on the Left saw as representing slavish obedience to their master and a great betrayal to their anti-fascist former allies. It destroyed the Communist Party's credibility in the labor movement and made it vulnerable to attack in ways that were not possible prior to the pact. In the period beginning in August 1939 and ending in June 1941, when the Nazi's invaded the Soviet Union, membership in the Party had plummeted to under 50,000. It was during this period that Local 5, 537, and 192 were most vulnerable.

The founders of the Teachers Union, Henry Linville and Abraham Lefkowitz, had been trying unsuccessfully since at least 1932 to rid it of the Communist party, and of the other communist factions, as well. It was early in 1935 that AFL President William Green was urging the AFT to "oust the Communists from New York's Local 5."[96] Having failed at that in the 1935 convention, Linville and Lefkowitz left the Teachers

[96] Murphy, 161.

Union with about 800 members and a majority of the Executive Board and formed the independent Teachers Guild.[97] The AFL had continued the pressure on the AFT by refusing to hire new organizers and by limiting other means of support.[98] The Teachers Union and its supporters had held a majority on the Executive Council of the AFT between 1935 and 1940, but given the Hitler-Stalin pact this began to change after the 1939 AFT convention when George Counts won the AFT Presidency.[99] Though the radicals still had clout on the Executive Board, Counts began to maneuver against the three unions. In 1940 Counts built up support for the ouster of the communists. By 1941, they were ready to move. Having conducted a Spring mail referendum of the membership and obtaining a majority, the Executive Council proceeded to exclude New York Locals 5 and 537, and Philadelphia Local 192 from the August 1941 convention.[100] In this way, according to Celia Zitron, the Executive Council could avoid "a confrontation of views before the delegates at the national convention, the only ones authorized by the AFT constitution to vote expulsion. (In 1935 the delegates, after hearing opponents of charter revocation, had rejected the recommendation of the executive council.)."[101] The three locals were then expelled at the August 1941 convention in Detroit.[102]

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[97] Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, "Organizational History," *Guide to the New York Teachers Guild Record, 1923-1957, Collection Number: 5279,* http://rmc.library.cornell.edu/EAD/htmldocs/KCL05279.html; Murphy, 161.

[98] Murphy, 162.

[99] Ibid., 165-166.

[100] Zitron, 34.

[101] Ibid.

[102] What were the charges against the Teachers Union and their allies? Celia Lewis Zitron explains them as follows: "The gist of the charges against Local 5 was that it constituted an obstacle to the growth of the

The Teachers Guild had remained waiting in the wings. Given the attack by the Rapp-Coudert Committee, which occupied much of the time, energy, and attention of Locals 5 and 537, plus the attacks from within the AFT, they were embattled and outflanked. Now, with the Teachers Union, their college counterparts, and their friends from Philadelphia finally ousted from the AFT, the path was clear for the Teachers Guild to be quickly given a charter as Local 2 of the AFT.[103]

The Teachers Union and their offspring, the College Teachers Union, were the central targets of the Rapp-Coudert Committee. The hearings in the State legislature became known as the "dress rehearsal" for the McCarthyism of the 1950s.[104] Its purpose was to investigate the financial situation in higher education, due to alleged abuses of public spending, and to root out subversive influences at the public colleges, meaning Communists.[105] Some viewed the Committee's activity as "an attack on public education, trade unionism, and civil liberties" that was meant to "discredit teacher unionism and to justify reduced spending on public education."[106] Interestingly, it was State Senator Coudert, persuaded by the Legislative Conference, who would be responsible for (re)introducing and sponsoring the successful 1940 tenure legislation.[107]

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organization and that it had tried to take the AFT out of the AFL and into the CIO. These charges were contradicted by the reports at the convention and by the position of Local 5 in convention discussions on affiliation with the CIO. Basically, the executive council relied on the red scare to put across the expulsions." (Zitron, 34).

[103] Zitron, 35.

[104] Edel, 81-82.

[105] Edel, 81; Leberstein (1993), 96.

[106] Leberstein (1993), 96-97

[107] See Gerald Grayson, "The Legislative Conference and Statutory Tenure," *The Clarion*, September 1981. *The Clarion* is the newspaper of the Professional Staff Congress.

This could be interpreted to mean that Coudert was not as anti-labor as he was anti-communist; or, more likely, perhaps, one could conceivably argue that the Legislative Conference represented a more palatable alternative for the conservative Coudert and that its success could undermine the credibility of the College Teachers Union as an effective vehicle. If the latter is true, then the radicalism of the Teachers Union paved the way for the concessions to the Legislative Conference. But that would be speculation at this point.

The Legislative Conference had been formed in 1938 through the merger of the legislative committees that formed a few years earlier at the four municipal colleges (Brooklyn, City, Hunter, and Queens).[108] As noted, its primary activity was lobbying. The 1936 tenure provision, for which the Teachers Union could take credit, was instituted more firmly when the Board of Higher Education adopted it as a by-law in 1938. The Legislative Conference spearheaded the campaign and worked with the various faculty organizations on the campuses to push for both the tenure by-law and for the 1940 tenure legislation signed into law by Governor Herbert H. Lehman.[109] The Legislative Conference became an important vehicle for the municipal college teachers in New York City as the College Teachers Union found itself increasingly under siege.

While the communist/anti-communist dimension to the conflict surrounding the Teachers Union was given much public attention, a less noticed conflict regarding the *kind* of unionism that would be most appropriate for teachers was being engaged without such public scrutiny. Whereas the Teachers Union at its best was rooted in a kind of

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[108] Irwin Yellowitz, "Academic Governance and Collective Bargaining in the City University of New York," *Academe*, November-December, 1987, 8.

[109] Grayson, *The Clarion*, September 1981, 8-9.

working class identity that made links to the community, another tradition, most commonly associated with the National Education Association (NEA) in its early years, was one of "professionalism" that saw a unity in the aims of administrators and faculty.[110] Professionalism was an aspect of the Progressive drive for the centralization of the schools. It was part of the process that empowered the school superintendents so as to act "efficiently" in the hiring and firing of personnel.

> What was needed was an ideology that separated teachers from the community, reinforcing their differences from the communities they came from and making them the hirelings of a new superintendent of schools who alone would determine their success in education. Professionalization became a tool for totally reshaping the lines of authority in school administration, for weeding out those of less desirable ethnic and social origins through requirements for higher education, and for instilling a sense of loyalty not to the community, but to the school principal, superintendent, and educational professoriate.[111]

Over time, the idea of what constituted "professionalism" gradually adapted and grew closer to the unionism which it had often opposed; as well, teacher unionism, especially with the ouster of the radicals, took on more of the qualities of professionalism. By the early 1940s, the rivals to the Teachers Union, such as Henry Linville and George Counts, "were promoting a more consensual politics, one where teachers were in trade unions because of their professionalism, not in spite of it."[112]

This notion of "consensual politics" reflects the idea that the teachers' union leaders recognized some areas of common interest with management (i.e., the university administration), i.e., a common interest in the promotion of the goals of the university,

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[110] Nicholas Murray Butler was the head of the NEA from 1895-1910; see Murphy, 51. Also, see above, pp. 213-214.

[111] Murphy, 23.

[112] Ibid., 170.

thus they worked cooperatively towards them, or at least that was the aim. This model, though it has gone through various versions over time, has developed into what is loosely defined as "professional unionism." A movement to coax teacher unions towards the professional union model gained some momentum in the mid-1980s.[113] The model has its roots in these earlier formations. Briefly, advocates of the contemporary model of professional unionism argue that the older models of industrial unionism are not well-suited to education due to the limited emphasis on bread-and-butter issues, whereas professional unionism is put forth as a means to also promote educational reforms and concerns for the quality of education. The problem with this approach, according to its critics, is that in some of its representations it "can be seen as a sophisticated anti-unionism."[114] It forsakes the confrontational "them versus us" approach.[115] Bob Peterson, an editor at *Rethinking Schools*, argues that some advocates of professional unionism lack a "coherent social analysis" and capitulate to "aspects of a conservative, 'free-market' approach to education."[116] This serious drawback has led to calls for a social justice model of teacher unionism which deals with "the relationship between schools and broader social concerns" drawing from the strengths of both the industrial

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[113] See Charles Taylor Kerchner and Douglas E. Mitchell, *The Changing Idea of a Teachers' Union* (London and New York: The Falmer Press, 1988); Also see an insightful critical review of this book by Wayne J. Urban, "Is There a New Teacher Unionism?" *Educational Theory*, Summer 1991, Vol. 41, No. 3; A useful summary and analysis of these contemporary debates and their genesis has been written by Bob Peterson, "We Need a New Vision of Teacher Unionism," *Rethinking Schools Online*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Summer 1997; Also see Bob Peterson, "Rethinking Teacher Unions," *Rethinking Schools Online*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Spring 2006. Both of Peterson's articles can be found at http://www.rethinkingschools.org.

[114] Urban, "Is There a New Teacher Unionism?"

[115] Peterson, Summer 1997.

[116] Peterson, Spring 2006.

model and the professional model, but also taking up issues of social justice.[117] He cites the New York Teachers Union during the 1930s, "which did anti-racist and community organizing in Harlem," as being among the very few historical examples of unions that engaged in social justice practices in a "sustained" way.[118] Thus, the conflicts between these competing models of unionism – often presented as if they were invented in the mid-1980s in reaction to the outcomes of the teacher unionism of the 1960s – actually have deeper roots.[119]

The McCarthy era completed what Marjorie Murphy identifies as the "divorce of the professional teacher from the community."[120] Thus, the centralization of the school system, which had its roots in the Progressive movement, led to a severing of the ties between the union and the communities served by the schools.[121] The problem is that the centralization of the schools, and, one might add, of the university, takes away an important source of political power for the teachers' unions. There is no organic connection with the community when one is a "professional" as defined through this

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[117] Peterson, Summer 1997.

[118] Peterson, Spring 2006

[119] Peterson (Summer 1997) points out that during the 1968 Ocean Hill-Brownsville strike in New York City, Albert Shanker's UFT, "which had cut its teeth fighting the centralized New York City school authority, became that centralized authority's biggest advocate in order to ensure that community control would not impinge on what he and many teachers saw as fundamental teacher rights. The teachers union won, and 'community control' was lost forever in New York City. In ensuing years, school policy was determined in large part through bilateral negotiations between a highly centralized administration and a highly centralized union. This mirrored the labor-management model of private industry and didn't take into account the public, quasi-democratic nature of schools." Additionally, Marjorie Murphy, in *Blackboard Unions*, shows how the demise of the community organizing model left both teachers and the community vulnerable to the conflicts that emerged during the Ocean Hill-Brownsville conflict of 1968, p. 232-251.

[120] Murphy, 195; Murphy does an excellent job of teasing out the distinctions between the different types of teacher organizations and of mapping out their historical development.

[121] Ibid., passim.

tradition. What is called social-activist unionism today includes an appreciation for the organizing tradition of the Teachers Union, but its focus is largely on the members and on its labor's allies. There are few links to the larger community. Though social-activist unionism does not have the baggage of the Communist party with its centralized decision-making model and its ties to Moscow, it also does not have the institutional framework to develop solidarity with the community outside of the university. The alliance between administration and faculty through the model of professional unionism may have promoted the growth of the university, but, as we will see at CUNY, when the corporate university emerged more fully in the 1990's the lack of strong relationships to the community hindered the ability of the union to fight.

With the decline of the College Teachers Union, teacher advocacy did continue in some shape or form, but what that shape would be was strongly influenced by the trend towards anti-communism and by a version of "professionalism." Collective bargaining, as we shall see, did not develop for teachers until the 1960s. In the interim, the voice of the municipal college faculty was expressed increasingly through the lobbying efforts of the Legislative Conference.

> The LC was never under fire during the Rapp-Coudert hearings and never took any public positions in regard to the hearings. Although there were people who were members of both the LC and the New York College Teachers Union, there were substantial differences in orientation between the two organizations. The NYCTU took strong positions of a pro-communist nature on such issues as the Spanish Civil War and World War II. The LC, on the other hand, kept its activities centered around legislative and educational matters pertaining to the four city colleges.[122]

[122] Gerald Grayson, "The LC: The foundations of a university union," *The Clarion*, November 1981.

Belle Zeller, who had been the president of the Teachers Union chapter at Brooklyn College, was elected "chairman" of the Legislative Conference in 1944.[123] She was known as an expert on lobbying having published her 1937 Columbia University doctoral dissertation titled *Pressure Politics in New York*. Under her leadership, and with the editorial support of *The New York Times*, the Legislative Conference campaigned for the same pension, protections, and salaries as were given to the public school teachers.[124] They made gradual gains, and a major milestone came with the passage of a parity bill in "the state legislature making the salaries and incremental steps in effect July 1, 1956, statutory."[125]

The Legislative Conference continued to advocate for the permanent faculty, however, it was not long before another union was on the scene seeking to gain a foothold in the colleges. The Teachers Guild, as noted above, was chartered as Local 2 of the AFT in 1941. The Guild was chosen in 1950 to represent the faculty at The New York State Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences (later to become New York City Community College, and later still to become New York City Technical College).[126] Israel Kugler, a faculty member there, was soon elected chairman of this new college chapter of the Guild. In 1960, the Teachers Guild merged with a number of other teacher organizations to become the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), though still remaining Local 2 of the AFT. In 1963, the college chapter became an independent union, the United Federation of College Teachers (UFCT, Local 1460, AFT) with Kugler as

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[123] Grayson, *The Clarion*, November 1981,

[124] Gerald Grayson, "The Legislative Conference and salary 'parity,'" *The Clarion*, October 1981.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Israel Kugler, "Confronting discontent: from Stasso to UFCT," *The Clarion,* December 1981.

President. The UFCT maintained close ties with the UFT which provided "substantial material assistance in its fledgling efforts."[127] The UFCT wasted no time in expanding its reach throughout the CUNY system, as well as to other colleges in the New York City metropolitan region, and they began pressing for collective bargaining.[128] These events coincided with the renewed expansion of CUNY.

The "takeoff period" for the junior colleges, as characterized by Brint and Karabel,[129] occurred in the post-World War II period, and the College of the City of New York was not excluded from this academic industrialization. These community colleges would become a central component of the contingent academic labor system as the overwhelming number of faculty who would come to staff them have been part-time. The State legislature provided aid for two-year community colleges that were "sponsored by local government or educational boards under the general supervision of the Trustees of the State University."[130] New York City Technical College, initially a two-year institution, was formed in 1946. Staten Island Community College was established by the BHE in 1955. Bronx Community College was established in 1957, and Queensborough Community College in 1958. Notably, the community colleges provided opportunity not just for the intellectual elite, but for the intellectually "average" student, as well.[131]

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[127] Kugler, *The Clarion*, December 1981.

[128] Ibid., 5.

[129] Brint and Karabel, *The Diverted Dream*, 67-101.

[130] Gary William Fellows, "A Case Study of the Community Colleges of the City University of New York," (Ph.D. diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 1970), 10.

[131] Ibid., 11-13.

In the Spring of 1961, the name of the municipal college system had been changed to The City University of New York. In that same year, The Graduate School and University Center was formed. Expansion continued through the 1960s with the formation of the Borough of Manhattan Community College (1963), Kingsborough Community College (1963), John Jay College (1964), York College (1966), Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College (1968), Herbert H. Lehman College, which, as noted above, became independent of Hunter College in 1968, Medgar Evers College (1969), and Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College (1970). The College of Staten Island was formed in 1975 through a merger of Staten Island Community College and Richmond College. This explosion of opportunity coincided with the reforms and agitation in the schools and in the streets that took place in the 1960s. Academic labor was not exempt from these transformations. The 1950s and 1960s saw significant gains for academic labor, and CUNY was no exception. Part of the reason for these gains was due to the market for faculty to staff the expanded system. A common description of the academic job market at the time was that hiring depended on the "mirror test." That is to say, if a prospective employee could fog up a mirror when it was placed under his or her nose, then they were hired. This set of market conditions made for some success on the part of academic labor unions.

In terms of accomplishments, the UFCT and its predecessor – the college chapter of the Teachers Guild – made significant gains through agitation, publishing newsletters, speaking at hearings, and being involved with the Faculty Council.[132] These gains included reductions in workload, the extension of vacation periods, and, through lobbying

[132] Fellows, 11-13.

efforts, the passage of the "first tenure law for a community college [which] was enacted in 1956."[133] The UFCT also made notable legislative gains in the area of sabbatical leaves (1967) and the "exemption of maternity leave periods for community college staff as being breaks in service for tenure consideration (1968)."[134]

With two bodies on campus both vying for the nod to represent the college faculty at CUNY, a fiery competition developed. The Legislative Conference was not a union per se, and, according to Kugler, they were quite open about this as they "eschewed all affiliations with national [labor] organizations."[135] The UFCT, on the other hand, touted its role as an AFT local and as a member union of the AFL-CIO.[136]

In Fall 1962, the Legislative Conference was confronted with a challenge from Local 384 of the American Federation of State and County Employees (AFSCE), which filed a petition for election to represent the secretarial, clerical, and part of the administrative staff, who had been "represented" by the Legislative Conference for many years.[137] The Legislative Conference lost that election. The following year, after the UFCT was chartered, the Legislative Conference proposed to Chancellor Albert Bowker that "it be designated as the official collective bargaining agent for CUNY."[138] The request was not acted upon. However, the Legislative Conference began to act more like a bargaining agent. They instituted procedures to handle individual grievances, and they

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[133] Kugler, *The Clarion,* December 1981, 5.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Israel Kugler, "Unionization comes to City University: The first contract negotiations," *The Clarion*, February 1982, 14.

[136] Ibid.

[137] Grayson*, The Clarion*, November 1981.

beefed up their budget from about $10,000-$11,000 for the previous few years to $25,000.[139] In the Spring of 1964, the CUNY Administrative Council "asked the faculties of the seven colleges to decide whether they wanted a collective bargaining contract."[140] Bowker recommended that "they hold a series of discussions to resolve the question."[141] The administration indicated that it preferred the status quo. The Legislative Conference requested to be the bargaining agent, and the UFCT challenged that request. The UFCT did not seek to be the bargaining agent itself at this time, as it only had about 500 members, but it argued that the Legislative Conference could not be the collective bargaining agent because it was a "company union."[142] The faculty heeded the preference of the administration, and for the time being, the status quo remained.

The following year, in February 1965, Kugler sent a letter to the Legislative Conference requesting that they consider a merger.[143] The Legislative Conference organized a committee to consider the request, but in December they turned it down, "primarily because of the affiliation of the UFCT with the American Federation of Teachers, which in turn was affiliated with the AFL-CIO."[144] The Legislative Conference committee concluded that an such an affiliation was not appropriate for its

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[138] Grayson, *The Clarion*, November 1981, 7.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

constituency.[145] However, the Legislative Conference was looking less and less like a professional lobbying association and more and more like a union. The rivalry between the two organizations was becoming "bitter and unremitting."[146]

In 1965-66, the UFCT gained some notoriety for its strong defense of "31 members of the faculty at St. John's University who were dismissed without charges or hearings."[147] The strike was not successful "in the narrow sense… [but] most of the strikers received better positions elsewhere, and St. John's suffered censure from the American Association of University Professors and a general loss of reputation."[148] According to Irwin Yellowitz, it was now clear that the Legislative Conference faced a formidable challenger.[149] The Legislative Conference response was to seek recognition as the sole collective bargaining agent.

There was not much progress on this point until 1967 when the state legislature passed the Taylor Law, effectively forcing the issue.[150] The Taylor Law grants public employees the right to choose a collective bargaining agent, and, in return, it prohibits them from striking. It requires both management and labor to "confer in good faith" over wages, employment conditions, etc. Given its passage, the determination of the bargaining unit(s) at CUNY needed to be clarified.

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[145] Grayson, *The Clarion*, November 1981, 7.

[146] Kugler, *The Clarion*, February 1982.

[147] Irwin Yellowitz, "Building the union," *The Clarion*, October 1996, 6.

[148] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 6.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

> The university opted for a single overall unit. The LC pressed for two units--one for the staff having professorial rank, including instructors, eligible for tenure; the other for Lecturers, both full-time and adjunct. The UFCT wanted one overall unit for the teaching staff and another made up of College Science Technicians and Assistants. After long hearings and an appeal to the Public Employee Relations Board, the view of the Legislative Conference prevailed. There was to be two units and two elections.[151]

This was fortunate for the Legislative Conference since its strength was with the higher ranking faculty, and they could not be certain of winning if all of the faculty and staff voted in one unit.[152]

Thus, in December 1968, CUNY held the first election "in an integrated, heterogenous, multicampus system."[153] The results were revealing. They showed that the lower the tier of academe – that is, those with less security, prestige, income, and involvement in graduate research – the greater likelihood of a vote for strong union representation (i.e., of a vote for the UFCT); conversely, the majority of upper-tier faculty voted for either the Legislative Conference, which had not previously operated as a union, or for "no representation."[154]

The details of the voting pattern tell the story. In unit 1 (the unit with a majority of upper-tier, i.e., more prestigious, faculty) the Legislative Conference won with 47 percent to 38 percent for the UFCT and 15 percent voting for "no representation."[155] In a

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[151] Kugler, *The Clarion*, February 1982, 15.

[152] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 7.

[153] Everett C. Ladd Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, *Professors, Unions, and American Higher Education* (Berkeley, Calif.: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973), 48. Previously cited in Tirelli, "Adjuncts and More Adjuncts," *Social Text*, 76.

[154] Ladd and Lipset, 48-49.

[155] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 7.

run-off election, the Legislative Conference won with 54 percent to 46 percent for the UFCT.[156] In unit 2 (i.e., the lower tier faculty), the UFCT won more decisively with 60 percent of the vote and only 27 percent for the Legislative Conference.[157] In this unit, 13 percent voted for "no representation."[158] Yellowitz argues that the closeness of the unit 1 election indicates that "the UFCT was correct in estimating its strength, and had there been only one unit, the UFCT most likely would have won."[159] This obvious estimation contains within it implications that would loom large in the coming decades as the part-time faculty were effectively disenfranchised and marginalized within the offspring union that would be born when these two combatants merged.

After the 1968 union elections there were economic gains and improvements brought about in the first contracts. The Legislative Conference contract gained parity between the senior and community college faculty and staff.[160] The UFCT contract gained a Certificate of Continuous Employment for full-time lecturers who had served for at least five years.[161] However, the conflict and competition between the two unions continued. The UFCT still wanted one unit and in April 1971 launched a petition drive to have a new election.[162] At this point the Legislative Conference decided to join the NEA

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[156] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 7.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Ibid.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Ibid.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

which provided funding for the Legislative Conference position of Executive Director, to which Arnold Cantor had been appointed the year before.[163]

The conflict between the two contending unions was becoming expensive for both of them.[164] They faced a new collective bargaining election. As the PERB was being petitioned for new unit configurations by the UFCT and by CUNY, and the Legislative Conference was petitioning for the status quo to remain, "neither union was confident of victory."[165] They began to discuss a merger of the two unions. It took place in April 1972 when the members of both organizations voted in support of it by a wide margin.[166] The Professional Staff Congress (PSC) was born.

It was, thus, through both the conflict over what *kind* of unionism could best serve its members and the conflict between different classes or ranks of faculty within that union by which the PSC first emerged. It was upon the foundation of these conflicts that the initial possibilities for the PSC had been formed. This formation coincided with the beginnings of the sixth epoch. But before we get to Chapter 4 – the case study of CUNY which focuses on the PSC and its relationship to part-time faculty – there are two other important historical events that have also contributed to the shape of public higher education in New York City during the transition to the sixth epoch – they are the struggle for open admissions and the 1975 New York City fiscal crisis.

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[163] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 7.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Ibid.

[166] Ibid.

The Fight for Open Admissions

As the University expanded and civil rights conflicts took center stage nationally, the conflict over minority access to higher education escalated. Albert Bowker became CUNY's Chancellor in 1963, and he soon understood the need to open up the university to greater minority enrollment and moved in the direction of expanded opportunity.[167] In 1964, College Discovery, an experimental admissions plan for the community colleges, was implemented. The Seek program (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge), a special minority admissions program, began in the fall of 1966 with a thousand students.[168] These programs had been designed to offer minorities preparatory support along with alternative routes to college. Lavin, et al, point out that these initial efforts were "mainly symbolic."[169] In the 1950s, about 700,000 blacks and Puerto Ricans migrated to the city as a similar number of whites took flight from it.[170] Bowker perceived that the expansion of the university and liberalization of admissions policies would be necessary if the university were to maintain political support.[171] However, the conflicts surrounding minority access would prove to outpace university planning and ignite a drive for a far more ambitious plan.

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[167] David Lavin, Richard D. Alba, and Richard A. Silberstein, *Right Versus Privilege: The Open-Admissions Experiment at the City University of New York* (New York: The Free Press, 1981), 5.

[168] Ibid., 6.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid., 5, (citing figures from Glazer and Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot*, 2nd Editon).

[171] Ibid.

A central part of the debate over open admissions was the question of who should receive higher education.[172] At one end of the spectrum the talk was about quality, while on the other end it was about equality. On one side the emphasis was on merit, while on the other side it was on potential. There was much hope and much skepticism. The flashpoint occurred in April of 1969. Led by the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community (BPRSC), an ethnically mixed group of students, with many white students included among them, most of them Jewish, took over part of the City College south campus for two weeks.[173] The protest served as a stimulus that made open admissions politically possible. Though Chancellor Bowker had a plan (CUNY's master plan) that had called for Open Admissions by 1975, the protest, and the way that it played into city and state politics, created the need for a plan that would satisfy all of the key blocs of voters.

Prior to the takeover of the buildings, there was fear of a budget shortfall that would adversely affect the student body, most especially the Black and Puerto Rican students.[174] These fears coincided with calls for a strike of classes in support of a set of demands that had been put forth in early February by the predecessor of the BPRSC, the Committee of Ten.[175] These demands called for the alleviation of conditions that

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[172] James Traub, *City on a Hill: Testing the American Dream at City* College (Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1994), 75-76.

[173] Marshall Berman, longtime City College Professor who was present at that time and involved with the protests, confirms this diversity. The conflict has sometimes been portrayed as a conflict drawn along strict ethnic lines, but Berman asserts that something much more general was appropriated as being something ethnic, fitting a right-wing model of balkanized ethnic politics.

[174] Lavin, et al, 11.

[175] Ibid.

negatively affected the black and Puerto Rican community at City College.[176] Support for the strike "was greater among social science and humanities students than among science and engineering students."[177] On the morning of April 22, 1969 approximately 200 members of the BPRSC entered the south campus, chained the gates, and sealed off eight of the colleges twenty-two buildings.[178]

Interestingly, Conrad Dyer points out that the relations between the CCNY faculty at this time were "quite conflicted," and that during a Faculty Senate meeting on April 30, 1969 matters came to a head.[179] He reports that a motion to present an ultimatum to the striking students was endorsed by the tenured faculty, but rejected by the non-tenured faculty. Despite the overwhelming numbers of the non-tenured faculty, including adjuncts, the chair of the meeting, Professor Sam Hendel, ruled that the vote of the senior faculty would be final. The non-tenured group (100 of them) walked out and formed the Caucus of Concerned Faculty. However, Dyer points out that from "that point, the influence of the left faculty was effectively curbed."[180]

The protest and the "propriety of closing the college" became a central issue of the campaign for mayor.[181] Many viewed the election as a referendum on Lindsay's Open Admission moves. He lost the Republican primary to John Marchi, and ran on the Liberal Party line. The protest had garnered the support of the black and Puerto Rican

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[176] Lavin, et al, 10-11.

[177] Ibid., 11.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Conrad Dyer, "Protest and the politics of open admissions: The impact of the Black and Puerto Rican students' community (of City College)" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1990), 124.

[180] Ibid., 124-125.

communities, an important block of Mayor Lindsay's supporters.[182] Lindsay's main opponent in the election, New York City Comptroller and Democratic nominee Mario Procaccino "attracted working-class and lower middle-class Irish, Italians, and Jews," residing largely in the outer boroughs.[183] For many, a central issue of the race became whether Lindsay had done too much for blacks and Puerto Ricans at the expense of working and lower middle-class whites.[184] Lindsay would go on to win re-election on the strength of Jewish and Black votes, as well as the support of the municipal labor unions, which by-and-large had benefited from strong contracts during his administration, but his victory was only by a plurality.[185]

The protests at CUNY fed into these larger fault lines and effectively forced the issue of open admissions.[186] The solution to the conflict was not an easy political task. The negotiation between the BPRSC and the City College administration brought forth a proposal for consideration by the City College Faculty Senate that would set up an "ethnically based 'dual admissions' plan: 50 percent of CCNY's entering class, beginning in fall 1970, would be drawn from poverty areas or designated ghetto high schools. The other 50 percent were to be admitted under traditional competitive criteria…."[187] All of

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[181] Lavin, et al, 12.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Ibid., (citing Glazer and Monynihan, xxviii-xxix).

[185] See Martin Shefter, *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis, The Collapse and Revival of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 95-99.

[186] Dyer, passim.

[187] Lavin, et al, 13.

the major mayoral candidates attacked this proposal.[188] The Faculty Senate also rejected this plan and put forward a plan that would admit a "few hundred additional students from 'disadvantaged areas.'"[189] The BHE held numerous public sessions that engaged the debate and elicited opinions from students, faculty, and community groups.[190] Each of these positions generated opposition from some group in the city. The dual access plan was considered by many to be a quota plan, and that resonated negatively with the Jewish voters who remembered how quotas were used against them to keep them out of the private colleges. Through June of 1969 "resolution of the crisis began to crystallize."[191] Lavin points to Harry Van Arsdale, head of the New York City Central Labor Council, as being especially influential in this resolution. His members, largely white ethnics of Irish and Italian Catholic heritage, did not stand to gain from either of these proposals. Politically, open admissions was the best solution and this was the proposal supported by Van Arsdale. Lavin notes that "[O]nly the open-admissions notion offered something to everyone and seemed to lay to rest the specter that increased representation of some groups would come at the expense of other groups."[192] A consensus formed around this plan.

The plan went beyond the demands of the minority students who had been protesting, provided a way out of the conflict, and set the stage for a huge expansion of

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[188] Lavin, et al, 14.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Ibid., 15.

the University.[193] Some feared that the financial commitment might become too great, but politically this was a special moment—much like the moment over a century before when citizens voted to open the Free Academy. Governor Rockefeller initially opposed it, but he could not afford to be the only major figure to not be a part of the consensus.[194]

The open admissions plan was implemented in the fall of 1970. The plan that was adopted would admit groups that had been heretofore underrepresented in the University. The specific policy guaranteed a place in a CUNY senior college to those high school graduates with at least an 80 average (in academic, college preparatory courses) or who ranked in the top 50 percent of their high school graduating class.[195] All others could enroll in a community college.[196]

Fiscal Crisis: The Empire Strikes Back

The hopes and dreams of this era had only a relatively brief time to experiment and to grow. By 1975 the aspirations that had characterized the 1960s had given way to the harsh reaction carried out, at least initially, by the Nixon administration. Since the New Deal, New York City depended upon Federal aid, but Nixon would begin to change this formula. The national mood had changed. Now the "crisis of democracy" had become the phrase of the day and the problem was not inequality, but law and order and

[193] Lavin, et al, 15-16.

[194] Ibid., 16.

[195] Ibid., 18.

[196] Ibid.

the lack of authority.[197] The Great Society of the 1960s had given way to the fiscal crisis and austerity of the 1970s. Similar to the period of the founding of The Free Academy, and similar to the conflicts over the University during the Progressive Era, the changes that had occurred during this period can best be understood as the outcome of a political struggle, rather than as a mere shift of the economic winds. That is, they were a manifestation of class conflict, rather than a crisis of resource management. Seen in this light, the crisis at CUNY in 1975, and the policies which followed from it, can be understood more completely.

Prior to 1975, the public sector employment created by the expansion of the welfare programs in the 1960s had created a social and political climate where municipal workers would gain "generous concessions" from the city during Mayor Lindsay's administration.[198] The political climate had been influenced by national and state policies. In 1962, President Kennedy issued an executive order encouraging organization and collective bargaining by federal employees.[199] Many states passed similar measures. From 1960 to 1976 public employment grew at an average rate of 5 percent per year.[200] By 1976 public-sector unions claimed over 40 percent of government employees.[201] If

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[197] See Michel J. Crozier, Samuel Huntington, and Jojo Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (New York University Press, 1975).

[198] Eric Lichten, *Class, Power, and Austerity: The New York City Fiscal Crisis*, with an introduction by Stanley Aronowitz (Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, Inc., 1986), 91.

[199] James R. Green, *The World of the Worker: Labor in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 234.

[200] David Lewin, "Public Employee Unionism and Labor Relations in the 1980s: An Analysis of Transformation," in *Unions in Transition*, edited by Seymour M. Lipset (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1986), 243.

[201] Leo Troy, "The Rise and Fall of American Trade Unions: The Labor Movement from FDR to RR," in *Unions in Transition*, edited by Seymour M. Lipset, 80-81.

we understand the problems as being rooted in politics and not merely in economics, and as being conflict between classes and not just a problem of resource management, then the state response to the fiscal problems of the mid-seventies can be viewed as having been formed in reaction to these trends towards a downward redistribution of resources and were supported by the aforementioned shifts in state power (i.e., urban renewal, jurisdictional fragmentation, rise of the Sunbelt, etc.). Eric Lichten explains that during the Lindsay administration this public sector unionism had an impact, though it had its limitations, as well:

> The militant activism by the city's workers was matched and fueled by a more general popular militancy within the city. The "community" movement and the union movement seemed to feed upon each other. Through their militancy, and through federal policies that encourage spending, the city's unions gained influence. A city administration besieged by minority and community activists could ill afford sustained conflicts with its workers.[202]

District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Transit Workers Union, the United Federation of Teachers, the Patrolman's Benevolent Association, and the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association all received generous contracts from the Lindsay administration in 1969.[203] However, there was a "measure of illusion" to this working class power.[204] While the response of the federal government to urban insurgency resulted in the increase of city expenditures, and these revenues expanded the social service network and, thus, increased the number of city workers, the rise of the public sector unions was, at least in the 1960s, consistent

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[202] Lichten, 91.

[203] Shefter, 95-96.

[204] Lichten, 91.

with the interests of the elites.[205] Lichten points out (attributing the argument to James O'Connor) the following:

> The most powerful elements of the private sector encouraged the increase in city expenditures, because it served their class needs. New York City's economic base was changed, as manufacturing declined and services became more predominant. Increased city services stilled a potentially troublesome population, while keeping the city's workers cooperative through the dual policy of increased wage and benefit packages along with decreased productivity. Labor peace was essential to this transformation, and a smooth one was more likely while the city spent its funds and borrowed more, rather than while it was cutting back. To put it simply: the expansion of city expenses and debts assisted corporate needs in ways that a retracting budget could not.[206]

As noted in Chapter One, post-World War II elites bought off the working class, or at least a portion of it, as part of a social contract that allowed elites to restructure the economy for their own ends. But these favorable conditions for workers would only last as long as elites required their cooperation.

> When the economy was jolted by a severe and sustained crisis, the corporate and financial sectors could no longer permit workers to exercise influence over government, nor could they permit government to respond to citizens' demands for increased services….
> …the city's unions found themselves unable to sustain their former influence.[207]

Thus, the gap between expenditures and revenues does not tell the whole story. The complete story, or at least the more credible story, is one that includes an analysis of class actors and the interplay of politics.

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[205] Lichten, 91.

[206] Ibid., 92.

[207] Ibid., 93.

The local economies were not the level of power that could resolve this problem, or even address it. Local taxes could not meet the need because they might "produce capital flight and be counterproductive."[208]

> …in 1974-75 the national economy went into the worst recession since the Great Depression, and banks refused to renew loans, federal and state governments reduced their assistance, and the city's tax base was unable to bear the cost of its growing expenses at a time of declining real estate tax collections and accelerated job losses. The result was the imposition of austerity and the sort of budget the International Monetary Fund imposes on third world countries as a condition for renewed borrowing.[209]

The banks came to control the crisis for their own profit. The bargain was off.

> …the bankers… had gotten virtually everything they asked for: fiscal cutbacks, the stripping of the mayor's power, and the creation of an advisory control group to run the city their way.[210]

This brief explanation of the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s provides the backdrop for the problems faced by CUNY during the 1975 fiscal crisis, and provides a partial explanation for the increasing use of part-time faculty at CUNY.

CUNY is just one of many public institutions that had been affected by these policies, of course, but what makes it interesting is that it is an institution that produces knowledge and engenders the kind of cultural capital that could arm a working class population with the tools that would allow them to fight back. The use of part-time faculty is, obviously, on one level, a budgetary mechanism that allows the university leadership to continue to provide an education to the largely working class and minority student body. That is how it can be viewed from inside the campus gates. Another effect

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[208] William K. Tabb, *The Long Default* (Monthly Review Press, 1982), 23.

[209] Ibid., 21.

[210] Ibid., 29.

of it, however, is to weaken the leverage of the collective bargaining agent, and to fragment and destabilize a potential source of political power. And the view from the inside legitimates and provides cover for what can be seen from the outside.

A frequent mantra of apologists for the expansive use of part-time faculty is that the budget dictates the necessity of this policy, and this fact is implicitly and sometimes explicitly, portrayed as a natural occurrence of the market. If one only considers the public university budget in isolation from the social and political forces, then it could be argued that the expanded use of part-time faculty is an unfortunate, but reasonable response to difficult circumstances in a zero-sum game. However, the public higher education budget is the outcome of politics, not a natural occurrence of the market. This was no less true during the mid-Seventies than it was during the earlier fight over open admissions, during the Progressive Era, and during the period of the founding of the Free Academy. The budget as a naturalized entity is an ideological construction that legitimates austerity during times of fiscal crisis. Lichten argues that, "Fiscal crisis is the result of class struggle and… has a material base in the actions of both capital and labor."[211] The bankers struggled as a class, while the workers and their unions did not.[212] The "language of crisis was capital's language, reflecting capital's consciousness and needs."[213]

Lichten also argues that during the 1975 crisis it was the lack of vision that led the union leaders to accept the terms of austerity: "The unions failed to develop their power

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[211] Lichten, 74.

[212] Ibid., 59.

[213] Ibid., 160.

resources, or even to use the resources they had precisely because their ideological perspective denied the validity and practicality of such action."[214] He suggests that this type of unionism was part of the post-World War II liberal consensus that basically accepted the terms of capital instead of confronting them. This weakened labor when the mid-1970s arrived and left it ill equipped to fend off the austerity measures, which, in large part, served the bankers' interests, i.e., everybody tightened their belts except the banks.

Through budgetary mechanisms, the banks, albeit indirectly, were able to control the work force. In the university, this means that they also exert control over the profession, and, to some extent, the curriculum. Faculty gains obtained during a generation or so of a favorable market during the postwar period had stagnated and in some cases had been rolled back. The budget cuts that CUNY endured during the 1975-76 fiscal crisis, which led to faculty layoffs, the imposition of tuition, the subsequent drop-off in enrollment, increased class sizes, and other measures, had also opened the door more widely for the expansion of the academic proletariat in the ranks of the faculty. Paul Blumberg, who in 1976 was an associate professor of sociology at Queens College, wrote in *The Nation* about the implications of the CUNY budget cuts as he saw it from the vantage point of the unemployment line in June of that year. CUNY was closed indefinitely by Chancellor Kibbee after Mayor Beame announced that it had run out of money. The closure lasted for two weeks, and the uncertainty of the situation found faculty heading for the unemployment lines.

> It was indeed a strange scene, this spectacle of middle-class professionals waiting in long lines to file their unemployment claims. They should have

[214] Lichten, 162. Also see Mark H. Maier, *City Unions, Managing Discontent in New York City* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1987).

> been wearing caps and gowns as they assembled behind the notice that said to stand behind the white line until your turn comes: it would have made a good Ingmar Bergman dream (or nightmare) sequence.[215]

The mood was one of "embarrassment," "confusion," and "disbelief that 'things have really come to this.'"[216] All of their status and all of their titles "melted away" as the bureaucrats called each of them up to the desk for processing.[217]

> Suddenly, the significance of all their impressive academic training and their scholarly publications in respectable journals faded before the simple fact of their utter dependence upon men of wealth and property and power for their daily bread. Suddenly in this scene of professors lined up for money, the fundamental powerlessness of the intelligentsia became transparent.[218]

After the golden age of post-war higher education where "dismissal from one university meant that one pulled up stakes and put them down at another university," now they faced the prospect of having to find not just another job, but possibly another occupation.[219] And what was the union to do about it? Blumberg explains the weak position of the union in this affair:

> Although everything at the university was disrupted—final examinations, grading, graduation, summer school, grant applications pending, important undelivered mail locked up—in a sense nothing was disrupted because the public was completely unaffected. The closing of an institution of 270,000 students and 25,000 faculty and staff made scarcely a ripple in the ongoing life of New Yorkers. Could any other institution in America involving nearly 300,000 persons be shut down tight with such minuscule effect? Some state Senators smugly said that it wouldn't be a bad idea at all to keep the university shut down for the whole month until the new fiscal year began. Could they say that about the transit system, sanitation

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[215] Paul Blumberg, "The New Academic Proletariat," *The Nation*, August 14, 1976, 102.

[216] Ibid., 102.

[217] Ibid.

[218] Ibid.

[219] Ibid., 103.

> collection, police and fire services, hospitals, or even the public schools? While a great university is certainly one of the highest achievements of a civilized society, it is also the least crucial in the short run for the functioning of that society. Herein lies the powerlessness of the university, the faculty and the union.[220]

The feeling of impotence in the face of such overwhelming power, which no doubt was felt by many during this fiscal crisis, seems to have had an even more objective basis for those in the university. But power is never strictly objective. As Lichten argues, the unions were not able to develop or use their resources because their ideological perspective precluded them from accepting the validity of a more radical stance that challenged the root class-based assumptions of the imposed austerity measures.[221] He argues that "worker militancy had the potential to change the course of the crisis."[222]

Whether the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the faculty and staff union at CUNY, could have played a more activist role at this time is, of course, a matter of speculation. The Newt Davidson Collective, an insurgent group of faculty at CUNY who organized during this period, produced a book in 1974 called *Crisis at CUNY* in which they criticize CUNY's administration and describe the PSC as cooperating too eagerly with it for only shortsighted gains. Although *Crisis at CUNY* was published with only the first names of the members of the collective listed on the Acknowledgments page, it can now be told that the senior author was Mike Wallace, and Ted Burrows worked closely with him on it and edited the manuscript. They are better known as the co-authors of the much acclaimed *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (Oxford

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[220] Blumberg, 102.

[221] Lichten, 162.

[222] Ibid., 174.

University Press, 2000). Also active in the Collective were Bill Tabb, Gerry Markowitz, Nanette Funk, Blanche Weisen Cook, Rusty Eisenberg, Amy Bridges, and Bart Myers, to name a few – all in all, an impressive array of contemporary scholars well-known in their respective fields, thus proving that radical activism does not condemn one to the dustbin of history. Among their insights regarding the PSC, they offer the following:

> The 'faculty' union often follows the BHE line. It ignores adjuncts, sets impossible dues schedules for them, and throws them to the wolves at contract negotiation time to get more of a dwindling pie for senior staff, then wonders why adjuncts stay away [from the union] in droves. Soon, perhaps, the union will speak for only a handful of privileged elite workers—the "Faculty"—of whom there will be very few. The great bulk of the teaching staff will be adjuncts, in fact if not in name.[223]

> ….The union shuns grass roots organizing. Its dues (most of which goes to affiliates) are forbiddingly high for adjuncts, who are thus effectively barred… It has failed to provide a proper organizational vehicle for mobilizing the very real discontents among the faculty. It reflects and perpetuates the current academic hierarchy imposed by management, and – except on economic issues – is relatively acquiescent to administration policy.[224]

In the next chapter, we will evaluate these charges by the Newt Davidson Collective, and, in the process, we will witness the entrance of our demurring protagonist, the activist part-time faculty.

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[223] Newt Davidson Collective, *Crisis at CUNY*, (Self-published by the Newt Davidson Collective, 1974), 21. Thanks to Carol Smith, Bill Tabb, and Mike Wallace for sharing their memories of the Newt Davidson Collective.

[224] Ibid., 102.

Chapter 4/ Case Study: The City University of New York

The problems faced by the part-time faculty at CUNY have seemed intractable due to the somewhat unique circumstances of being part of a union – the Professional Staff Congress, American Federation of Teachers (PSC-AFT/Local 2334) – that, for much of its history, had effectively marginalized them by shutting them out of union politics and governance. This marginalization was partly an effect of the political inertia surrounding their contingent status, but, many would argue, it also was due to their nominal representation by the PSC leadership. Events of Spring 2000 ushered in a new union leadership, which included the part-time faculty in an alliance with full-time faculty as well as staff. The New Caucus ran on a platform that had a strong message that acknowledged that the extensive and expanding exploitation of part-time faculty is not only unjust, but that it is also damaging to the interests of academic labor, in general, and to the University as a whole. The Spring 2000 election campaign for the central leadership of the PSC energized the debate over what *kind* of unionism is best suited to meet the needs of labor at the beginning of the new millennium. We will, thus, discuss the decisive victory of the New Caucus in the contest for the leadership of the PSC. This victory was met with a burst of enthusiasm by those who hope for a change in the direction of organized academic labor, and it indicated a new understanding by the members of the collective bargaining unit regarding the issues that confront academic labor. For part-time faculty at CUNY, though it has not translated into real economic equity, it undeniably meant political enfranchisement and inclusion. The contingent academic labor system is now not simply discussed as being "about the budget," but it is

widely understood to be about much deeper conflicts concerning power and decision-making in the university.

The story of academic labor at CUNY is an obvious choice for a case study for several reasons. First, as noted above, in 1968 CUNY became the first university to hold an academic labor union election in "an integrated, heterogeneous, multi-campus system."[1] This makes it historically significant, as well as providing us with a rich body of information to study. Second, CUNY was deeply affected by the epochal changes that occurred from 1968-1975, discussed in Chapter One, and by the austerity measures set in motion by the 1975 New York City fiscal crisis which firmly established the place of the contingent academic labor system within a broader post-Fordist system of segmented workers. Thus, despite the differences in the categories and configurations of contingent academic labor, this close relationship of CUNY to these broader events, makes it, to the extent possible, representative of a generalized pattern of conditions for part-time faculty. Third, the relatively large size of the CUNY system gives it a great influence and impact on many aspects of higher education, including the academic labor market in the New York metropolitan region. Fourth, perhaps most importantly for our purposes, CUNY provides an example of contingent academic labor organizing that allows for a concrete study of the limits and possibilities of success in such an endeavor. In terms of the sub-hypothesis of this dissertation, CUNY's recent history has examples of successful alliances between part-time faculty and other groups of workers, and it also serves to exemplify the problems of union democracy. Additionally, it offers a rich history of labor campaigns through which to provide an interpretive, though by no means definitive,

[1] Everett C. Ladd, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, *Professors, Unions, and American Higher Education* (Berkeley, California: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973), 48.

narrative of the development of shared understandings of conditions and events by academic labor at CUNY that may yet serve as the glue for a broader based movement. Finally, this chapter concludes with an update on the activity of the "new" PSC, as well as the role of part-time faculty within it, during this epoch of globalization and war. New York is the "global city" that is still the financial capital of the world and it offers us a context that most strikingly encompasses the multiple layers of the struggle by academic labor. These struggles have been complex and the labor organizing has involved an arduous commitment.

With this framework in mind, in this chapter I discuss the pitfalls and successes of contingent academic labor organizing at CUNY since the founding of the PSC. Understanding the CUNY academic labor union story can help us to peel back some of the layers that conceal hidden political, social, and economic relationships that shape policy regarding higher education.

The PSC and Part-Time Faculty: Early Stirrings

With the formation of the PSC in 1972, Belle Zeller became its first President and Israel Kugler became its Deputy-President. The conflicts between the factions – the Legislative Conference and the UFCT (discussed in the previous chapter) – continued as they formed into caucuses within the union. The Zeller faction, i.e., those who came from the Legislative Conference, tended to have the upper hand. Over time, the differences were gradually minimalized and the conflicts between those who were originally leaders of the Legislative Conference and those who were originally leaders of

the UFCT would diminish, but this would not be fully realized until after the 1976 election.

The first contract under the new union was ratified in September 1973.[2] The PSC had been able to exert some leverage over the university due to the impending threat of an October 1, 1973 strike that had been authorized by the membership.[3] Irwin Yellowitz, in a brief history which appeared in the official union newspaper, points out that the contract built upon the gains won by each of the separate unions, and that several key advances were made, among them, grievance procedures and job security for instructors (i.e., full-time). However, though they were able to make some gains – primarily monetarily – according to the Newt Davidson Collective, this was only accomplished by signing away on some other key provisions. The Collective described the contract as a "disaster."[4]

> The most catastrophic was the union's agreement to a "zipper clause," which reserves to management every right not specifically granted to the Union by the contract. This clause also gives the Board the right to change at will any term or condition of employment not explicitly stated in the contract, despite past practice. It was a vital concession, since the contract says nothing about organization of departments, peer judgment, election of department chairmen or P & B committees, faculty control over curriculum, and other critical matters….
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> The quid pro quo for all these concessions to management was money (again, even here, adjuncts were severely short-changed). The PSC got an impressive-looking series of salary increments, which was all to the good, but it should be kept in mind that the rate of increase did not even keep pace with inflation.[5]

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[2] Yellowitz, *The Clarion*, October 1996, 8.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Newt Davidson Collective, *Crisis at CUNY*, 102.

[5] Ibid., 103.

Clearly, however, as will be shown, the part-time faculty were the big losers in this contract in more ways than one.

The most serious contractual setback for the part-timers was the lack of a preferential rehiring procedure which had been included in the UFCT contract of 1969. The UFCT contract had a provision, article 26.1a, which provided for preferential hiring for part-time members in the event of cancellation of a class "because of financial inability, insufficient enrollment or changes in curriculum."[6] When seven part-time lecturers in the Brooklyn College School of General Studies in the Departments of Integrated Science and Physics had been told in December 1969 that they would not be rehired, the UFCT filed a grievance on their behalf and it was determined by Joseph F. Wildebush, Arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, that their rights under the contract were violated and they were "entitled to reappointment."[7] This decision was a major victory for the job security of part-time faculty. Wildebush, in his decision, pointed to Article 26.1b, which requires anyone affected by "a reduction in force shall be placed on a departmental preferential rehiring list established by date of initial employment."[8] An adjunct could have been fired based upon poor evaluations or for misconduct, but if they were not reappointed for any of the three reasons stated above – financial inability, insufficient enrollment, or changes in curriculum – then they had to be given preferential rehiring rights, as per the contract, and be placed on a list for such

[6] American Arbitration Association, Case Number: 1330-0207-70.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

purposes. Despite this grievance victory, when the PSC negotiated its first contract it failed to secure this job security provision for part-time faculty. Many felt betrayed.

There were a few activists who advocated on behalf of the part-time faculty, and they provided a critique of the contract and an analysis of union matters. David Y. Allen (Brooklyn College, History) the chairman of the Adjunct Faculty Association (AFA), claimed, with regard to the contract, that "even union leaders have admitted publicly that part-timers were 'clobbered.'"[9] Bill Leicht, the PSC Vice President for Part-time Faculty, at the time, wrote that while there was a pay raise (that did not keep up with the cost-of-living), and while the contract did provide for a notice of reappointment to be issued by December 1st and April 1st for the semesters that followed, the part-timers took some losses that were quite significant.[10] The part-timers lost a tuition waiver for undergraduate classes (the full-timers gained a partial tuition waiver for graduate classes) and there was an imposition of strict workload restrictions – the lesser of two courses or 60% of a full-time workload.[11]

Allen went so far as to file an improper practice charge against the PSC with The New York State Public Employment Relations Board. The Memorandum of the Charging Party (Adjunct Faculty Association), contends that "the PSC deliberately sacrificed the job security of the adjunct staff that it had previously enjoyed under the UFCT agreement and the award of Arbitrator Wildebush in order to gain economic and fringe benefits for the group which previously constituted the Legislative Conference, all

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[9] David Allen "Why Part-time Faculty Need Cross-Campus Unit Status," undated mimeo, unprocessed PSC Archives, Wagner Labor Archives, NYU.

[10] William Leicht, "The Contract and the Part-Time Staff," *The Clarion,* September 10, 1973, p. 5.

[11] Leicht, "The Contract and the Part-Time Staff," *The Clarion*, September 10, 1973, p. 5.; Also, David Allen, "Stop the Contract!" undated mimeo, unprocessed PSC Archives.

to the detriment of the group previously represented by the UFCT."[12] The charge was dismissed and the hearing officer's decision was not appealed to the full board.[13]

The strongest efforts of the adjunct activists were on behalf of getting the adjuncts to join the union and to democratically engage in union politics. The lack of part-time faculty participation in the union had devastating effects upon them. The AFA's improper practice charges included the following:

> The teaching staff is the "cutting edge" of the union, yet not only were adjuncts barred from membership on the contract negotiating committee (for fear of upsetting the apple cart when the respondent started giving up the contrived proposals put forth on behalf of the charging party), but the adjuncts were also foreclosed from participating in the internal affairs of the union. William Leicht was the only adjunct holding office in the PSC….
>
> A union dominated by full-time faculty members, and by former officers of the Legislative Conference, is hardly expected to put up a fight for the adjuncts.[14]

However, while it is true that the adjunct faculty had been marginalized in union politics, it was also true that the adjunct response to appeals for them to join the union had been less than enthusiastic.

It was reported by the University Office of Data Collection and Evaluation that there were 7,031 part-time teachers *and* teaching staff ("about 5000 'pure' adjuncts")[15] and 11,370 full-time teachers and teaching staff, including librarians, as well as 2,649

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[12] New York State PERB, Case No. U 1078, Memorandum of Charging Party, 6.

[13] Professional Staff Congress, 7 PERB paragraph 4529 (1974)

[14] New York State PERB, Case No. U 1078, Memorandum of Charging Party, 11.

[15] Unprocessed PSC Collection, Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. Letter from Marilyn Magner, Associate Dean, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations to Burton H. Hall, Esq., March 12, 1974. Original handwritten note in letter: "about 5000 'pure' adjuncts." No doubt "pure" refers to those who are only part-time faculty at CUNY and not full-timers pulling overload or administrators who teach a class. The number of part-time faculty at any given moment has not been a well-documented record until more recent years.

non-teaching employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement during the spring semester in 1973.[16] Bill Leicht reports that only 8% of the adjuncts had actually joined the union at the beginning of Fall 1973 (about 500, according to Leicht).[17] Despite numerous urgent appeals and reasoned arguments by Allen and by Leicht, the vast majority of adjuncts still would not join the union.

Belle Zeller made an early attempt to encourage part-timers to join the union by sending out a letter and membership materials to chapter chairpersons.[18] And there were dissenting voices that could be heard. Leicht was able to publish an article in *The Clarion* that was highly critical of the 1973 contract – such a criticism of the leadership's position in the union's own newspaper would become a rare find during the years when Irwin Polishook became PSC President. Leicht also was the editor of *The Part-Timer,* a newsletter that addressed part-time faculty problems. The argument was simple: if part-timers would join the union they would have a voice since they have the numbers to make an impact. This campaign has proven to be the hardest nut to crack. It seems manifestly clear to the activist adjunct organizers (since these first efforts) that since the part-timers are such a big chunk of the union, then they only needed to join for their interests to be well represented. Accomplishing this, then they could challenge management more effectively, not to mention the union leadership. However, the

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[16] Unprocessed PSC Collection, Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. Letter from Marilyn Magner, Associate Dean, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations to Burton H. Hall, Esq., March 12, 1974.

[17] Undated PSC stationary form letter from Bill Leicht, Vice President, Part-Time Personnel. Again, there is a discrepancy in the total number of adjuncts, since if 8% equals 500, then there are 6,250 adjuncts at this time.

[18] Unprocessed archives, undated PSC letter.

obstacles to this mass mobilization have presented the biggest challenge to the part-time organizers and activists.

One can guess why part-timers did not join the union in droves and become active at this time. The reasons are as varied as the reasons why people choose to teach part-time. As noted, some are full-time elsewhere and picking up an extra job for either money or satisfaction or both. Others are trying to piece together part-time opportunities perhaps in the hope of finding that full-time position. Many viewed the union with some disdain and did not wish to participate. Whatever the reason, the difficulty in getting largely itinerant faculty to join a union dominated by senior full-time faculty is about as complex a problem as the problem of voter apathy in the general population where a large segment of the population which is located near the bottom of the socio-economic ladder are disaffected. In both cases, it is in their interest to do so, but the obstacles are unusually obstinate and the population's sense of political efficacy is obviously weak. None of these early efforts at organizing adjuncts to join the union attained a high degree of success, although they did lay the groundwork for later efforts.

By 1975, the fiscal crisis had hit New York City, and, as noted in the previous chapters, it was the model for a subsequent national urban policy of austerity that affected local, as well as national, governmental policies. The adjunct working conditions were poor through the 1960s and early 1970s, but the University employed a high percentage of full-time faculty, as well, thus, the character of the university was not strongly subject to criticism on this count. After the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s blew over, the system became characterized by the ever-increasing use of part-time faculty combined with the

diminution of full-time faculty. "Adjunctification" is how one critic labeled this trend.[19] The public higher education system, thus, had been dramatically influenced by the austerity measures imposed upon the city. As noted above, college faculty did not have much in the way of political leverage and the brief market-driven employment heyday for them during the 1960s and early 1970s had declined by the mid 1970s and it has not recovered since. At first it seemed short-term and temporary, but adjunctification soon took on a systemic and permanent character: the number of full-time faculty members was gradually reduced, classroom size was increased, teacher-student ratio increased, and the number of adjunct faculty members has increased. At CUNY, aside from the immediate retrenchment and lay-offs which affected all faculty, over the 25 year period following the 1975 crisis, *the number of full-time faculty was cut in half while the number of part-time faculty grew by about fifty percent at its height* (the number of part-time faculty fluctuates widely from one semester to another).[20]

These austerity measures, along with the imposition of tuition, can be construed as constituting an institutional roll back of the democratization that had occurred under Open Admissions. Prior to Open Admissions, in 1969, minorities – defined as Black and Hispanic students, the latter at this time being mostly Puerto Rican – comprised approximately 9% of the total CUNY student population. Between 1970 and 1972 the average percentage of minority students making up the total population of CUNY

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[19] Will Petry, "Academic Fordism: Adjunct Jobs and the Two-Tier Structure in the University System," unpublished manuscript, 1988.

[20] Perhaps a more pertinent piece of data would be the number of credit hours taught by full-time versus part-time faculty, but that is not available for this time period. Nevertheless, the head count of full-time versus part-time faculty is a strong indication of the changes that were occurring. See Table 7 for detailed figures.

students rose to 24%.[21] With the changing complexion of the University, and with the white middle-class flight to the suburbs which had been occurring since the post-war period, the political will to fund Open Admissions waned and the University, like the city it belongs to, faced austerity.[22] The student body shrank dramatically through the fiscal crisis and still has not fully reached the levels from pre-1975.

Through the next couple of decades, the union was able to protect, in relative terms, the shrinking number of full time faculty, but the price that was paid for keeping up the status of the full-time ranks and simultaneously providing a relatively low-cost education of reasonable quality for the students was the exploitation of a growing number of part-time faculty, working with few contractual protections and little in the way of remuneration or benefits.

Thus, the reproduction of the corporate model, with the pliable adjunct labor force as its centerpiece, was imposed in a public institution through budgetary mechanisms. We might ask: What could have been done differently? This dissertation argues that this decline could have been ameliorated with strong union leadership that fought for the whole bargaining unit *and* did not follow the hierarchical, narrowly focused, model of unionism which implicitly accepts the corporate model, fights for the economic gains of its shrinking body of top-tier members alone, and virtually ignores the rest. The PSC has been called a company union and denounced as a business union. The latter indicates a bureaucratically narrow focus on bread and butter issues to the exclusion of broader influences, including the quality of education issues that professional unionism purports

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[21] Lavin and Hyllegard, 33.

[22] Kate McCaffrey, "The On-going Lesson: A Brief History of Access and Tuition at CUNY," *The Graduate Student Advocate,* special supplement, *Splinter,* CUNY Graduate Center, April 1991.

to extol. These definitions become muddy at times and they are only ideals, not concrete examples of particular teacher unions. The PSC followed the professional model, more or less, in that they were clearly interested in quality of education issues as they affected the academic labor force, but their "interest" did not prevent them from badly carrying out policy. This was not due to any abstract distinctions between bread-and-butter or professional unionism, but because they did little in the way of political mobilization. The lack of community ties and the weakness of their political activism are at the root of this inefficiency. Of course, a single union cannot fight powerful elite interests all by itself. If the PSC and the other municipal unions in New York City had followed a social activist union model that had *educated* and *mobilized* its membership *as well as the broader community*, and spoke to issues beyond narrowly construed bargaining issues, including, of course, those that affect public policy such as militarism and social welfare policies, then perhaps the corporate model might have at least had a New Deal-type social compact firmly embedded in it. Even if one argues that *at that time* it could not have been done any differently, we can still learn from the lessons of history.

In 1976 Irwin Polishook was elected to preside over the PSC. This would have been a difficult period for any union leader, given the fiscal crisis. Polishook had been the First Vice-President under Belle Zeller, and was part of the City University Union Caucus (CUUC), the group made up primarily of former Legislative Conference members. In that election, the CUUC defeated the Unity Caucus – Kugler's group – which was, in turn, made up primarily of the former UFCT members. The entire CUUC slate won. This slate, later to be fused with the Unity Caucus (thus the name change of CUUC to the City University *Unity* Caucus), would control the Executive leadership of

the PSC and most of the campus chapters nearly unopposed as a caucus for 24 years. Polishook was known to say that the PSC "doesn't need an opposition."[23] Conceivably, such a position might reflect a functional truth in a union where there were real avenues of democratic participation and where there were no members who were effectively disenfranchised, but union democracy was still not on the horizon, and due to this deficit the dissent and discontent would grow over the years. Nevertheless, Polishook came to acquire a positive reputation among many full-timers and within the hierarchy of the AFT, but among part-timers it was a very different story. Full-timers were in a position to view Polishook in favorable terms – they usually obtained some financial gain with each new contract, and though these gains may have been meager, compared to the adjuncts, they were comfortable. Not having to worry about union matters makes it easier for a faculty member to stay focused on his or her own work. However, this *relative* stability came at the expense of faculty power in the University and increasing adjunctification. During these years, the problem for part-time faculty would become one that was not just about their working conditions, pay, and rights on the job, but also about how to gain adequate representation from a union that appeared to be bent on restricting their power within the union. There was no one element that could be pointed to which can, by itself, speak to the disenfranchisement of part-time faculty within the union, but taken as whole, the procedural barriers were formidable.

In 1978, under Polishook's leadership, the PSC made constitutional revisions that would further undermine the ability of part-time faculty to participate in the union. They

[23] Quoted by Israel Kugler, "Ethics, Democracy and the PSC – An Open Letter from Israel Kugler," October 15, 1973. Unprocessed PSC Collection at The Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University.

changed the rules so that members of the union, who previously could vote in union elections one month after joining, could vote in the elections only 4 months after joining. In addition, they changed the qualifications for being a candidate in a union election from five months after joining the union to one year. The given rationale for such changes was that it would have the effect of requiring "some familiarity with union policies and procedures before eligibility to hold office."[24] While this sounds plausible, the fact is that it disproportionately affected the part-time faculty who, being transient in their employment, would have the most difficulty in meeting this requirement. Full-time faculty were not required to join the union, and not all of them joined, but it was less likely that this provision would have a great impact upon them since full-time faculty union membership was more stable than the erratic part-time faculty membership. Given the contingent nature of part-time faculty employment, the PSC added insult to injury by these changes.

The PSC Executive Council is up for re-election every three years, and the local chapters are also up for re-election every three years, but on a staggered basis so that there are some PSC elections every Spring. Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s part-time faculty activists struggled during the Fall semesters to get adjuncts to join the union before (approximately) December 1st so that they could qualify to vote in the Spring PSC elections, ballots usually being mailed out by April 1st, i.e., the constitutionally required four months later. The campaigns to enlist adjuncts were not welcomed by the PSC central office, and they did not give even minimal cooperation. Part-Timers United (PTU) volunteers had difficulty in getting the union to give them even a handful of union authorization cards so that they could try to get adjuncts to join. The reason given,

[24] PSC Proposed Amendments Mimeo, May 2, 1978.

according to the PSC central office, was that there is "private information" on the card and it must not get into the wrong hands, even though new members could choose to mail the card directly to the union.[25] Meanwhile, the PSC central office made little effort to even notify part-time faculty about the union.

It is not that Polishook encouraged the expansion of the use of part-time faculty – on the contrary, he had written many eloquent arguments against this practice which appeared in various union publications over the years. And the contract proposals that the PSC put forth in each round of negotiations always seemed to recognize the need for better pay for adjuncts and better working conditions – at least in the proposals that were presented to the public, for the negotiations were held in private. The outcomes, however, were usually fairly dismal for the part-time faculty, leading to the common belief among them that the union sold them out in order to make gains for the full-time faculty and staff. Part-time faculty may have been included in the across-the-board pay increases, but this only leads to a growing gap between part-time and full-time salaries, given the already existing disparity.[26] The real problem, however, was in the means that Polishook sought to implement these proposals. There was very little mobilization of the membership, little in terms of large-scale activism around the contract, and little room for adjuncts to politically participate in the union. They had abandoned any notion of an activist union, and had gone the route of over-relying on such tactics as lobbying the state legislature and engaging in cooperative efforts with the administration. Even when they

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[25] VincentTirelli, "New Caucus on the Scene, PSC/CUNY Leaders Face Electoral Competition for the First Time in 20 Years," *The Advocate*, October/November 1996, Vol 8, No 2, 11.

[26] For example, a 3% increase for someone making $60,000. amounts to $1800; the same 3% for someone making $16,000. amounts to $480. If we continue the comparison for the next time around, a 3% increase for someone making $61,800. amounts to $1854; the same 3% increase for someone making $16,480. amounts to $494. And so on. Thus the disparity between the two categories continues to grow.

had to confront the administration forcefully, and there is no doubt that at times they did, they had little more than their powers of persuasion, legal recourse, and the union's lobbyists to use as leverage.

Evidence of the systematic exclusion of the part-time faculty from participation in union politics can be found in the conflict over the enforcement of the agency shop fee. An agency shop, unlike a closed shop where all bargaining unit members must join the union, does not require unit members to join the union and pay dues, but does require them to pay an agency fee for the services that the union provides as bargaining agent for the entire collective bargaining unit. The agency fee is the same as the dues rate, but the agency fee payer can get back a portion that would otherwise be used for political or ideological expenditures. The agency shop fee became a provision of New York State's Taylor Law in 1977. The third model is the open shop, where bargaining unit members are required neither to join the union nor to pay an agency fee. The third model is common in the South where there are many right-to-work states.

The PSC, until the New Caucus won the election for executive leadership in 2000, did not enforce the collection of the agency fee from part-time faculty, although it did do so for full-time faculty and staff. This practice of non-enforcement of the agency fee provision is highly unusual. The reason frequently given for this omission by the union leadership was that adjuncts do not make much money and to force them to pay an agency shop fee would be onerous. So the full time faculty had a strong incentive to join the union (i.e., since they were already charged the agency fee), whereas the part-time faculty had a disincentive to join. On top of that, the flat-rate dues charged to adjuncts was expensive, especially if they were only teaching a few classes per year. It was

difficult for adjunct activists, such as PTU members, to get part-time faculty to join the union given that the amount they would have to pay would jump from zero to one hundred percent, and if they did not join, they could continue to financially tread water as a not-so-free-rider. As the argument of the adjunct activists went, however, if part-time faculty were subject to agency fee enforcement, then many more of them would join the union, and the anticipated contractual improvements due to greater participation would more than offset the amount part-time faculty would pay in union dues. By not enforcing the agency fee provision, the PSC guaranteed that the overwhelming majority of part-time faculty would not become active in union politics.

In 1982, a new adjunct faculty group had emerged called the Association of Part-Time Faculty (APTF). Paul Wagner, an adjunct in ESL at CUNY (York College and BMCC) was one of the founders of this group. In 1983, Wagner decided that in the next general PSC election for the central leadership he would run for the PSC Executive Council position of Vice President for Part Time Personnel against the CUUC incumbent, Susan B. Prager. According to Wagner, he had signed up over two hundred new part-time faculty to be members of the PSC within the allotted time frame to be able to vote in the election which would be held in the Spring of 1985. The PSC Constitution held that the Vice President for Part Time Personnel would be elected by the part-time faculty exclusively, and that the part-time faculty were excluded from voting for the Vice Presidents and Officers of the Senior Colleges, the Community Colleges, and the Cross-Campus Units. In December of 1984, just prior to the tri-annual Spring elections for the central leadership of the union, the PSC Constitution was amended so that all of the members of the bargaining unit, including the full-time faculty, would vote for the Vice

President for Part-Time Personnel, and the part-time faculty would be able to also vote for the Vice President and Officers that corresponded to where they taught, i.e., a Senior College or a Community College. Had these changes not taken affect, Wagner's campaign to sign up adjuncts to the union could have won him the Vice Presidency against Prager, who was uniformly derided by adjunct activists as being not well suited for the job. However, the constitutional changes at the last minute, which Wagner believed were geared to derail his efforts, left the hundreds of adjunct voters unable to find their voice amidst the thousands of full-time faculty and staff votes, most of whom simply voted for the entire CUUC slate. The PSC portrayed these constitutional revisions as a democratizing measure because it allowed adjuncts to vote for the other categories of officers, in addition to the Vice President for Part-Time Personnel, but clearly the gerrymandering diluted their voice even further. Part-time faculty votes could not possibly have changed the outcomes in those other categories, CUUC candidates usually running unopposed, however, it was only in the contest for the Vice President for Part-Time Personnel that the part-time faculty vote could have made a difference and they could have at least gained some kind of voice, such as they had when William Leicht had occupied this position under the Presidency of Belle Zeller during the first years of the PSC.

These are some of the ways that the PSC Constitution served to inhibit the political organizing of the part-time faculty. Another part-time faculty organization soon arrived that would not work within the union, as the APTF did, but would attempt to decertify the PSC as the collective bargaining agent for the part-time faculty – the Part-Time Instructional and Research Staff Union (PTU).

The PTU Decertification Campaign

The PTU grew out of a chartered student organization of the CUNY Graduate Center's Doctoral Students' Council (DSC), which was called the Graduate Students' Union (GSU).[27] The relationships of these organizations to each other (APTF, GSU, DSC, and PTU) constituted the continuation of an uneven movement on behalf of part-time faculty rights. The ideas and the players congealed together out of the overlapping memberships of these organizations and led to a modest adjunct faculty labor movement at CUNY. The DSC was a fractious student government that had difficulty in getting anything serious done due to a convoluted constitutional structure that encouraged divisiveness and sophomoric power struggles. The GSU was formed in December of 1982 "by many DSC members who grew frustrated by the institutional limits to student government and the inability of past members to work for real student needs, such as union, health care, day care, [and] democratization of the university."[28] Among the founders of the GSU were Jonathan Lang (Philosophy), Jeffrey Gerson (Political Science), and Will Petry (Sociology). Nancy Erber from LaGuardia Community College attended some of the meetings as a representative from APTF and reported on their activities to the GSU.[29] Thus the GSU served as a platform for these various groups to gather around. It's formation as a chartered student organization allowed it to share some DSC resources (phones, photocopies, modest funding) to advocate for and promote the interests of part-time faculty.

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[27] Circa early 1984.

[28] GSU minutes, August 17, 1983, Private Collection.

[29] Ibid.

Petry used his position as co-editor of the DSC-sponsored newspaper, *Refuse*, to provide reportage of common concern to part-time faculty and doctoral students. He was a colorful working-class scholar who often irritated his editorial targets (and occasionally his allies), but he kept issues alive with his biting wit and dramatic and bold banner headlines, one of the most incisive being "TRENCH SCHOLAR," an exposé depicting the difficult working conditions of part-time faculty, and an early inspiration for this dissertation.

The PTU was more than just a graduate student organization. Its membership also included "regular" CUNY adjunct faculty. That is, just a few graduate students had scholarships to teach, but the PTU also included both those graduate students who doubled as regular part-time faculty and those adjunct faculty who had terminal degrees or who had concluded their terms as students. The two organizations, which had overlapping memberships, thus, ran more or less concurrently for a time. This allowed them to continue to get DSC resources to carry out their activities, i.e., as a chartered graduate student organization. These activities included attempts to attain a critical mass of supporters, to educate the academic public to these issues, to discuss plans to form as a separate union at some future point (they had this discussion with their PTU hats on since the GSU was prohibited from engaging in that activity), and to, meanwhile, act as an advocate for part-time faculty.

The PTU's first major accomplishment came through a legal challenge to the settlement agreement between the University and the CUNY Women's Coalition, which had sued CUNY for discrimination in salaries paid to faculty women since 1968. The Coalition, led by Professor Lilia Melani of Brooklyn college, received support from the

PSC, including "help in arriving at the final settlement agreement."[30] The decision of Federal District Court Judge Lee Gagliardi on March 17, 1983 found CUNY guilty of "intentionally discriminating against women on the instructional staff."[31] The out-of-court settlement awarded $7.5 million to faculty women and established a University Affirmative Action Committee (UAAC). Neither the monetary award nor the new committee had included faculty women who were part-time, though there was a provision for part-time faculty women "who applied for a full-time job to get a modicum of relief."[32] The lawyers for the newly formed PTU "filed affidavits objecting to the lack of participation by part-time instructional women on the UAAC."[33] On July 12, 1984 the Federal District Court favorably answered the PTU's protest. As a result of this intervention by the PTU, part-time faculty women won a seat on the UAAC.[34] They did not pursue gaining a share of the monetary award for part-time faculty women because they were advised that the judge was not inclined to re-examine the monetary damages previously awarded and, if they had pushed for it, it reportedly might have jeopardized the newly won seat for part-time faculty women on the UAAC.[35]

I became personally involved with the GSU and the PTU in Fall 1985. In May of 1986 I was elected to be DSC Chair for the upcoming school year. The two major accomplishments of the DSC during my tenure were to direct money and resources to the

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[30] Irwin Yellowitz, "A decade of advance," *The Clarion*, December 1996, 7.

[31] Mary Ann Lone and Bettina Drew, "PTU Victory in Federal Court," *Refuse*, N.D., circa Fall 1984.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

GSU, and to constitutionally reshape the DSC so as to remedy the chronic structural problems that had plagued the organization and to make it a more democratic body. The first accomplishment had obvious and immediate implications for part-time faculty interests, and the second accomplishment allowed the DSC to develop into a more coherent, responsible, and consistently activist organization which, some years later, developed two important institutional means of support for part-time faculty: (1) an award-winning student newspaper, *The Graduate Student Advocate*, which frequently reports on academic labor issues;[36] and (2) the Adjunct Project, a very successful and creative DSC endeavor which became an important institutional means of support for adjunct faculty interests after 1994.

A central part of the DSC constitutional restructuring was to redesign the representative structure from being strictly represented by departmental representatives to being represented by a body that was two-thirds departmental representative and one-third at-large representatives.[37] This created the opportunity for an activist bloc of students to be able to have a significant presence on the Council, which had, in the past, often had its more politically ambitious proposals thwarted by inexperienced representatives or by those whose political inclinations were conservative or neo-liberal, as compared to the more left-leaning activists seeking more fundamental changes. After the 1991 student strike discussed below, the activist students, disappointed in the tepid support of the DSC for their strike, ran successfully for at-large, as well as departmental,

[36] In 1996, *The Graduate Student Advocate* won a Campus Alternative Journalism Award from the Independent Press Association.

[37] This idea was promoted by DSC Treasurer Danny Choriki (Environmental Psychology).

DSC seats in large numbers. Among this group there was strong support for the activities of the part-time faculty organizers.

Thus, the DSC was an important vehicle for promoting the continuous activism by and for part-time faculty on many levels. Both Lang and Petry had been DSC Chairpersons prior to my term. There was a lot of cross-pollination going on within and between these various institutions. It was this ability to act on multiple levels at once, through multiple associations, that allowed this mobilization to gain a measure of success.

In May 1986, PTU began to organize a campaign to decertify the PSC as the collective bargaining agent for part-time faculty. The now defunct APTF turned over their modest treasury, symbolically passing the torch to the PTU in a gesture of support for the new tactics. As the PTU grew more visible, the GSU gradually faded from the scene. Jeff Gerson was formally elected as PTU President, however, we continued to operate democratically as a loose committee.[38] Gerson was the most committed, the most involved, and the most identifiable, but there were about a dozen people who had become active in coordinating this campaign, and there were many unsung supporters on the campuses who did a lot of the hard work such as leafleting and collecting signatures. Some of them became campus contacts who would be public and visible: besides their campus organizing, many of them participated in the numerous meetings at the Graduate Center, and they would allow their names and phone numbers to be listed on PTU literature. This was not a light or casual thing to do since part-time faculty had absolutely no job security protections. They did not even have to be fired, but simply not

[38] I served as Treasurer of PTU at this time.

reappointed the following semester, thanks to the 1973 PSC contract which, as noted above, failed to hold on to part-time faculty job security and seniority rights.

I began to notice that being "flexible labor" made us interchangeable in more ways than one. That is, while there were eight or ten who were regulars on the committee, there were always a few who could not make the meetings (given our teaching schedules and outside jobs), and there were always a few who came to these meetings for the first time. We would always get new activists, and this would require a constant process of education on the issues and strategies, but for the most part the new enlistees would step up and quickly adapt.

The minutes of the GSU had recorded previous discussions about problems in drawing more women activists into the organization and several members questioned why there were so few women involved. The PTU, on the other hand, seemed to resolve this issue of a lack of gender balance as Sally O'Driscoll and Lorraine Johnson-Riordan, along with former APTF activists Joan Wathen, Susan DiRaimo, and Anthea Tillyer, became leading figures in the decertification campaign.

Our campaign to collect signatures was an education in itself. We collected small donations and words of encouragement from hundreds of people. Many full-time tenured faculty had encouraging words and a check or two. John Hyland, Michael Frank, and Nancy Erber, full-time faculty members from LaGuardia Community College, were occasional visitors to the PTU meetings. They listened, discussed union and university politics with us, and provided us with friendly encouragement. The difference between them and most other supportive full-time faculty at this time was that they believed that we could change the leadership and the culture of the union. They subsequently joined

together with others at LaGuardia and formed an independent slate called New Directions that in 1990 would be the first caucus to defeat the City University Unity Caucus (CUUC) in a chapter election.

It is difficult to measure the depth of dissatisfaction that the part-time faculty had for the PSC at this time, but it was immense and it was widespread. We had this simple, little, half-baked, smoke-and-mirrors operation in the PTU, with attorneys who were more or less working pro bono, and every day of the campaign we would meet adjuncts from all over CUNY and one after another after another would treat us as if we were an advancing army that had come to liberate them. On payday, we would go to the payroll offices and sit with a sign, leaflets, and signature cards (now they have direct deposit). We were constantly getting encouragement by adjuncts who told us that we made them feel as if someone was finally fighting for them. Many were excited to sign up, and to have someone to talk to about their lonely plight and their miserable working conditions.

We were not able to get our message out to enough people within the limited time frame. What was remarkable, however, was that we were able to get nearly 1500 signatures within the time that we had with our limited resources. The anger was everywhere, and much of it was directed at the PSC, especially at Irwin Polishook, and, to a lesser extent, at Susan Prager, the Vice President for Part-Time Personnel.

If we won, we would have had to become union officials ourselves, and negotiate on behalf of the thousands of adjuncts at CUNY. For many of us, this was our first union campaign. Though I was not happy about the working conditions, the job prospects, and the direction that higher education was taking, my preference was to teach, not to be a union official. I know I was not the only PTU activist to feel this way. But events were

moving rapidly and we had to adapt quickly. There was so much discontent with the union that we were more successful than we imagined we could be, and we had to start thinking about the possibility of winning.

During the 1986 campaign,[39] I was not convinced that we would be able to reach enough adjuncts within the allotted time so that we could obtain their signature on union authorization cards. The PTU argument was that part-time faculty constitute a separate community of interests and deserve independent representation. Though there was strong support for the PTU among adjuncts, the obstacles to a certification election were formidable. There was a limited three-month period during which the PTU could legally engage in on-campus union organizing activities, given the existence of an already-authorized collective bargaining agent, i.e., the PSC. Thus, encouraging adjuncts to sign union authorization cards with the express purpose of decertifying the incumbent union could only lawfully be done during this designated challenge period.

Most other unions were prohibited from assisting the PTU because the PSC is part of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and of the AFL-CIO, and there is a no-raid pact among member unions. This prohibition includes, within its scope, challenges to the incumbent collective bargaining agent from a faction within a union, such as the challenge posed by the PTU. Thus, we had our work cut out for us. The actual number of signed union authorization cards needed to challenge the PSC to an election depended upon the way that the prospective new unit would be determined, i.e., which of the various job title categories would be included, but we believed that we needed at least 1500 signatures to successfully authorize an certification election. This number

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[39] Some of the account here draws upon an earlier article by author: Vincent Tirelli, "Whither the PTU?" *The Graduate Student Advocate*, May-September 1990.

represented approximately thirty percent of the members from the contested job titles. The resources needed to find and then to sign up the necessary number of adjuncts were not readily available. Part-time faculty often change the location of their workplace, as well as their home addresses, and this complicated the task. Nevertheless, with a small staff of volunteers the PTU signed up well over a thousand members in a short period of time. Though the effort fell short of the required number needed to authorize a certification election, the fact that such a large number of signatures were attained under such difficult conditions reflected the anger that part-time faculty had for the PSC leadership.

State law requires management to act with neutrality during a union organizing campaign. The PTU charged the University administration with violating that neutrality. A revealing moment occurred at a preliminary conference, held March 11, 1987, at the New York State Public Employees Relations Board (PERB), the governing body for public labor unions in New York. CUNY Associate Counsel Jane Denkensohn explained that part-time faculty should continue to be represented by the PSC as CUNY and the PSC have developed a long-term "mature" and "stable" relationship over the years.[40] The PTU answered this in their newsletter (distributed to thousands of part-time faculty) by contending that "CUNY and the PSC are very comfortable with their cozy relationship, which has worked well both for the University and the full-time faculty. Neither side wants to rock the boat by opening up the question of part-timers."[41]

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[40] Reported by author in "Whither the PTU?" and based on personal observation. Also reported in *PTU VIEW*, April 1987 (Private Collection).

[41] *PTU View*, April 1987 (Private Collection).

There were four specific charges that the PTU filed against University for breaching neutrality: 1) in CUNY's interpretation of the length of time of the challenge period; 2) in the timeliness of CUNY's response to PTU's request for the names and addresses of adjuncts; 3) for interfering with PTU members when they were engaged in campaign activity on campus; and 4) for reducing the time requirements for adjunct health benefits *during* the challenge period, thus favoring the PSC over the PTU.[42] These require some explanation.

Firstly, the PTU argued that the challenge period should be for six months beginning on May 1, 1986, however, CUNY Associate Counsel Denkensohn asserted that it was for 90 days beginning August 1, 1986. There was what is known as an open-window period in which a petition for certification could be filed with PERB. This was between November 1, 1986 and November 30, 1986. Given this time frame, the PTU had August, September, October, and part of November to get signatures for the petition. But August is an impossible month to organize at CUNY because there are only a few summer session classes and the teachers are, for the most part, dispersed. There was little time that remained to sign up the required thirty percent of the part-time faculty. The aim was to gather more than the approximate thirty percent in order to ensure that PERB would not have any reason to question our signatures. This presented a problem in that the number of part-time faculty at CUNY at any given moment is, or was, not exactly a figure kept with precision.

Secondly, the PTU charged that the University was late in fulfilling their request for the list of all CUNY adjuncts. Initially, CUNY had given the PTU a computer-generated list of more than 10,000 faculty members. This list did not differentiate

[42] Tirelli, "Whither the PTU?" 2.

between full-time faculty and part-time faculty. PTU continued to insist on a more reasonable and manageable list. The University finally relented and we were given an up-to-date list that contained only part-time faculty names and contact information, but time was growing short as the deadline approached. This list was not received by the PTU until October 17th 1986. Meanwhile, the campaign was waged using old mailing lists, but these were not as reliable since part-time faculty tend to be more transient than other employees. This was also complicated by the fact that part-time faculty tend not to be on campus beyond their classroom hours, making face-to-face contact difficult to achieve.

Thirdly, PTU charged that on at least two occasions University security did not allow PTU activists – Tom Smith at Brooklyn College and John Antici at Queens College – to sign up new members on the grounds of the college. These two occurrences took place immediately after the "open window" period, however the PTU argued for the extension of this period because of CUNY's untimeliness in providing the list of part-time faculty names.

Finally, the fourth charge by the PTU regarding CUNY's lack of neutrality involved the expansion of health insurance benefits for part-time faculty in the middle of the 1986 challenge period. One might question why the PTU was critical of the expansion of benefits for adjuncts, but the issue was over the timing of it. The PTU argued that this expansion gave the PSC "an unfair organizing advantage."[43] This requires some explanation. The PSC had gained limited health benefit provisions for part-time faculty, not including their families, under the 1984-1987 contract which was

[43] *PTU View*, April 1987.

announced to the membership in a general announcement regarding the contract in the June 1985 issue of *The Clarion*.[44] The *details* of the new benefit for part-time faculty, which had only vaguely been referred to in *The Clarion*, were spelled out fully in a November 1985 "Dear Colleague" memo sent to part-time faculty by Susan Prager. It explains the benefit as follows:

> Under the 1984-1987 contract, adjuncts who are teaching six or more hours or the equivalent per semester and *who have taught one or more course in the same department at the same college for ten consecutive semesters*, not including summer sessions, and who are not covered by other primary health care insurance, will be provided with health care benefits [emphasis added]. This coverage will begin on February 1, 1986.[45]

The PTU's rebuttal, as proclaimed in the *PTU Pamphlet* of August 1986, was that "few will qualify" for this benefit, which they called a "sham."[46] In the middle of the 1986 challenge period, shortly after the distribution of the *PTU Pamphlet*, the PSC announced in *The Clarion* that an agreement was reached between the PSC and University management which changed the qualifying requirements for part-time faculty health benefits from ten consecutive semesters in the same department at the same college to six consecutive semesters and the "same-department" requirement was dropped.[47] Thus, it was the timing of the increased benefit which led the PTU to file the unfair labor practice charge against CUNY.

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[44] Cited in "Medical Insurance and Tuition Waivers: Why the PSC Contract Doesn't Help Adjuncts." *PTU Pamphlet*, circa August 1986, private collection.

[45] Mimeo. "PSCcuny, Part_time Personnel," November 18, 1985.

[46] *PTU Pamphlet*, circa August 1986.

[47] *The Clarion*, September 1986. Reported by author in "Whither the PTU?," 2.

The PSC leadership would not admit that it was the pressure that developed due to the effect of the growing adjunct activism that was responsible for the loosening of adjunct health insurance qualifications, however it would not be a great leap of logic to surmise that it was done to undercut the PTU's growing support. Additionally, former CUNY Chancellor Joseph Murphy, an openly leftist scholar, later acknowledged that he had encouraged the union to include adjunct health benefits among their demands, both as an altruistic measure – his wife had worked as an adjunct and it became an issue that she felt strongly about – and as a means to calm the restive adjunct population.[48] The latter reason coincided with the PSC leadership's interests at this time.

It would have been surprising if the PTU's charges had been upheld against CUNY, but in late Spring of 1987 PERB did decide partially in the PTU's favor. The PTU had initially sought an extension of the open-window period, but with the passage of time this point became moot. However, the PTU did gain a moral victory as PERB granted a six-month challenge period that could be applied to future efforts. As noted, the University had insisted that the challenge period was limited to the three months prior to the beginning of the "open-window period." Given the difficulty of organizing on a college campus during the summer months, the PTU argued that it should have six months to conduct such a campaign. PERB agreed.

New York State labor law allowed for a second open-window period, and the PTU organized a second campaign in August 1987. PTU literature indicates that it would be necessary to sign up thirty percent of what was now approximately 6000 adjuncts in

[48] Personal correspondence, March 22, 1993.

order to successfully petition PERB for an election.[49] The cards had to be filed with PERB between October 28, 1987 and November 28, 1987. But this window would only remain open as long as a new contract between the PSC and CUNY had not been ratified. Thus, the PTU had less than three months to re-sign old members and to encourage new members to sign authorization cards. This campaign was not as successful as the first in terms of mobilizing adjunct support. And the PSC was ready, gaining ratification of the new contract by October 27th, thereby undercutting the possibility of the PTU successfully petitioning PERB.

For full-time faculty, the economic packages offered during the mid-to-late 1980s were the best in the period from 1975-2000 with relatively strong salary gains. This allowed Polishook to continue to maintain support among full-timers, even though it was a period of a declining overall number of full-time faculty. One could say that the salary increases came at the expense of more full-time lines and that the whole framework was supported by increasing adjunctification.[50] Nevertheless, the 1987-1990 contract gives further evidence of the impact of the PTU campaign. The health benefit provision requiring an adjunct to be working for six consecutive semesters at the same college was further reduced to two consecutive semesters at the same college. This provision would go into effect as of September 1, 1988.

The decertification campaign, as well as the activism prior to it (i.e., APTF, GSU, and PTU), heightened the awareness of the contingent academic labor system and politicized the issue: it gave experience in activism and union organizing to dozens of part-time faculty, it helped to build alliances with some of the full-time faculty, it

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[49] *PTU View*, August 1987.

pressured the PSC into obtaining health benefits for part-time faculty, it forced a dialogue about part-time faculty at CUNY, and most importantly, perhaps, it showed that the PSC leadership was vulnerable. Our meager effort brought out in sharp relief the dissatisfaction that both part-time *and* full-time faculty had with the PSC. Polishook retained his credibility among many full-time members during this period, but there appeared numerous cracks in the facade. This dissatisfaction would eventually manifest itself in the emergence of the New Caucus.

Crisis, Protest, and the Gestation of an Opposition

The Part-Time Instructional and Research Staff Union disbanded after the 1987 decertification attempt. Tumult and conflict, however, continued to brew in the university. Tuition hikes, budget cuts, student strikes, and the beginnings of a faculty mobilization that would transform the union marked the years following 1989. As the 1990s wore on, it came to be more fully understood by many that the relative financial decline of the University, the student protests, the plight of the part-time faculty, the assaults by the State leaders and their allies in the press, and the declining significance of full-time faculty power over governance were all part of the same picture, that is, a kind of urban class warfare. Central to this conflict were the part-time faculty and the students. The contingent academic labor position within the university allowed many of the cuts to occur hidden from public view. It was one of the key instruments that eroded faculty governance, and it kept the union in a weakened state, thereby allowing the university administration and the reactionary state leadership, to whom they ultimately answered, to better control the political agenda.

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[50] Steve London made this observation in a conversation in November 2006.

The late 1980s and the 1990s were a period of crisis for the university as state and city leaders steadily chipped away at the budget. In the Spring of 1989, there was a proposal by the State legislature for a $200 per year tuition increase for students.[51] CUNY was already suffering from budget cutbacks and a hiring freeze. Governor Cuomo had submitted a budget to the State legislature "that included a $58.1 million cut for CUNY."[52] It was the fact that these cuts were proposed for "a system already teetering on the edge of retrenchment that led to… [the] student outrage."[53] In February of 1989, 3000 CUNY and SUNY students rallied in Albany on the Capitol steps. Additionally, the CUNY administration sponsored a letter-writing campaign that "flooded the legislature with mail."[54] The legislature restored $28 million to the budget, but "it became clear that budget cuts and the tuition increase would stand."[55] At that point, the students decided on more militant action.

It began at City College on April 24, 1989, and before it was over 11 days later CUNY students had taken over and occupied buildings at eleven CUNY campuses, and their fellow students at SUNY occupied two of their campuses. Students from the Graduate Center chained the doors shut for the last three days of the strike in solidarity with the undergraduate students. There were CUNY-wide student meetings at City College with representatives from each of the occupied campuses. It was a well-coordinated strike by the undergraduate student leaders.

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[51] Sean McCann, "11 Days that Shook New York," *The Graduate Student Advocate,* September 1989, 5.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid., 5.

On May 2nd, nearly ten thousand students from sixteen campuses rallied at the World Trade Center and marched up to the Sheraton Hotel in mid-town where Governor Cuomo was scheduled to give a speech. The traffic was blocked as the students chant of "M-a-a-ri-o-o" echoed off the buildings. It was a top news item in the print and broadcast media in New York City. That evening, the Governor announced that he would veto the tuition hike, though he denied that the student protest had anything to do with it.[56] About ten days later, a plan was announced by Cuomo and Chancellor Murphy to restore $18 million to the budget without tuition increases.[57] Sean McCann of *The Graduate Student Advocate* explains:

> …the Governor's solution was largely blue smoke and mirrors. No new money was found for CUNY. The $18 million is to be made up by borrowing against our capital accounts fund, by transferring TAP funds that would have been used to cover the tuition increase, and most importantly, by $7 million in 'management actions' by CUNY…. Secondly, there is no reason to believe that the pattern of minimal financing and tuition increases for CUNY has changed at all. Rumor in Albany says that some legislators, seeking revenge against students and Governor Cuomo, may simply ask for a doubled tuition fee next year. Thirdly, the student victory has just managed to preserve an already dismal status quo. Finally, as graduate students, we have particular reason to be unhappy. *Chancellor Murphy has himself noted that continued underfinancing of CUNY will force increased exploitative use of adjuncts and other unappealing employment practices.* [emphasis added][58]

McCann's analysis, and Chancellor Murphy's prediction, both proved to be essentially correct.[59]

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[56] McCann, "11 Days that Shook New York," 5.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Chancellor Murphy recognized his own dilemma. He had advised me once after he retired as Chancellor and again became a Political Science Professor, "You might find that I bear some culpability for the situation with adjuncts" (circa 1996). Even when he was Chancellor, though, he was keenly aware of it. When I was the Doctoral Student Council's representative to the University Student Senate in 1986, he was

There were tuition increases at CUNY in 1991, 1992, 1993, and 1996. As tuition was raised, public revenue for CUNY was reduced dramatically. Throughout the 1990s there was a serious erosion of University resources. At the CUNY senior colleges, from 1990 to 1999, revenue declined by 15.2% after adjustment for inflation.[60] When taking into account CUNY senior college enrollment increases of more than 4% during the same period, it results in an even greater decline in revenue of 18.8% per full-time equivalent student. This compares unfavorably to national senior college peer groups where revenue *rose* 15.6% during the same period. When taking into account senior college peer group enrollment increases of 13% during the same period, revenue increased 2% per full-time equivalent student. Both the CUNY senior Colleges, which experienced an increase of tuition revenue by 79.4%, and national senior college peer groups, which experienced an increase of tuition revenue by 71%, had increases in tuition and increases in enrollment during this period, but the total revenue disparity between them is explained when we consider that public revenue for CUNY senior colleges declined during this period by 43.4%, whereas the peer group was subject to a decline of only 0.9% in public support.

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a guest at the meetings, on occasion, and the first time I asked him a question, which had to do with graduate student financial support, he answered my question, and then offered that he thought I should have asked a question about the exploitation of adjunct faculty, which, he suggested, was an important issue.

[60] University Budget Office, The City University of New York, "A Comparison of Unrestricted Current Fund Revenue at CUNY and Select Peer Institutions FY 1990 to FY 1999," May 1, 2001; According to the report, "1990 data have been adjusted for inflation using the Higher Education Price Index so that they reflect 1999 dollars" ("Methodology Notes," 17). All of the data and analysis in this paragraph are derived from this report. Peer groups are defined as having originally been developed by PriceWaterhouseCoopers for the Schmidt Commission, and it includes "Carnegie classification, urban mission, and student demography" (From the report, 1). The report discusses revenue as "Unrestricted Current Fund revenue" and this includes "funds from tuition and State and Local support that have no limitations or stipulations placed on them," and it excludes "private gifts, grants and contracts, endowment income, sales of educational services, auxiliary enterprises, and other sources" (from report, "Methodology Notes," 17).

During the same period, revenue at the CUNY community colleges declined by 4.2%.[61] When taking into account CUNY community college enrollment increases of more than 13% during the same period, it results in a decline in revenue of 15.4% per full-time equivalent student. When compared to revenue at the community college peer group institutions, the results are unfavorable for CUNY. Revenue *rose* 4.2% at the community college peer group institutions. When taking into account community college peer group enrollment increases of 5% during the same period, revenue decreased just 0.8% per full-time equivalent student. Again, similar to the senior colleges, it is the decline in public funding that accounts for this disparity. Both categories experienced tuition increases – at CUNY it amounted to an increase of 79.7% in tuition revenue, and in the peer group tuition revenue increased 29.1%. However, with only a small decrease in public support (4.3%) at the peer groups, and a 30.1% reduction in public support at CUNY, the CUNY Community Colleges fell far behind their peers.

Thus, state support for CUNY had been slashed, all during a time of rising enrollments and rising tuition. Tuition payments accounted for 21.4% of funding to CUNY (University-wide) in 1991.[62] By 2002, it accounted for 37.2% of the budget University-wide. The pattern of rising tuition has not been enough to maintain an adequate budget in the face of declining State aid, which has fallen by 30.7% from 1991 to 2002, and in the face of declining City support, as well, which decreased by 44.2% during the same period. Thus, from 1991 to 2002 overall University funding (State, City,

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[61] University Budget Office, "A Comparison of Unrestricted Current Fund Revenue at CUNY and Select Peer Institutions FY 1990 to FY 1999." All of the data and analysis in this paragraph is derived from this report.

[62] University Budget Office, The City University of New York, "Funding History for the City University of New York Fiscal Year 1991 to Fiscal Year 2002," January 28, 2002. All of the data and analysis in this paragraph is derived from this report.

and tuition revenue) has declined by 16.4% after adjustment for inflation, even as tuition has skyrocketed.

Additionally, as predicted by Chancellor Murphy in 1989, during this period the decline in the number of full-time faculty and the increased reliance on part-time faculty increased precipitously, i.e., the University made use of part-time faculty, as well as increases in the student-teacher ratio, to balance its declining budget, while allowing full-time faculty to be lost through attrition and early retirement packages. From 1990 to 2000, the number of full-time faculty at CUNY was reduced by about a thousand.[63] In terms of teaching load, this translates into some disturbing trends. In 1990, 54% of undergraduate instruction at CUNY's community colleges was taught by full-time faculty.[64] By 1999 that figure was reduced to 44%.[65] At the senior colleges, in 1990, 62% of undergraduate instruction was taught by full-time faculty.[66] By 1999, that figure had dropped to 51%.

The student protests at CUNY did not stop the budget cuts, though one could argue that it might have been worse without them. However the protests did provide a context of activism and of urgency that had been missing at CUNY in the immediately preceding years. The students could see right away that the attacks on CUNY were direct assaults on them. They responded in protest. Their protest proved to be a kind of

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[63] PSC/CUNY Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Programmatic Priorities for the City University of New York, January 31, 2002, citing City University of New York. Reportedly, the number of full-tiime faculty went from about 6,515 in 1990 to 5,594 in 2000.

[64] PSC/CUNY Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Programmatic Priorities for the City University of New York, January 31, 2002, citing City University of New York, 2001-02 Budget Request.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

accelerant that would help the faculty organizing to become more intense. During the 1989 student strike a group of about forty faculty organized at City College to support the students who were striking. They called themselves, "Concerned Faculty and Staff" – the name of a faculty organization that would get reinvented and re-used on an ad-hoc basis, when needed, since, at least, the 1960s.[67] This group included full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and staff members who would continue to develop a set of relationships beyond the student strike of 1989.[68] The part-time faculty in this group would be the prime movers in reconstituting the PTU, and, later, many of the "Concerned Faculty and Staff" would go on to become the leaders in the City College chapter of the New Caucus.

In the midst of all of this activity, the early 1990s saw the first successful challenge to Polishook's CUUC. At LaGuardia Community College, John Hyland, Nancy Erber, Michael Frank, and Paul Bartlett were among the leaders who had been organizing an independent slate called New Directions. They would challenge the incumbent CUUC chapter leadership and win. When New Directions began organizing there had been no union meetings at the college.[69] They pressured the chapter leadership to have meetings and they organized people to attend. Their success at this led them to publish a newsletter, at the request of the chapter leadership.[70] The newsletter, in an article by Michael Frank, had some criticism of the central PSC leadership. He had criticized the union's strategy for fighting budget cuts as being limited to "lobbying by

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[67] Conversation with Carol Smith, March 28, 2003.

[68] Conversation with Susan DiRaimo, November 30, 2002.

[69] Michael Frank, "LaGuardia Delegation Leads the Way: The New Directions Caucus at LaGuardia Community College," *PTU View,* March 1992. (Private Collection).

[70] Ibid.

small groups of union officials and giving financial support to Democratic politicians."[71] The central leadership had refused to publish the newsletter, asserting "that it was a 'house organ' and that… [Frank's] article did not reflect union policy."[72] So, they printed it themselves.

This more activist group developed support from the members of the chapter through their activities and by taking positions on key issues. Hyland organized a series of labor forums at LaGuardia to educate the faculty. And they proved themselves in battle by organizing a successful fightback against an agreement that had been reached between the administration and the central and chapter leadership which would have changed the tenure requirements to include an additional tenure project.[73] In these ways, they gained the support of the members, and when they ran as a slate in Spring 1990 they were able to gain 11 of the 12 positions by "a healthy majority."[74]

In addition to the institutional voice that was now gained by the victory of the New Directions slate at LaGuardia Community College, they developed a strategy that they would counterpose to that of the CUUC-led central PSC leadership. Frank articulated that strategy as follows:

> The 16,000 people represented by the union are discouraged from playing any active role.
>
> The leadership claims that their strategy has been successful, that the cuts would have been worse without their lobbying efforts….
>
> An effective strategy against budget cuts would require the mobilization of the entire union membership for a broad public relations

[71] Frank, "LaGuardia Delegation Leads the Way: The New Directions Caucus at LaGuardia Community College," March 1992.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

> campaign, to reach out and explain to the working people of this city that CUNY, which is the only avenue to economic and social advancement, is under attack. Such a strategy would involve coalitions with students, community organizations and other unions; press conferences; news releases; leafletting; informational picketing; rallies; demonstrations, etc. The money now wasted on budget-cutting politicians could be put into this effort. We would evoke wide-spread sympathy, since quality, low-cost (better yet, free) higher education is a pressing need for large segments of the city's population. This would put far more pressure on the state legislature and upon City Hall than does lobbying by a handful of union leaders. Lobbying can supplement mobilization and public pressure: it cannot substitute for it. The entire history of the labor movement, the civil rights movement and women's movement demonstrates this.[75]

The activist strategy outlined by Frank would necessarily have to embrace the growing ranks of part-time faculty since they constitute almost half of "the entire union membership," and since their very existence as a category of faculty is central to the changes occurring within academic labor and within the university system. The New Directions leadership at LaGuardia had, prior to their victory, already begun to lay the foundation for a new relationship between part-time and full-time faculty by establishing ties to the original PTU. Soon after their victory they would get a chance to renew those ties.

In the Fall semester of 1990 a group of adjuncts led by Anthea Tillyer, David Tillyer, Susan DiRaimo, Susan Simon, Alberta Grossman, and Paul Bartlett (all ESL teachers from City College and BMCC, excepting Bartlett, an economist from the winning LaGuardia New Directions slate) decided to reincarnate PTU. This time the acronym stood for Part-Timer's United. I attended the first CUNY-wide meeting and became President with Grossman as Vice-President and Anthea Tillyer as Treasurer. Similar to the earlier PTU, it functioned democratically as a committee using consensus

[75] Michael Frank, "LaGuardia Delegation Leads the Way: The New Directions Caucus at LaGuardia Community College."

to make decisions. My role was that of a facilitator as others took the lead on various projects. The purpose of the new PTU was not to attempt decertification of the union again, but to get adjuncts to join the union, to influence contract negotiations, and to run candidates for union offices. David Tillyer expressed the feeling of the moment:

> The first PTU meeting we had in 1990 was amazing. There were probably 100 people there. It was in that lounge area in the Grad Center. There was electricity in the air. I remember someone kept shouting "Tax the Rich," apropos of what I don't know. The subsequent meetings were very instructive to me. I didn't grow up in a labor family so the idea of building alliances with other labor organizations was new to me. Also, the PSC was the first union that I had ever belonged to, so I somehow got the impression that all union officials were like Irwin Polishook! It's been difficult retraining myself to believe that unions can be forces for good![76]

Tillyer's recollections capture the feeling of the moment that awareness was beginning to grow along with the participation and solidarity. He also, perhaps unintentionally, expresses what most of the adjunct activists felt about the PSC leadership.

From the adjunct faculty perspective, the disdain for the PSC leadership was well-deserved. Signing up adjuncts to join the union was no easy task. One of the problems in doing this, as noted above, was that the PSC central office would not give out more than a few yellow union cards to each person. It was very simple: if we did not have authorization cards, then we could not sign-up members in large numbers. On top of this, the membership office did a poor job of updating records, which affected adjuncts most adversely since their records are more subject to change than are full-time faculty members. For example, when Alberta Grossman wanted to run for chapter office at BMCC, the membership office claimed that she had become a union member too late to run in the next election, i.e., in Spring 1992. Grossman had to literally go down to the

[76] Personal correspondence, December 9, 2002.

office and find her original sign-up card, which had the date stamped on it showing that she beat the deadline by several months. Experiences like this led the PTU to passionately embrace union democracy as one of its central principles.

The PTU were granted a meeting with the PSC leadership on November 5, 1990. Present for the PSC were Polishook, Howard Jones, PSC First Vice-President, Aaron Alexander, Associate Executive Director, and Susan Prager. I was included in the PTU delegation which consisted of seventeen PTU members. The PTU requested the meeting to discuss the plight of adjuncts at CUNY and had a list of demands for the PSC.[77] Polishook vaguely agreed that considerations should be made to obtain improvements for adjuncts in health care provisions, disability compensation, salary, and seniority, but he was not confident that these could be realized under the then-current conditions. Given those conditions, the PTU raised the point that there had recently been a tax proposal put forward to City Hall by Arthur Cheliotes, President of Local 1180 of the Communication Workers of America (CWA), entitled "Break the Impasse Tax Plan." PTU members were interested in this progressive tax-the-rich program, which provided an alternative to the city tax plan which placed much of the burden on the middle class and poor. Polishook considered the proposal to be unrealistic and merely rhetorical, though he added that he "did not oppose it."[78] One PTU member, Charlie Clayton (English, John Jay College), said "As adjuncts we've been making all the sacrifices all along. It's their fiscal crisis, not ours! Let them pay for it!"[79] In an ideologically revealing moment,

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[77] Personal observations. The meeting was reported, without a by-line, by author as "PTU Meets PSC President Irwin Polishook," *The Graduate Student Advocate*, December 1990, 2. This account draws upon that report as well.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

Polishook countered Clayton on this by saying that it is no longer "them and us," but it is "our" crisis.[80] He asserted that the public-employee situation is no longer like the labor-management relations of previous generations. We cannot do much about it, he added, because "the public is not sympathetic to teachers."[81] The acceptance of this premise undermines union power and reflects some of the worst aspects of the "professional" unionism that emerged after the downfall of the Teachers Union. In this model, the union has closer ties to the administration than to the communities which they serve – the latter being a potentially powerful political force.

Professional unionism at its best – in boom times, perhaps – is a cooperative endeavor on behalf of the university. At its worst, in tough times, the union accedes to external political forces and fights with little leverage for a shrinking buffet of demands, which are sometimes only obtained at the expense of a demobilized lower-tier work force. If it could be looked at as part of a continuum, this type of unionism would be moving closer towards that anti-labor epithet, the company union. Polishook spells out his philosophy of academic labor in a paper presented at a 1993 conference:

> The hard times that have befallen higher education have been inflicted from without, from a withdrawal of the funds needed to nurture the academic enterprise.
>
> The solutions will also come from without. But in unionized systems, they will not come without the input of labor and management, whether together or separately. One of the unanticipated developments in collective bargaining in higher education has been the role assumed by faculty unions in advancing the interests of the institution. They have set aside the narrow adversarial roles assigned to them by the early prophets of faculty unionization and have even achieved a surprising level of

[80] Tirelli, "PTU Meets PSC President Irwin Polishook," *The Graduate Student Advocate*, Dec. 1990, 2.

[81] Ibid.

> convergence with academic management on vital issues where their interests have coincided.[82]

As an example of this dynamic, he cites the way that the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), the state arm of the AFT in New York, lobbied the state legislature successfully at the behest of both the PSC and CUNY to deliver an early retirement option for senior faculty instead of instituting reductions to CUNY's operating budget that would have led to the loss of class sections, overcrowding, and the loss of hundreds of jobs by junior faculty to retrenchment. This resolution was a voluntary option for faculty and it minimized academic loss. Acknowledging that it was not an ideal solution, Polishook points out that "without such concerted joint action over the past decade, the hard times that have descended upon unionized systems would have been harder."[83] This observation may have been true for the short-term, but as the epoch wore on, it began to become clear that such a philosophy was shortsighted.

In the era of the corporate university, the cooperation and common interests of professional unionism have become a one-sided partnership. As in the fiscal crises of the 1970s, there was little sense that the union could be more militant, draw upon its resources, and build broader alliances. Of course, one small union could not accomplish great gains by itself, and the practice of pattern bargaining, i.e., of following the pattern of other public unions in negotiations, as well as the general decline of the strength of the labor movement in this period were formidable obstacles. Higher education became

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[82] Irwin H. Polishook, President, Professional Staff Congress, CUNY, "Academic Unions and the Academic Future," *Unions and Management: Working Our Way Out of Fiscal Stress*, Proceedings, Twenty-First Annual Conference, National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, Baruch College, City University of New York, Frank R. Annunziato, Director, Caesar J. Naples, Editor, Beth H. Johnson, Conference Organizer, April 1993, 14.

[83] Ibid., 15.

somewhat invisible in City Hall and in Albany. But in retrospect, the trend of convergence and cooperation, i.e., professional unionism, left academic labor unprepared for the onslaught of the 1990s when its partner took off its velvet glove and the corporatization of the American university proceeded openly. The era of shared governance was over. It was paid for by the lower-tier faculty, but they would fight back.

In Spring 1991, PTU members Paul Bartlett and Susan DiRaimo ran as independents for PSC Executive Council seats. Bartlett ran for Vice President for Part-time Personnel and DiRaimo ran for University-wide Officer. John Hyland and Nancy Erber, both from the New Directions caucus at LaGuardia, also ran as independents for the Executive Committee seats, Community College Vice President and Community College at-large Officer respectively. The original intention was to run a full slate against the CUUC incumbents. According to Bartlett, they understood that in order to win they would first need to win more chapter elections, but they also knew that challengers rarely win the first time out and that there was no time like the present to begin that process.[84] An election could generate visibility and support and cultivate candidates for future elections. They did not manage to get a full slate off the ground, but even with three candidates running from LaGuardia (Hyland, Erber, and Bartlett) and one running from CCNY (DiRaimo) – all running as independents – they still had a strong showing, even though they did not win.[85] DiRaimo won 29% of the votes needed for one of five University At-Large Officer seats. Bartlett won 23% of the votes for Vice-President for Part-time Personnel against Susan Prager. Hyland won 30% of the vote for

[84] Conversation with Paul Bartlett, March 15, 2003.

[85] Thanks to Barbara Gabriel at the PSC for digging out these numbers.

Community College Vice-President. And Erber won 37% of the votes needed for one of three Community College At-Large Officer seats. It is significant that they ran as independents in this regard because, in order to vote for them, voters would have to check off the boxes for each position independently, as opposed to simply checking one box for an entire slate. Thus, the relatively strong showing was significant.

Shortly after the Spring 1991 PSC ballots were sent out, CUNY students went on strike again, this time to protest a proposal by Governor Cuomo to hike tuition five hundred dollars a year, to decrease financial aid, and to reduce university services by $92 million.[86] And they occupied campus buildings again. The student networks that had been established to oppose the Gulf War did not get much of a chance to mobilize since that war lasted less than two months. However, the networks found some use as it was through them that the Spring 1991 student protests were first organized.[87] This time, they were not as successful in affecting state and city policy choices. Tuition was raised in 1991, 1992, 1993, and 1996. The climate had changed, Joe Murphy was no longer Chancellor, and the new Chancellor, W. Ann Reynolds (known as W.A.R. by her detractors), a less sympathetic figure who embraced a more strident corporate "retrenchment" model of higher education, would soon implement a centralized CUNY security force known as the SAFE team, and they would be given peace officer status with arrest powers, the common belief being that this was ostensibly to prevent such a student uprising from occurring again. This unrest on the campus served as an incubator of an academic labor movement that only gradually developed as the assaults on CUNY became greater and more intense.

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[86] *The New York Times*, AP, May 3, 1991, 3.

CUNY's Graduate Center students, a relatively privileged student population when compared to CUNY's undergraduate population, also participated in the building occupations of Spring 1991 in solidarity with the undergraduate students. The Graduate Center student activists were in a unique position because, being graduate students, they embraced the student issues of tuition and budget, but they also had the standpoint of the part-time faculty since many of them had served in this capacity at CUNY and, thus, were familiar with the low status and hardship of that experience. I was drawn to the event. What was interesting about the protest was that the graduate students, though privileged in some ways, recognized how they too were marginalized – as women, people of color, gays and lesbians, Latinos, working class intellectuals, and as part-time faculty (mixed in with their other multiple identities) – and these differences became a central part of the conversations that took place at the "liberated" Graduate Center.

The implicit understanding of democratic processes and the need for them was also a part of this conflict. Each afternoon there were well-attended open-mike forums in the atrium of the Graduate Center on Manhattan's 42nd Street, just across from Bryant Park. Many students found their voices in these daily forums. Crowds of students, faculty, administrators, passersby, and onlookers, perhaps numbering between a hundred and two hundred people at its most dense, would sit on the floor or just stand as students, faculty, and even a few visitors gave speeches during the afternoon. It was serious and it was exhilarating at the same time. There was a potential danger to academic careers in asserting oneself in this manner, and in their search for authenticity the rebellious students tested the boundaries of this expression and found solidarity in their common struggle. Though there was an understanding that the looming budget cuts would have

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[87] Conversation with Tom Burgess, March 1, 2003.

some affect upon us, i.e., the graduate students, but more importantly for the strikers was the understanding that it could have a devastating affect upon many of the poorest undergraduates. Many of us taught these students and had images of their faces and knew their stories and their names. It was a matter of justice, and the emotions were strong. At the same time, the all-day democratic discussions, public and private, helped many of us to intellectually crystallize our understanding of the relationship between politics, race, class, higher education, and the place of the contingent academic. It may not have all been completely worked out, but somehow the links were being made and this was evident from the discourse that had emerged.

In the end, alas, the student strikes of Spring 1991 did little to prevent the budgetary onslaught of the 1990s, but it did serve as a point of connection and a means of keeping the flame of protest alive. It became clear that the budgetary cuts to the public university system amounted to a frontal political assault on the economically disadvantaged and on the socially marginalized. In the lost battle, insights and experiences that became part of an expanding vocabulary would continue to grow, along with the networks of activists.

In the period immediately following the strike, many of the activists were elected to the Doctoral Students' Council. The DSC had not been as supportive of the strike as many had hoped, but the at-large seats added in 1987 helped to make the activists' post-occupation campaign possible. This made it a more activist organization. In the coming years they would develop the Adjunct Project, discussed below, and strongly support adjunct faculty organizing efforts. They would also actively participate in another

student protest in 1995. These activities added further threads to the fabric of the fight-back that would continue to develop through the 1990s.

In the Spring of 1992, PTU activists again ran for union office. Alberta Grossman and David Tillyer sought to gain seats in the PSC chapter elections at BMCC. Adjuncts comprised about 70% of the faculty at BMCC, but no adjuncts were on the Unity Caucus' (CUUC) slate. Grossman ran for Officer-at-Large of the BMCC Chapter Executive Board, and Tillyer ran for the Delegate to the CUNY-wide Delegate Assembly. The PTU campaign to enroll part-time faculty into the PSC made the contest at BMCC a close one. Both Grossman and Tillyer played leading roles in that drive. Before Fall 1990 the adjunct membership of the BMCC chapter was approximately 15% of the chapter. By the time of the election, adjuncts at BMCC comprised 30% of the total chapter membership. Since the Unity Caucus (CUUC) was running as a slate, if Tillyer and/or Grossman were to win, as noted above in the discussion of the 1991 elections, voters would have to split their ticket and vote for candidates as individual members rather than checking off the box for the entire slate. Full-time faculty members Jim Perlstein and Bill Freidheim gave critical support to their campaign. Perlstein wrote a "Reject the 'Slate' Vote" letter which was distributed widely. It encouraged full-time faculty to vote for Tillyer and Grossman arguing that it was a matter of both justice and of self-interest – "part-timers deserve a real voice; full-timers can't afford a divided union." Within 24 hours of its distribution, the letter had the signature of fifteen full-time faculty members, among them five departmental chairs. They each lost by less than two dozen votes.

Though Tillyer and Grossman lost the election, the narrow margin of their loss had awoken the activists at BMCC as to what could be. This set the stage for the next

round of elections at BMCC. In the chapter elections of 1995, discussed below, independent candidates won the key leadership positions with part-time faculty support. Among them, Freidheim won the Chapter Chair and Perlstein won a seat as Delegate to the Delegate Assembly.

The PTU did not remain an active organization after the 1992 campaign, but most of the members continued to participate actively in academic labor issues at CUNY. The PTU had six major accomplishments: (1) it identified leaders; (2) it gave labor organizing experience to teachers who never had any; (3) it kept the issue of academic labor on the front burner; (4) it gave some adjuncts hope that things might change by creating common forums so they did not feel isolated and could begin to develop a collective/group identity; (5) it secured more firmly the growing alliances with full-time faculty; and (6) in the 1990-1996 contract, signed on January 29, 1993, the "same college" requirement was dropped and health benefits qualifications for adjuncts became based upon CUNY-wide service. This last accomplishment was a major demand that PTU had promoted at their November 5, 1990 meeting with Polishook, discussed above, but it was not solely due to PTU efforts. The emergence of insurgent caucuses, winning at LaGuardia and in formation at other campuses (Brooklyn College, BMCC, and Queens College), had provided the PSC leadership with a strong incentive to obtain these improvements. The part-time faculty vote, though still small in number, could swing a close election. These conflicts of the early 1990s – both the battles within the union and the larger battles against the budget cuts – served as the petri dish in which a new union culture at the PSC would eventually develop.

Class Conflict and the Formation of the New Caucus

In 1992, a coalition of two hundred and fifty CUNY faculty, staff, and students – CUNY Coalition of Concerned Faculty and Staff – filed suit against New York State charging them with "discrimination in the funding of its two public higher education institutions—CUNY, overwhelmingly minority, and SUNY, overwhelmingly white."[88] After four years of legal wrangling, the New York State Court of Appeals (the State's highest court) rejected the petition arguing that "no substantial constitutional question is directly involved."[89] But it was not all for naught:

> Over the course of four years, the Weinbaum v. Cuomo legal challenge broadened a discussion of the issue, engaged critical sectors, and helped establish equity in the distribution of budget cuts between CUNY and SUNY. Many of the plaintiffs and supporters of the case became active participants in parallel efforts. Some plunge into the student academic standards, SEEK, and welfare debates, while others founded a higher education political action committee. Still others promoted union activism, strengthened the faculty senate, enlarged voter registration drives, and worked in city-wide coalitions.[90]

The multiplicity of associations and the multiple levels of activism described above were critical components of the coming labor union struggles, as well as of the broader fight on behalf of the democratic mission of CUNY, and the importance of the Concerned Faculty and Staff network as an important foundation of these efforts cannot be overstated.

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[88] CUNY Coalition of Concerned Faculty and Staff / CUNY Legal Action Committee, "An Open Letter to the City University of New York Community / A Statement on the case of Weinbaum v. Cuomo (Index No. 5306/92)," December 1996. Ironically, the New York State Attorney General's "Motion to Dismiss" in June, 1992 had attempted to justify the disparity in funding by, among other reasons, pointing out that New York City had a more bountiful urban academic labor market from which inexpensive part-time faculty could be harvested, as compared to SUNY, which has colleges spread out over the State, thus not having such access (Reported by Frank Deale, CUNY Coalition of Concerned Faculty and Staff, "Legal Action Committee Newsletter," Vol. 1, Number 2, Winter 1992).

[89] State of New York, Court of Appeals Decision, Mo. No. 1624 SSD 106, January 16, 1996, as cited in CUNY Coalition of Concerned Faculty and Staff, "Open Letter," December 1996.

[90] CUNY Coaliton of Concerned Faculty and Staff, "Open Letter," December 1996.

While Weinbaum v. Cuomo wound its way through the courts, conflict on the CUNY campuses proceeded apace. By early 1993 the contours of the conflict at CUNY emerged more starkly as the University proposed an ill-fated restructuring report – the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Academic Program Planning, known as the Goldstein Plan, after Leon Goldstein, the President of Kingsborough Community College and the chair of the Advisory Committee. The Goldstein Plan met with stiff resistance from both faculty and students. Members of the Concerned Faculty and Staff played an important role in this conflict, as well, and the coming together of those who would soon become part of the independent slates that would challenge the CUUC leadership began to percolate energetically. Solidarity emerged through common struggle.

The Goldstein Plan proposed that instead of completely autonomous colleges, that the university be converted into a more integrated system, which included consolidated departments and shared faculty, ostensibly as a means of obtaining greater efficiency. But what it would mean was the cutting of scores of courses, the consolidation (i.e., elimination) of dozens of departments, most of these in the liberal arts, in such a manner that certain majors, e.g., Philosophy, Anthropology, History, etc., could only be obtained at some of the CUNY campuses and the students from the other campuses who would take courses in these disciplines would have to travel to the other college. The humanities would have been the hardest hit, with the study of foreign literature facing the most dire threats. It was thinly-veiled retrenchment.

The plan was uniformly condemned by students and faculty from all corners of the University. It was castigated for not having any in-depth study of the colleges, for not having public hearings on it, for not consulting with the students, for the fact that only six

faculty members were involved with designing it, and for haphazard and unscientific data collection.[91] Aside from the criticism of the lack of democratic procedures, the report was also widely criticized for putting forth a vocationalized vision of education for poor and minority students, somewhat reminiscent of the plans proposed for "democracy's colleges" put forth by elites earlier in the Century. This aspect of the plan was roundly admonished by The Council of Executive Officers of the CUNY Graduate Center:

> The de facto result of the proposals, although not the intent, will be to debase those campuses that have the heaviest minority enrollment while retaining the "elite" traditional educational program for other more privileged regions with fewer minority residents. It would be as though to say that students from these parts of the city do not merit the retention of strong undergraduate programs. Lower-level vocational programs would be deemed good enough in Harlem and the Bronx, while Queens and Brooklyn, somehow, would still need philosophy and literature. This is a risky stance to appear to adopt and, in any case, all of the students deserve to have available to them and stand to profit by the traditional humanistic component of undergraduate education.[92]

Aside from this cogent analysis, there were numerous resolutions, statements, forums, and articles written that were critical of the Goldstein Plan. The University was abuzz.

It was in this tumultuous context that I began to understand the importance of the contingent academic labor *system* in relation to the politics of public higher education. Kimberly Flynn, a graduate student in the English program at the Graduate Center and one of the leading activists fighting the Goldstein Plan, organized a forum at the Graduate Center with a number of faculty opponents of the plan, including Marx Wartofsky (Philosophy), Vincent Crapanzano (Comparative Literature), Frank Kirkland

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[91] Summary of criticisms by Ken Sherrill, "New York Forum About CUNY: Trojan Horse At the Gate," *Newsday*, March 16, 1993, 40.

[92] The Council of Executive Officers, CUNY Graduate Center, (Draft) "A response to the REPORT of December 2 of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Academic Program Planning," February 3, 1993, 9.

(Philosophy), and Francesca Sautman (French). Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Richard Freeland was on hand to give the administration's perspective. I was asked to speak as a part-time faculty member and to discuss how part-time faculty fit into this equation.

Looking back over my notes now, I can see that the social processes that overlay the political struggle helped me to articulate my analysis. That is to say, the debates, discussions, and struggles that I had been involved with through the 1980s with the DSC, GSU, PTU, student takeovers, etc., and the debates, discussions, and struggles through the early 1990's which surrounded the growing insurgency within the union, were all part of a social and political education that had combined with my academic education to help me find my way through the tangle of social relations so as to better understand the underlying currents of academic labor and its politics. We all developed this knowledge together. It was not an individualized process, but it was a social process of gaining political knowledge – men and women are social animals.

At that forum, I argued that a generation prior, CUNY had approximately 11,000 full-time faculty and approximately 5000 part-time faculty:

> Today those numbers are almost fully reversed. Figures from the Chancellor's office within the last year give the numbers as almost 10,000 part-timers and under 6000 full-timers. *Why does this matter*? The strength of the university lies in having a mobilized faculty who can articulate issues, mobilize the community, and serve in the traditional role as decision-makers over issues of curriculum and academic governance. Today, that traditional role is being challenged. Administration has grown and continues to grow, and part-timers are effectively shut out of the process of governance both on the campuses and in the union hall. We are faced with the prospect – enhanced by the new technologies – of having the university become a vocational school where the full-time faculty are maintained at a minimum level, and the part-timers become even more of a flexible, cheap, interchangeable labor force. In this techno-versity, it will be the bureaucracy that administers the curriculum and makes the

> important decisions. These decision-making powers will not be direct, but they will be, as in the current proposal, cuts justified by budgetary needs, decisions that conceal political conflicts by smoothing them over. And the administrators making these decisions won't have fangs. They'll be nice people just doing their jobs, trying to make the best of a bad situation, and probably unaware of the political dynamics that have created it.[93]

In effect, what we were struggling against was the corporatization of the university – the techniques of Taylorism attempting to penetrate the corridors of Academia. It found its way into the university through an administrative logic. That is, on a number of issues, we had heard over and over again from both the administration, and, to a lesser extent, from the bureaucratized union leadership, that the particular outcome is not their wish, but the problem is a budgetary one, the problem is a national one, the problem is with the Press, the problem is with public opinion, etc. The perspective of administrative logic is that it assumes that the political status quo is unchallengeable, and then it focuses its attention on how to implement budget cuts that it is handed. This perspective excludes any possibility of alternatives that might arise out of a serious examination of the larger political framework. It negates a political role for students, teachers, community groups, and labor unions, unless that role is framed in only the strictest, pre-ordained channels of political participation.

However, the struggle against the Goldstein Plan made the activists realize that they do have other resources at their disposal. The protest against it was quite remarkable and, no doubt, surprised even some of the most seasoned activists. The numerous student organizations, the faculty governing bodies on each campus, the ability to organize and engage in public forums, and the ability to reach out to broader communities were all aspects of the electrifying energy in this conflict. Opponents to the Plan also gained

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[93] Vincent Tirelli, Untitled presentation, CUNY Graduate Center, February 17, 1993.

some support from Tony Kushner, the award-winning playwright of *Angels in America* who is a close personal friend of Kimberly Flynn. He lent his celebrity status to generate excitement at press conferences while becoming a committed advocate for CUNY in various forums.

The PSC played its behind-the-scenes role in opposing the Goldstein Report, but, as usual, they did not draw upon the potential of the union by using its resources to mobilize support. The success of the resistance made it clear that if we could win such a battle with one hand tied behind our backs, imagine what could be done if we had the union, and its resources, actively involved in mobilizing faculty, staff, and our allies in the communities served by CUNY. Though curriculum matters are the jurisdiction of the academic bodies, such as the Faculty Senate, if we cut through the cant of so-called professional unionism, we can clearly see that restructuring and retrenchment are not only workplace issues, but they are issues that affects the larger urban community as well. The union might have been working behind closed doors to oppose the Goldstein Plan, but it was the mobilization of protest that stopped it in its tracks. This challenge required a political mobilization of wide scope – something the PSC at this time was ill-equipped to accomplish. Many of the more radical full-time faculty had already resigned themselves to looking upon the union as a hopeless case, but this would soon change.

The successful mobilization against the Goldstein Plan made evident that multiple groupings forming broad alliances can have an impact so as to at least place a limit on the corporate reconstruction of the University. The Administration backed away from the Goldstein Plan, saving face by suggesting that it accomplished its aim of fostering dialogue about curricular reform at CUNY. Perhaps it was the sweeping and

undemocratic nature of the plan, as well as the lack of thought put into it, that galvanized the opposition. *One thing that began to become clear at the time, at least to a core group of academic labor activists, was that the contingent academic labor system was a central part of the equation to the extent that the changing shape of the university, i.e., its transformation along the lines of the corporate model, is made possible, in part, due to the demobilization of the faculty engendered by the growth in the use of part-time faculty.*

While all of the hullabaloo was going on around the Goldstein Plan in the Spring of 1993, the New Directions slate was re-elected at LaGuardia Community College, and at Brooklyn College the Independent Caucus headed by Steve London (Political Science) knocked off the CUUC incumbents in a hotly contested chapter election. It was the first campus chapter campaign to challenge a sitting member of the CUUC-led PSC Central Executive Council – Phyllis Gold Gluck (Education). Among the other leaders in the Independent Caucus at Brooklyn College were Nancy Romer (Psychology), Bart Meyers (Psychology), Len Fox (ESL), Renate Bridenthal (History), Joseph Wilson (Political Science) and Tibby Duboys (Education). London was convinced that the full-time faculty would understand that it was in their self-interest to support part-timers and this became a central plank of their platform.[94] They also argued for a more democratic form of unionism, for a union that mobilizes its membership, and for a more clearly articulated vision for CUNY. Once the Independent Caucus won, London went to other leaders and activists around CUNY and argued that the Brooklyn College example was proof that full-time faculty would support part-time demands for equity and that alliances could be built on this basis. He would soon be successful in persuading others that gaining control

[94] Conversation with Steve London, November 2006.

of the union and its resources would be by far the best way to continue fighting the battles for CUNY, and to stop the hemorrhaging of academic labor.

One of the first acts of the new chapter leadership was to form a committee to begin planning for a conference that would be titled, "Academic Unionism and Part-Time Faculty: The Transformation of the Professoriate."[95] Also on the planning committee were activists from LaGuardia, BMCC, and City College. The plan was to develop a series of conferences that would help to galvanize a CUNY-wide academic labor movement.[96] This first conference took place in Spring of 1994 and drew over 150 participants from around CUNY, including full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and staff. It brought together not only insurgent faculty from around the university, but also some of those who were on-the-fence. Karen Thompson, an AAUP official and a part-time faculty member from Rutgers who by now was becoming well-known for a series of articles that she had written on part-time faculty issues, was invited as the keynote speaker to this pivotal convocation. One of the important debates that took place at the conference was whether adjuncts should organize separately or with full-time faculty. Thompson talked from her own experiences about adjuncts being in a separate bargaining unit, not without its problems. London spoke up for a single unified union. Former PTU activist Anthea Tillyer was not confident that part-time faculty could succeed in a single bargaining unit. Given the PSC's history, the resolution of this question was central to any new caucus formations. Many of the part-time faculty activists, though cautious, began to be won over to possibility of a new path.

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[95] I was invited to be on the planning committee and I spoke at the conference as well.

[96] Conversation with Steve London.

The part-time faculty activists served as an important bridge of sorts because most of them knew each other, and many of them also knew the full-time supporters of the emerging independent caucuses on the various campuses (most of us had taught on several different campuses). London would later say that the part-time faculty organizers laid the groundwork for the New Caucus. At the same time, the CUNY-SUNY disparity suit was winding down, and many of those who had been involved with the Concerned Faculty and Staff were now open to the idea of working to take over the union. The conference, and the meetings that continued after it had concluded, helped to frame an analysis that situated the contingent academic labor system at the center of the declining power of the professoriate.

Aside from the direct union activism that was growing at this time, there were other threads that tied into the maelstrom of academic labor politics, and which contributed to the growing awareness of the class conflicts that embroiled CUNY. For instance, in the Fall of 1993, Eric Marshall, co-chair of the Doctoral Students Council at the Graduate Center, and Daniel Mozes, both English Program graduate students, founded the aforementioned Adjunct Project. The key difference between the Adjunct Project and previous efforts by the DSC to support adjunct activism was that now the activities were funded with a paid coordinator, as well as other resources such as a phone, an office, a computer, etc. With this organization, the DSC was able, once again, to play a vital role in raising awareness among a new generation of graduate students with regard to academic labor issues through various newsletters, activities, forums, events, surveys, etc., including the sponsorship of the Spring 1998 Second National Congress of Part-Time, Adjunct, Non-Tenure Track and GTA Faculty conference (later to be known as

COCAL II),[97] organized by Eric Marshall and myself in our roles as coordinators of the Adjunct Project, along with Ward Regan, a historian teaching as an adjunct at NYU, David Staples, a graduate student from the Sociology Program at CUNY, and Greg Wilpert, a sociologist teaching as an adjunct at The New School.[98] This conference helped to link the CUNY contingent academic labor activists with their counterparts throughout New York City, as well as throughout the United States and Canada.

Eventually, these contacts would be reinforced through the e-mail listserv, ADJ-L, originally founded through the Adjunct Project and based at the CUNY Graduate Center.[99] Today, ADJ-L connects contingent academic labor activists from coast-to-coast in the United States, Canada, and it includes several important list members who are leaders in the Mexican contingent academic labor movement and who had attended COCAL VI in Chicago during the summer of 2004. The sharing of information, experiences and strategies, as well as the building of contacts, and the extension of the alliance has been a life-line for beleaguered contingent academic labor activists.

Another vitally important e-mail listserv was CUNYTALK, founded circa 1994. It was a vibrant and democratic forum that at one time boasted as many as 700 CUNY faculty, staff, students, a few friends, as well as members of the administration and of the press. It was the offspring of the University-wide Faculty Senate at CUNY, and it

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[97] Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor.

[98] Marshall, after serving two years as a New Caucus co-chair (1998-2000), and then two years as the PSC Vice President for Part-time Personnel (2000-2002), would later get a position as a labor relations specialist for New York State United Teachers (NYSUT); Regan became president, in 2005, of the joint NYU-New School adjunct faculty union (UAW); Staples finished his dissertation on home workers, and writes on new labor formations; Wilpert reports frequently from Venezuela for *Democracy Now*, a public radio program with a national audience hosted by Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez.

[99] I am the founder and list-operator of ADJ-L. I began it when I was coordinator of the Adjunct Project.

became a hotbed of dialogue and debate for numerous issues, including academic labor issues, which figured prominently in the discussions, especially during the union election periods.

The creation of alliances with students is a thread that could potentially be an important part of the fabric. A massive student demonstration against proposed budget cuts, retrenchment, and tuition hikes took place at City Hall on March 23, 1995. The PSC had been uninvolved when the students had their strikes in 1989 and in 1991. During the 1995 rally a large contingent of CUNY faculty, many involved with the Concerned Faculty and Staff network, participated in a feeder march that was endorsed by the PSC and led by those chapter leaders who were activists in the new independent caucuses that were increasingly acting in a coordinated manner. In a dramatic show of support, over 2000 faculty and students marched, some of the faculty in academic robes, across the Brooklyn Bridge to join the noon-time rally, which overflowed City Hall park with nearly 20,000 protesters. Though the major media had colluded with Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki in their "portrayal of CUNY as a waste of taxpayer dollars" and in their characterization of the protesting students as thugs cutting classes while their professors were a "lazy elite," those who were present saw a different story.[100] Barbara Bowen presented an alternative view of it when she was interviewed by *The Village Voice*: "Professors who attended the rally and agreed to student requests to be excused for the rally scheduled make-up sessions. Many of them, teachers of political science, urban studies, journalism, sociology, history – built analytical assignments around the

[100] As depicted by Esther Kaplan and Alisa Solomon, "Correcting Papers, The CUNY Protest You Didn't Hear About," *Village Voice*, April 4, 1995, 11-12. I surveyed *The Daily News*, *The New York Post*, and *The New York Times* the day after the protest, which I had attended, and found the reporting in the major media to be one-sided and not consistent with my own observations.

protests."[101] Perhaps the real lesson learned that day by the thousands of high school and college students who attended the rally was the role that the state officials and the corporate media play in trying to shape public opinion. The mainstream press followed the Mayor and the Governor in portraying it as a violent melee, but "for the vast majority who came… many engaging in political protest for the first time – the violent media version of the story bore little resemblance to their experience."[102] Many who had attended the protest felt that the police tactics – implemented after the event had ended and when people were trying to disperse – were the primary reason for the violence that had occurred, most of it directed at the protestors.[103] The story of the day, however, in *The New York Post* and *The Daily News* depicted a violent, insolent, and ungrateful crowd of young people disrupting the orderly and peaceful afternoon. *The Daily News* page one headline said, "Student Protest Turns Violent" with pictures of students getting held down or otherwise restrained by police.[104] Similarly, The New York Post headline read "No Class, Downtown Students' demo turns violent; Rudy, gov: Why weren't they in school?"[105] Instead of writing about the issues of the protest the Post dwelled on such things as the fact that on one poster, Mayor Giuliani's name was misspelled (i.e., Guliani). The lessons learned that day about class, race, media, and state power were lessons learned through the formidable pedagogical tool of experience. The common

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[101] Kaplan and Solomon, 11-12.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Elizabeth Pallitto, a graduate student present at the event, confirms this account, as have others.

[104] *The Daily News*, March 24, 1995.

[105] *The New York Post*, March 24, 1995.

interests between students and faculty is a potential source of power of which the March 1995 protest gave only a hint.

The emerging new caucus continued to grow. Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) was the next PSC Chapter to be lost by the CUUC.[106] As noted above, in the chapter elections of Spring 1995, independent candidates won the key leadership positions. Among them, Bill Friedheim and Jim Perlstein, both supporters of David Tillyer and Alberta Grossman's efforts to crash the CUUC party at BMCC in 1992, won the Chapter Chair and Delegate to the Delegate Assembly seats, respectively. LaGuardia's Hyland, and Brooklyn College's Bart Meyers, as well as London, worked to support the BMCC independent slate. The next year, adjunct activist Alberta Grossman was elected to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board of the Chapter. They created a standing committee on part-time faculty issues and she was appointed to Chair that committee.

By the Fall of 1995, the combination of events and the victories at LaGuardia, Brooklyn, and BMCC prompted the emerging leaders to plan for a convention to officially unify the independent insurgents and their caucuses. In December of 1995, over 100 faculty and staff from 14 campuses met and became the New Caucus. There was a wide selection of representatives from the different categories of the faculty and staff that comprised the bargaining unit. They drafted a platform[107] and voted on a set of

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[106] Some of this account of the New Caucus victories preceding the 1997 Central PSC leadership elections is derived from a previous report by the author, Vincent Tirelli, "New Caucus on the Scene, PSC/CUNY Leaders Face Electoral Competition for the First Time in 20 Years," *The Advocate* (CUNY Graduate School and University Center), October/November, 1996, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1.

[107] The platform was drafted over the summer of 1995 by a committee that included Grossman and London. London had been active in the mid-1980s in the reform caucus of the United University Professors (the SUNY faculty union) and helped to draft their program. The reform caucus platform served as a partial model for the New Caucus platform.

general principles, which included detailed strategies for defending public higher education, for strengthening union democracy, for organizing the unorganized, i.e., primarily the part-time faculty (but also those who work for CUNY's Research Foundation), and for acting "in the defense of our students, university and livelihood."[108] What was most noticeable about this energetic coming together, however, was that adjunct faculty and graduate assistants (e.g., teaching and research fellows) were in on the ground floor. It would be the beginning of a dramatic transformation in academic labor unionism at CUNY.

The next year brought the New Caucus through its growing pains and it showed the members what some of the key obstacles to success would be, as well as where the current limits to the new alliances were bounded. Several groups within the union – e.g., Lecturers, College Lab Technicians, and Higher Education Officers – were highly dissatisfied with previous contracts, and the New Caucus position argued that these groups, along with adjuncts, had their interests sacrificed in the past and that this needed to be addressed in the ongoing contract negotiations. Most of the adjuncts who were active in the New Caucus felt that their grievances were in a different category since they were the most exploited. Some of the New Caucus leadership sympathized with this position, more or less, but recognized the need to balance this with the concerns of the lower-tier full-time faculty and staff, as well. At times, the tension between the groups was palpable, and the rancor threatened to throw the fragile new body into disarray. The New Caucus had to serve as the big tent under which disparate and sometimes conflicting interests gathered. The adjuncts formed a cross-campus committee to advocate for their

[108] New Caucus Platform, mimeo, circa December 1995.

interests within the New Caucus. There were, at times, bitterness and disputes. Some of the full-timers just did not "get it," treating their adjunct counterparts as if they were ingrates when they justly, and without apology, tried to assert their own interests. Some of the part-timers, suffering from years of being ignored by their own union and of living as if they were characters out of *New Grub Street,* were overcome with years of pent-up rage and exploded with indignity and feelings of betrayal, sometimes at the slightest offense.[109] Mutual distrust was not unknown. Insensitive statements from full-timers that would rationalize the inequities and downplay the injustice of the adjunct conditions were heard from time to time and not easily forgotten. For example, one of the concerns that was expressed was that if the adjuncts contractual demands were met (a longshot, to say the least) that it might institutionalize the two-tier system, as if it were not already institutionalized and a central feature of the contemporary academic labor system. In such ways, adjuncts' identity both as professionals *and* as workers was delegitimized by their colleagues, thus adding insult to injury. At the same time, now that adjunct activists finally had a space in which to express their feelings of entitlement in the midst of their full-time brothers and sisters, some of them wanted the world and they wanted it *now*, not always recognizing that their full-time brothers and sisters did not have the world to give.

It is apparent that most adjuncts (in fact, overwhelmingly so) believe that there are certain class-based biases that many full-time faculty have with regard to part-time faculty. This is sometimes evidenced in subtle ways, but occasionally it is less subtle. For example, I have heard it several times – before the New Caucus arrived, within the New Caucus, and secondhand in stories from adjuncts I met at the COCAL conferences –

[109] George Gissing's late nineteenth-century English novel about impoverished writers desperately struggling to survive.

that when part-time faculty complain, a response that is sometimes given by unappreciative full-timers, as well as by management's representatives, is that part-time faculty have made "a choice" and now they have to live with it. Even among left-wing faculty, and even among the New Caucus, this blame-the-victim class unconscious construction would occasionally emerge from the muck. Such characterizations are especially offensive given that the (shrinking) privileges of the full-time faculty depend upon the existence of a class of faculty that is beneath them. It is anti-labor, anti-solidarity, and it implicitly fails to acknowledge the systemic nature of the academic labor configuration in the contemporary institutions of higher education which depend upon a pool of adjunct labor for their very survival. In a previous generation at CUNY, many without terminal degrees, but with years of experience teaching, were hired as full-time instructors. However, those lines are no longer offered. Those who espouse the "choice" construction also fail to recognize that many of those part-time faculty are professionals who have been successfully teaching for many years, some for decades, and that, though in some literal, Hobbesian sense it is a choice, in all fairness, nobody *chooses* a "career" as an adjunct.[110] Most adjuncts only "choose" to be part-time faculty in the sense that it is a Hobson's choice, and they hope, and are often encouraged by the institution and by its representatives to believe, that they will eventually get that brass ring, or at least a cheap knock-off.

Nevertheless, despite the conflicts, I have always felt that it was the far-reaching vision of the New Caucus platform, democratically debated and widely discussed prior to ratification at the founding convention in December of 1995, that held it all together –

[110] Thomas Hobbes, in *Leviathan* (1651), mocks the idea that there is such a thing as "free will," in that whatever a person does following the conclusion of internal deliberation *is* his will, and, thus, to speak of

that, and two related facts: 1) despite the arguments and the rancor, it remained that the part-time faculty activists were finally at the table and part of the family, no matter how dysfunctional it might have been at times, and 2) the fact that there was a core of the New Caucus leadership who understood clearly that the fate of higher education and its work force is intimately tied to the growing academic proletariat, and going forward without the part-time faculty on board would be tantamount to rowing a boat with only one oar. Over time, the level of discourse began to rise for all involved.

The New Caucus platform emphasized that given the political attacks on CUNY and on higher education, in general, the culture of the union must change and the membership must be increasingly mobilized. It argued that democratic unionism is a precondition for the struggle ahead, and it stressed political inclusion of the part-time faculty regarding union matters. It understood that the exploitation of the part-time faculty was not only detrimental to the needs of our students and unjust to the adjuncts, but that it was also undermining the ability of the whole bargaining unit to secure good contracts, and, threatening the democratic culture of higher education at CUNY. The contingent academic labor system is an instrumentalization of higher education that would have made Frederick Winslow Taylor proud. Unlike the CUUC leadership which talked about demanding more full-time jobs, but never having any real strategy for bringing it to fruition, the New Caucus plan showed an organic understanding of the relationships and structures of the job hierarchy in an increasingly corporatized higher education system, and their inclusion of the part-time faculty showed that their practice was roughly consistent with their theory. In terms of economic gains for part-time faculty, "bringing up the bottom" was not only a fair and just strategy to advocate, but,

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"free" will is nonsensical.

arguably, it is the soundest strategy for gaining power and leverage for the whole bargaining unit. The underlying idea here is a traditional one: the idea that social welfare spending by the government creates a social safety net that not only benefits the poor, but that also strengthens the labor market power of the middle class by "raising the floor." Opposed to this way of thinking is the model which consists of conflicting classes fighting each other over a fixed zero-sum vision of the economic pie. Any class that has an advantage, in this model, often fears that anything the lower class gets will come at its expense.

By the end of the Spring 1996 elections for PSC Chapter leadership, the New Caucus had won numerous victories – a feat made more impressive when one considers that their stance in support of part-time faculty was being made in an environment where most of the part-time faculty were still disenfranchised, indicating considerable support for this position from a significant proportion of full-time faculty, as well as growing overall dissatisfaction with the Polishook-led CUUC now that there was a significant opposition to criticize them. There were now six Chapters controlled by the New Caucus, including City College, chaired by Gary Benenson (Mech. Engineering), Baruch College, chaired by Cecilia McCall (English), and Queens College, chaired by Barbara Bowen (English). At Queens College, adjunct activist Eric Marshall (English) was included on the New Caucus slate and was elected as one of the CUNY-wide Delegates to the Delegate Assembly. Having an adjunct in this position was a rarity till now.

There was an immediate impact on the Delegate Assembly due to the growing chorus of New Caucus voices. It became a more animated and lively body with passionate debates and controversy. The CUUC maintained its majority, for the time

being, and in conflicts with the New Caucus delegates, the CUUC usually held their ground. However, it was now possible for a minority to make important points while staking out their positions, even if only in opposition.

In the Fall of 1996, the New Caucus began mobilizing for the Spring 1997 elections for the PSC central leadership. Steve London was chosen to be the New Caucus candidate for PSC President, along with Cecelia McCall, John Hyland, and Jim Perlstein running for the top positions. The New Caucus ran a full slate of 21 candidates with Mel Pritchard, an adjunct member on the Executive Committee of the Queens College chapter, running for Vice-President for Part-time Personnel.

The nominating convention for the New Caucus slate, held on December 7th 1996, was an open and sometimes raucous event attended by over a hundred members and marked by a democratic process. One of the contested issues at the convention regarded the number of adjuncts on the slate. That is to say, there was debate over the strategic implications of placing even one more adjunct on the slate, aside from Pritchard's Vice President slot, which required a part-time faculty member. Though thousands of adjuncts were part of the collective bargaining unit, yet only about 600 adjuncts were dues-paying members of the union. The adjunct activists pushed the issue and managed to persuade the body to vote for former PTU Vice-President Alberta Grossman to be on the slate, filling one of the Community College Officer seats.

The New Caucus lost the election against Polishook, his First Vice-President, Richard Boris, and the rest of the CUUC slate, taking slightly better than 30% of the votes, overall. That was not a bad showing for a first-time contender against a long-time incumbent, and in this electoral loss they managed to lay a foundation for the future by

firing up a debate about what were the important issues facing higher education and academic labor. The central debate was about what kind of unionism was appropriate to address these issues. It was a consciousness raising campaign and, in the process, it also helped the New Caucus to further clarify its own identity.

Central to the New Caucus identity was the idea that the membership needed to be activated and that the top-down leadership style of the PSC under Polishook was wasting talent and resources. Conceptually similar to the mechanical and anti-democratic bank-deposit method of education rooted in an isolated and atomized view of the autonomous individual (commodified, alienated, instrumental), the top-down method of unionism assumes a membership that does not play a role in formulating policy, but only serves to passively receive information from the leadership. The New Caucus argued that this model had been applied not only to the membership, under the CUUC reign, but to the Delegate Assembly as well. The CUUC response was to try to portray the New Caucus position regarding "mobilization" of the membership as meaning mass rallies and demonstrations in the streets and little more. Their campaign literature described the New Caucus as "inexperienced antagonists."

In the New Caucus campaign literature they made good use of their academic skills and put together a compelling piece of research that analyzed the relative decline, when adjusted for inflation, of faculty and staff salaries at CUNY from 1986 to 1996.[111] They also found that during the same period, when compared to their counterparts both regionally (Middle Atlantic States, i.e., N.Y., PA., N.J.) and to all other public higher education institutions in the United States, that CUNY faculty salaries, on average, had

[111] "CUNY Salaries Plummet," *New Caucus Information Bulletin*, March 13, 1997.

not kept pace. In another piece of literature, they provided data, reproduced below, which showed how the ratio of full-time faculty to part-time faculty at CUNY had fallen dramatically over the previous 20 years:

Table 4: Changing Number of Full-time and Part-time Faculty at CUNY.[112]

	1974	1984	1995
Full-time Faculty	11,268	6,867	5,342
Part-time Faculty	4,924	6,405	6,340
Ratio of Full to Part-time Faculty	2.3	1.1	0.8

The CUUC had no viable response that addressed the hemorrhaging of the full-time faculty positions. Regarding the salary data presented by the New Caucus, they argued that it was distorted and that New Caucus activities undermined the unity needed for successful contract negotiations.[113] The latter position does not seem to have changed much from the 1970s when Polishook was quoted by Israel Kugler as saying, "We don't need an opposition" (see footnote 103 above). However, now the membership could evaluate the data and judge for themselves. Despite the claims that the New Caucus was undermining unity with their criticism and activities, the CUUC learned to talk the talk of the insurgents by incorporating into their last minute campaign literature, in a section

[112] "On the Two-Tier Professoriate," *New Caucus Information Bulletin*, March 1997. The literature identifies the source of the data as the Office of Affirmative Action, CUNY, and that it was originally presented in a table prepared by the University Faculty Senate Budget Advisory Committee, 11 February 1997.

[113] Untitled City University Unity Caucus campaign flyer, April 2, 1997.

ironically sub-headed as "Our Program for the Future," a promise to "Promote union democracy [and] open discussion."[114]

The 1997 PSC elections helped to put the issue of the growing use of part-time faculty and the corresponding transformation of the professoriate squarely at the center of the debate. The open and democratic nature of the New Caucus was in stark contrast to the enigmatic behind-the-scenes practices of the CUUC leadership. For a generation, most of the full-time faculty did not use their authority as union members to hold their union accountable to democratic practices and principles. Though many of them might have wanted to do so, there was little opportunity. Despite the election loss, the New Caucus and its allies began the process of changing the culture of the union.

Shortly after the PSC election, in the late Spring of 1997, a new adjunct association was formed. Some of the adjuncts who had been active in the New Caucus CUNY-wide Adjuncts Committee felt that, even though the overwhelming majority of them would remain in the New Caucus, it might be better for adjunct interests if they formed as an independent association. They chose the name *CUNY Adjuncts Unite!* (CAU!), in part because it expressed an affinity with the activist garment and textile workers union, UNITE!. CAU! proved to be one of the more impressive adjunct associations for at least two reasons. First, the fact that the New Caucus now existed within the PSC no doubt created a platform upon which CAU! could organize. Second, since CAU! was comprised of adjuncts from both the (former) New Caucus CUNY-wide Adjunct Committee and from the Doctoral Students Council (bringing in several new graduate student contingent labor activists), there was a combined creative energy that

[114] "Vote 'Yes' for the Polishook/Unity Leadership Slate," City University Unity Caucus campaign literature, n.d., circa April 1997.

grew and gave the organization more vitality, despite the occasional tensions between the two groups. That is to say, it became clear within CAU! that there were conflicts to be found between the older adjuncts who had finished their time as students and the graduate students who came into the fray through the Adjunct Project and the Doctoral Students Council. However, these conflicts were not as pronounced as the conflicts between the part-time faculty and the full-time faculty and they were comparatively easy to manage. The two groups clearly shared a lot of goals, but there were a few moments when there emerged a difference between long-term adjuncts who were more concerned, for example, with job security than with creating more new full-time lines that might displace them. Fortunately, such issues as union democracy and pay for office hours were held in common and helped them to stay united.

Among the prominent activists of CAU! were several seasoned activists from the New Caucus campaign, as well as from previous campaigns – Alberta Grossman, Ingrid Hughes (BMCC, ESL), Marcia Newfield (BMCC, English), Holly Clarke (John Jay, Economics), Shirley Rausher (BMCC, Social Science), and Mike Vozick (BMCC, Science); and among the Doctoral Students active in CAU! were Eric Marshall, Alex Vitale (DSC Co-Chair and Sociology), and Chris Malone (The Adjunct Project and Political Science).[115]

Though everyone worked on everything, some would take the lead on particular projects. Marshall took charge of the popular CAU! newsletter, *The Adjunct Alert*, which became an important communication vehicle. It had a distribution of ten thousand and

[115] After the New Caucus won the PSC elections (discussed below), Hughes and Rausher would each serve a three-year term as community college officers on the PSC Executive Council; Marshall, as previously noted, and Newfield would each serve as PSC Vice President for Part-time Personnel; and Vitale, as a full-time faculty member at Brooklyn College, would win a seat as a delegate to the Delegate Assembly.

ran, more or less, on a monthly basis for several years. It kept adjuncts up-to-date on union issues, elections, and campaigns. Vitale became the leading figure in the campaign for adjunct office hours pay which was a huge success. The resources of the Adjunct Project helped to create a means for efficacy, and the long-time adjunct activists provided the ground troops, institutional memory, a contact network, leadership, and experience.

CAU! had two major campaigns and each of them led, ultimately, to victory. The first was the campaign for paid office hours. Later, they campaigned for the PSC to enforce the agency shop fee for adjunct faculty and to combine that with a dues restructuring that would be more fair. Neither of these campaigns met with immediate success, but both of them would find fruition after the New Caucus won the 2000 PSC elections.

The office hours campaign was skillfully managed, and it played well in the press given the broader contemporaneous political conflicts around CUNY. CUNY adjuncts were not contractually obligated to keep office hours, but for a variety of reasons, including subtle coercion, many of them did. The campaign for office hours pay was able to gain some traction primarily due to the widely held view that students needed to be able to confer with their teachers outside of the classroom, and also due to the view that it was manifestly unjust to ask poorly paid hourly workers to put in overtime without pay. Low pay for professionals does not generate sympathy in the press or among the public, in and of itself, but if the connection could be made between office hours and student performance, especially at a time when CUNY was being mercilessly and unjustifiably derided by the Mayor, the Governor, and by their allies in the press, then office hours pay could and did become an important issue. CAU! planned the campaign

over the summer of 1997 and they began the Fall semester calling on all CUNY adjuncts to fill out time sheets indicating the number of hours that they met with their students outside of class each week.

As the office hours campaign took off with the drive for completed timesheets, it generated a lot of discussion on the local e-lists and around the campuses. The *Adjunct Alert* announced "Our position… is not that we shouldn't keep office hours, but that, like full-timers, we should be paid for our time and work."[116] The campaign culminated on Friday the 13th in February 1998. CAU! had their planned demonstration and press conference that day in front of CUNY's Central Offices at 80th Street in Manhattan. They submitted hundreds of completed timesheets and had nearly a hundred adjuncts and their supporters on hand, including students and a number of New Caucus full-time faculty. With a large cardboard timesheet as a prop, they conservatively estimated that of approximately 7500 adjuncts working 20,000 office hours at approximately $50 per hour, the University owed adjuncts about a million dollars for the Fall 1997 semester. The event was reported by WBAI-FM radio, *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, *El Diario*, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, which had a prominent photo of DSC Co-Chair Alex Vitale holding one of the large cardboard timesheets. The *Adjunct Alert* proudly reported it as "A *Roaring* Success!"

While the office hours campaign was taking place, some of us with the Adjunct Project were planning the Second National Congress of Part-Time, Adjunct, Non-Tenure Track and GTA Faculty conference held at the CUNY Graduate Center in April 1998.[117] Both the New Caucus and CAU! members were active participants at the conference and

[116] *CUNY Adjunct Alert*, Vol. 1, No. 4, December 1997.

important contacts were made with other activists from around the United States and Canada. Newfield, Marshall, and I were among the founders and steering committee members of the newly formed Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL), which emerged from the conference. From the early days of the PTU till now it seemed as if there had been a sea change, both locally and nationally, in terms of activism around contingent academic labor issues.

In the Fall of 1998, CAU! decided to tackle the issue of the agency shop fee by organizing a campaign for a PSC referendum. As noted above, the PSC did not, at this time, collect the agency fee from part-time faculty, though they did collect it from full-time faculty and staff. UUP, the SUNY faculty union, had been enforcing the agency fee for part-timers since the New York State Agency Shop Law was passed in 1977. Since union membership dues is the same amount as the agency fee (excepting, as noted, the right of fee payers to be reimbursed for the portion that is deemed to be for political purposes), then the full-timer had nothing to lose by actually joining the union, whereas the part-timer had a disincentive to join since they would otherwise not have to pay anything. The PSC leadership often justified this arrangement by arguing that the fee would be financially burdensome to the part-time faculty. CAU! argued that the benefits gained by fair union representation that would come with the enfranchisement of the adjuncts would far outweigh the cost of the union dues.

According to a little-used provision of the PSC Constitution, CAU! would need to collect about a thousand signatures from union members (of any rank or title) to get their proposed referendum on the ballot in the Spring of 1999. The resolution essentially called for two things: 1) that an agency fee be deducted from part-time faculty salaries,

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[117] Known later as COCAL II.

and 2) that the PSC institute a dues structure for part-time faculty that would be based upon a percentage of gross income, instead of the flat fee that was then in effect for part-time faculty union members. Additionally, it resolved that a union application card be issued to each adjunct at the time of hiring. The resolution explicitly showed a recognition of the need for solidarity so as to "defend against" the attacks on CUNY that came in the form of "downsizing, privatization, and annual budget cuts," and it argued that the PSC would be strengthened by the increased membership and, thus, improve its ability to fight these battles.[118] It expressed formally the shared understanding that had emerged out of the academic labor struggles that had marked the previous decade. Of course, not all adjuncts and not all full-time faculty shared this understanding – in the course of the campaign to get signatures, numerous adjuncts were found to be skeptical of having to pay a fee, but the campaign provided an opportunity to have face-to-face contact and to explain how a small fee would go a long way in providing them a stronger voice in their union, which would more than be compensated for by a better deal for adjuncts at contract time. Thus, the campaign itself served as an important consciousness raising tool.

Peter Ranis, New Caucus activist and full-time CUNY Political Science faculty member at York College and the Graduate Center, captured the mood of the CAU! campaign when he wrote, "While the UAW organizes [University of California]… graduate students, our PSC resists enrolling its own part-time faculty for fear of expanding its democratic base."[119] As if to reinforce Ranis' comments, a few weeks

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[118] CUNY Adjuncts Unite! "Adjunct Agency Fee Resolution," circa Fall 1998.

[119] Peter Ranis, e-mail posted on CUNYTALK, November 11, 1998.

later, there was an incident which caused a stir, and helped to keep the fire going around these issues. This was when the PSC asked CUNY Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations Brenda Richardson Malone to ask Graduate Center President Frances Degan Horowitz to investigate the actions of the officers of the Doctoral Students' Council for allegedly misusing student activity fees to fund the Adjunct Project. [120] The question was raised as to whether this funding was in violation of the Taylor Law, which stipulated that management could not support the activities of parties who were acting against the legitimate interests of the labor union in its role as the bona fide elected bargaining agent. Though the support for the Adjunct Project came from student activity fees, the fact that the dispersal and ultimate control of these monies were in the hands of the University raised the issue of possible Taylor Law implications. This investigation caused a flurry of exchanges on CUNYTALK which, one could argue, further advanced the cause of the adjunct activists. Whereas the PSC leadership had quietly filed their complaint and made no public expression of it, the supporters of the Adjunct Project found it to be an issue of free speech and union democracy, and it thus became another vehicle for public discussion of adjunct rights.

On March 18th, 1999, CAU! submitted almost 1200 signatures from every CUNY campus to PSC Vice President Richard Boris.[121] Many full-time faculty, especially those from the New Caucus, encouraged and supported the drive. Not until May did the PSC finally respond, saying that they found about 300 of the signatures to be invalid, thus the petition fell short of the required number. While the CAU! activists were submitting

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[120] As reported on CUNYTALK in an e-mail posted by CUNY Graduate Center Professor Hester Eisenstein titled "Open Letter to Vice Chancellor Brenda Richardson Malone," December 14, 1998.

[121] *CUNY Adjunct Alert*, April 1999, Vol. 2, No. 7.

clarifications of signatures, their letters, faxes, and phone calls were going unanswered by the PSC.[122] At the September 1999 Delegate Assembly meeting, Polishook announced that the petition fell short by 50 signatures, and that the validation period had expired, even though no deadline had been previously established.[123] The issue was dead, but it did not die in vain, as it would be resurrected the following year after the New Caucus won the election for PSC Central leadership.

While CAU! was raising the profile of the adjunct faculty cause, the New Caucus was gaining respect and support for its activism around two high-profile conflicts at CUNY: the conflict over the proposed PSC-CUNY contract (1996-2000) ratified by the members in the summer of 1998, and the remediation/restructuring battles, which came to a climax with the June 1999 release of the report commissioned by Mayor Giuliani, commonly referred to as the Schmidt Report. One could argue that these events represented a frontal assault on the mission of CUNY to educate the poor, to provide an avenue of social mobility, and to be the vehicle of the promise of American democracy. Both of these conflicts represented a shift towards the corporate university – the former due to its affect on the work force and the latter due to its implications for the student body. The brief account of both of these conflicts, which follows, provides important aspects of the context in which academic labor at CUNY is bound and in which the New Caucus would finally win the central leadership of the PSC.

The PSC leadership presented a collective bargaining agreement for the membership to vote on in July of 1998. It would cover retroactively the period from

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[122] *CUNY Adjunct Alert*, November 1999, Vol. 3, No. 2.

[123] Ibid.

February 1, 1996, and then continue through to July 31, 2000. The differences over the proposed contract became a source of contention between the two union caucuses. The New Caucus wanted to have a chance for the membership to discuss it and to hear opposing views, whereas the PSC leadership (members of the City University Unity Caucus) argued that a delay might have "'dire consequences' for the membership, given the highly volatile nature of politics in New York City and Albany."[124] The New Caucus petitioned to delay the mailing of the contract for 48 hours so that they could do a mailing in opposition to it, but was turned down in the U.S. District Court, due to lack of jurisdiction, and in the New York State Court, due to the lack of authority to intervene in a ratification vote conducted according to the guidelines of the governing constitution.[125] The New Caucus argued publicly that they were trying to make the vote fair, informed, and meaningful.

The New Caucus lost the battle, and the contract was approved by a vote of 3,822 to 824,[126] but the losers' argument in favor of union democracy gained a credibility that became manifestly clear later that year when a scandal exploded at District Council 37. Before we get to that sorry chapter in New York City's labor history, a brief explanation of some of the contract highlights is in order. The contract was criticized by the New Caucus on substantive and on procedural grounds.

Substantively, for the first two years there were *no* salary increases, making five years of no salary increases throughout the 1990s. The increases that they did receive in

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[124] Reported in *PSCcuny Clarion*, Vol. 28, Number 1, September 1998, 3.

[125] As summarized by "The PSC Web Site" posting on CUNYTALK, July 20, 1998.

[126] Reported in *PSCcuny Clarion*, September 1998, 1.

salary were not enough to make up for these deficits, nor to keep up with inflation. As far as the part-time faculty are concerned, across-the-board increases only increase the disparity between them and the full-time faculty by widening the absolute salary gap, thus further entrenching the contingent academic labor system. And despite the campaign by CUNY Adjuncts Unite!, adjuncts still were not granted pay for office hours. The contract was criticized for perpetuating and strengthening the corporate university in numerous ways by chipping away at the edges of faculty power. For example, workload requirements had been interpreted by the union to mean that a 21 hour teaching workload at the senior colleges and a 27 hour teaching workload at the community colleges were *maximums*. The new contract states that the 21/27 workload is a *requirement* and that any deficit must be made up within three years.[127] Additionally, the contract allows for substitute professors to teach an additional course each year.[128] Perhaps the most significant omission, the contract does not address the practice of "contracting out," a practice openly espoused by the Mayor, especially with regard to remediation and ESL. It also "facilitates" a practice known as "contracting in," a practice that was prohibited in a recent contract between SUNY and the UUP, the sister union of the PSC.[129] The New Caucus analysis explains how this practice insidiously undermines the work force, especially the contingent academic laborers:

> [The proposed contract allows for] instructional work previously offered as part of the regular college curriculum to be done by "institutes" set up by CUNY management. These "institutes" have been staffed under the rubric of continuing education and/or the Research Foundation. Since

[127] "Should You Vote for this Contract? A New Caucus Analysis of the Proposed PSC-CUNY Contract," New Caucus Mimeo, circa July 1998.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

> these institutes of continuing education programs are within the university's control, this is called "contracting in." Untenured, lower-paid, and without full benefits, continuing education teachers, who are part of our bargaining unit, will assume the professional responsibilities formerly held by tenured faculty and adjuncts working within academic departments. Also, research foundation employees, currently not part of our bargaining unit, will do what were formerly union teaching jobs….
>
> Given the current climate, the silence on contracting out and the facilitating of "contracting in" are significant failures. This contract, should it be ratified, gives the mayor, the governor, and the Board of Trustees a green light to pursue their plans.[130]

As will be seen in the discussion of the remediation battles, below, the New Caucus critique of these provisions of the contract has proved to be prescient. Continuing Education teachers, who have assumed much of the remediation duties, start at a rate that is almost half of the adjunct instructor rate. The policy establishes a further tiering of the academic work force. With a concessionary contract that only expands the contingent academic labor system and further reduces the power of the full-time faculty, it makes it easier for the restructuring of the University along the lines of the corporate model.

Procedurally, too, the New Caucus critique of the contract presented several objections. As noted, they were critical of the lack of a period of time in which the membership would have a chance to discuss the proposed contract and have alternative views presented. They were also critical of the lack of communication between the union leadership and the membership over the aims and progress of the negotiations. They repeatedly called for the union to use its resources to fully mobilize the membership so that there would be a democratic process in shaping union demands, and so that the membership could be involved in supporting those demands. They frequently argued that

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[130] "Should You Vote for this Contract? A New Caucus Analysis of the Proposed PSC-CUNY Contract," New Caucus Mimeo, circa July 1998.

the PSC leadership kept the membership in the dark, following a paternalistic, top-down, model of unionism.

The PSC leadership carried over these undemocratic practices to the process of ratification and elections, as well. The Delegate Assembly election committee was composed only of CUUC members. They refused to have observers at the counting of the ballots, and indeed, the ballots were counted as they arrived by the union staff.[131] Though there was no evidence of *im*propriety, but as Bill Friedheim pointed out, "the problem… is that conversely there is NO evidence of propriety."[132] Though there was little, if any, suspicion of tampering with the votes in the PSC offices, the fact that the PSC followed the Municipal Labor Council's pattern-bargaining left a sour taste for many once it was discovered later that year that DC 37's pattern-setting contract (with a two-year wage freeze) was mired in a voting fraud scandal. The New Caucus criticisms gained resonance from these revelations.

Briefly, District Council 37, the City's largest municipal union had an honorable and proud history, but it broke into the news in late November 1998 for charges of corruption and vote rigging during the 1996 contract ratification vote. The negotiating pattern set by DC 37 in 1996 had been a coup for Mayor Giuliani, and it was subsequently followed by the other municipal unions, as per an agreement that the Municipal Labor Council had previously negotiated with the Mayor.[133] Once the scandal broke, union President Stanley Hill resigned in disgrace, and DC 37 was placed into

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[131] Steven London, "Voting Fraud in DC 37 Sets Contract Pattern," *The Organizer, Newsletter of the New Caucus/PSC*, Volume 2, No. 2, December 1998, 2.

[132] Bill Friedheim, CUNYTALK, December 22, 1998.

[133] London, "Voting Fraud in DC 37 Sets Contract Pattern," *The Organizer*, 1.

trusteeship by its parent union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The sordid affair ended with more than two dozen convictions, including Alfred Diop, former vice president of DC 37 who was convicted of fraud and falsifying business records, and Martin Lubin, former associate director of DC 37 who was convicted of fraud and forgery.[134] Hill was never charged. According to one New York newspaper columnist, "It seems he had no idea most of those around him were dirty. This makes Stanley Hill one of the dumbest union leaders this town has ever seen."[135] Steve London explains the course of events and the impact that they had:

> The vote in DC 37 was going against the contract. With all but one DC 37 local reporting, the contract was losing. Then, holding out to see how the ratification process was going, the clerical local came in with a lopsided vote for ratification (10,002 for and 2,265 against). Reformers in DC 37 and many commentators immediately called foul, but the DC 37 contract was ratified.
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> The fraudulent DC 37 ratification vote pulled the rug out from under the opposition forces in other unions. The PSC negotiators, who initialed the original agreement, now argued the pattern was all that could realistically be expected. What they didn't say was what everyone knew or should have known: the pattern was a fraud and it was a mistake to rely solely on pattern bargaining….
>
> Had the PSC rejected the contract this summer, we would now be in a position to argue for breaking the pattern and increasing our economic settlement.[136]

For many at CUNY, this episode bitterly reinforced the belief that we needed more democratic practices in our union.

Linked to these struggles over the contract were broader struggles for power in the university. The contract is not just a means of agreement on salary, workload, and

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[134] Greg B. Smith, "Union Bigs Guilty in Vote Fixing," *Daily News* (New York), July 26, 2000, 22.

[135] Juan Gonzalez, "No Rush to Reform a Union," *Daily News* (New York), July 18, 2000, 17.

[136] London, "Voting Fraud in DC 37 Sets Contract Pattern," *The Organizer*, 1.

benefits, but it is also an instrument that shapes the university. In the contract ratified in the summer of 1998,[137] for example, the University gained an important concession. The contract allowed credit-bearing remedial courses taught by adjuncts to be offered as non-credit courses by Continuing Education teachers. This allowed for the ending of remediation as it had been structured at CUNY. The contract thereby allowed CUNY the authority to set up "language immersion institutes," which would serve both to separate those students who need remediation from the regular college experience and also to further fragment the academic work force by creating a new lower-tier. As a union with an increasingly tiered work force, little labor solidarity, and even less community support, the PSC was not in a position to exert much leverage.

As I argue in Chapter Two, the extensive use of a contingent academic labor force, increasingly fragmented, serves to diminish the power of the labor union and to allow for management – in this case the City and State leadership, as well as the University administration – to Taylorize the university, thus making it easier to bend to elite demands for diminished public funding. The problem with the PSC, the New Caucus argued, was that no one in the leadership had a clue as to the untapped potential that they had at their fingertips to counter this chipping away and to present a vision of their own. They had completely failed in their ability to imagine any way of mobilizing the forces that they could have had as allies, including, and perhaps especially, the part-time faculty. And due to the famine of democratic debate, discussion, and procedures within the union, these ideas and this vision had no way of finding a voice, obtaining nurturance, and developing strength. Imagine a membership of thousands, most with advanced degrees, experience at public speaking, at writing, at teaching, and at working

[137] The ratification in summer of 1998 was for the contract covering 1996-2000.

in committees, and their union being run by a mere handful of admittedly dedicated, though somewhat narrowly focused officials, who, granted, had long-established contacts with the top levels of the state and national parent federations and a few solid allies in government, but who had negligently written off – for more than two decades – the possible activism of its very talented membership. The biggest bloc of potential activists were precisely the lower-tier, academic underclass.

It may have seemed to many that the union was doing the best that it could under difficult circumstances against formidable foes, and that without their heroic efforts it would have been worse (a common refrain of the PSC apologists of that era). As this historical narrative indicates, however, the practices and policies of the PSC since the mid-1970s left them with little in their arsenal when the problems of the 1990s arrived.

As the labor movement, broadly construed, languished intellectually and materially under the tutelage of a version of business unionism, the conservative and reactionary forces that had become ascendant during this sixth epoch asserted their agenda ever more forcefully. As the Left was struggling within itself over the meaning of identity politics and the role of class, desperately seeking self-clarification, the Right was assaulting public funding of social welfare, especially public higher education. By the mid-1990s, the two fronts that the Right was advancing on – cultural conservativism and budget cuts for social welfare – were married in an uncivil ceremony at CUNY. That is, despite the impact that the budget cuts had on CUNY, the shortcomings of the noble institution, both real and imagined, would be blamed on open admissions and on the remediation programs that were created to meet the needs of disadvantaged students admitted under it who had academic deficiencies. Thinly disguised appeals to bigoted

fears helped serve as ideological gloss for the attacks on the poor and working class. Just as the ideology of Social Darwinism, along with its survival of the fittest ideology, was invented in the late nineteenth century to justify inequalities at the beginning of the industrial age, the conservative ideological attack on already-oppressed groups denigrated them as a campaign was waged to generate support for what was latent class oppression. A university that educates the poor and working class does not fit into the business model of the corporate university. The expansion of the contingent academic labor system through the late 1970s and 1980s weakened faculty power within the university, and this made the fight against conservative forces in New York City that much more difficult.

Despite the victory of democratic forces within the University in response to Chancellor Reynolds attempt to retrench programs in 1993, the pressure from the right continued throughout the 1990s. It was in these conflicts that the New Caucus message began to gain greater influence. Even in the lost battles, arguments and alliances were being made that would soon begin to gain traction. To step back briefly, the year 1994 was when the Summer issue of *City Journal,* published by the Manhattan Institute, a right-wing think tank founded in 1978 by William Casey (who would later become Ronald Reagan's CIA director), included an article by Heather Mac Donald titled "Downward Mobility, The Failure of Open Admissions at City University." Mac Donald's piece became a kind of political blueprint for the coming attacks on remediation and on open admissions, which still existed though in a scaled down form since the mid-1970s fiscal crisis which was followed by tuition and raised admission requirements at the senior colleges. The gist of the article blames the 1960s and the ensuing open admissions policy for the "failure" of CUNY. Students were no longer merely educated,

she argues, but "universities were called on to enfranchise minority groups through admissions and curricular changes."[138] She is aghast that CUNY's mission should include "*preparing* students for college on an unprecedented scale."[139] Comparing CUNY to a "compulsive gambler" who throws good money after bad in its funding of the remediation programs, she rails that CUNY's administration, at the dawn of open admissions, "quickly capitulated to the spirit… of the strikers' demands," and that instead of "concentrating on students who can be helped, CUNY creates ever lower levels of remediation for those who can't."[140] She clearly expresses her vehement objection against remediation programs that offer an opportunity to those who were given a raw deal and who had been poorly prepared for college. Her disdain for these programs that help such students is palpable. It would be easy to argue that such a position is implicitly racist, given the racial composition of students in remediation at CUNY, though she would argue that these programs have failed miserably and are not doing anything but wasting the time of the poor and disadvantaged students who enroll, thus doing a disservice to them. Mac Donald takes a concluding potshot at the remediation curriculum, arguing that it would be better for most of these students if they were offered "an honest vocational approach," i.e., track them into non-academic directions. She reveals her true colors, finally, suggesting the solution: "shrink the university."

Sandi E. Cooper, professor of history at the College of Staten Island (CUNY), head of the University Faculty Senate in 1994, and probably the leading faculty figure

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[138] Heather Mac Donald, "Downward Mobility, The Failure of Open Admissions at City University," *City Journal*, Summer 1994, 10. Also see Norman Solomon, "The Manhattan Institute: Launch Pad for Conservative Authors," EXTRA! (Institute for Public Accuracy), March 1, 1998. http://www.accuracy.org.

[139] Mac Donald, 10.

[140] Ibid., 14.

who was active in fighting the attacks on open admissions, and Blanche Wiesen Cook, professor of history at John Jay College, together responded to Mac Donald in a *New York Times* editorial titled "The Trashing of CUNY." They argue that Mac Donald's piece is part of the "national hand-wringing about the collapse of educational standards and local hostility to spending money for public education… a social vision, disguised in the language of fiscal accountability." It roughly conforms to the following outline:

> Not all students are educable; governments and universities are not equipped to repair the legacy of familial and social decay; well-intended public efforts to eliminate inequality and abolish racism are expensive failures. Competition is the only way that the fittest and finest emerge as leaders. Higher education can benefit only a talented minority; it cannot address racial injustice or repair past discrimination… In short, Social Darwinism is the anthem for the late 20th century.[141]

Cooper and Cook's analysis in 1994 proved to hold up in the coming years.

To the extent that there were problems with remediation, most of its advocates attributed it to a generation of budget cuts. But most would also argue that the "failures" were grossly exaggerated. David E. Lavin and David Hyllegard, authors of a comprehensive study of the first cohort of students admitted to CUNY under the open admissions program in the early 1970s, *Changing the Odds, Open Admissions and the Life Chances of the Disadvantaged,* present ambiguous results for the remediation programs that were offered during this initial time period, but with regard to open admissions the evidence is clear that it has been a great success for minority groups who had previously been excluded from CUNY. Lavin and Hyllegard report that "nearly 60 percent of the B.A.'s awarded to blacks, and almost a third of those to Hispanics were earned by students admitted through open admissions (among whites the figure was less

[141] Blanche Wiesen Cook and Sandi E. Cooper, "The Trashing of CUNY," *The New York Times*, September 8, 1994, 25.

than 20 percent)."[142] Despite the lower rates of graduation for blacks and Hispanics, "the program had a substantial effect in increasing the numbers of minority students who earned B.A. degrees."[143] In the community colleges, Lavin and Hyllegard indicate that minority students were as successful as white students in the attainment of an associate degree.[144] Their summary of the accumulated evidence, unlike anything coming out of the pages of the *City Journal*, present a realistically positive picture:

> These results provide little support for the fears that accompanied the birth of open admissions. Although a substantial number of open-admissions students graduated, the data hardly sustain the apprehension that CUNY would turn into a diploma mill under the program. Neither do the results support the concerns of some that the university would turn into a revolving door, whetting the appetites of open-admissions students for education and then frustrating them as they flunked out in droves. Using the actual achievement of students as a measure, the truth does not lie near either of these extremes.[145]

This truth lends itself to the belief that it was not the failure of open admissions that created all of the political ruckus in the 1990s, but that the conflict was the result of its modest success and of its continued promise. A study of the freshman cohort from 1988 indicates that CUNY students who completed remediation, as compared to those who do not need any remediation, graduated at just slightly lower rates for the bachelor's level, and at slightly higher rates for the associate degree level.[146]

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[142] David E. Lavin and David Hyllegard, *Changing the Odds, Open Admissions and the Life Chances of the Disadvantaged* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 48.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid., 55.

[145] Ibid., 55-56.

[146] City College Psychology Professor Bill Crain reported this data on CUNYTALK, February 2, 1999, attributing it to a study by the CUNY Office of Institutional Research.

Since the initial years of open admission, CUNY's remediation faculty, most notably City College's Mina Shaughnessy, whose work has revolutionized the field of teaching basic writing, have earned a positive reputation as innovators in approaches to remediation.[147] Shaughnessy's *Error and Expectations*, published in 1977, just a year prior to her untimely death, is fundamentally a visionary work that speaks to politics, albeit indirectly. Where many see "remedial writing" students, Shaughnessy sees inexperienced writers – beginners. In the tradition of Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, and with a similar humanistic faith in the potential of each individual, she puts forth a collaborative approach to the learning of writing; this means that the student is involved in the process of writing, and not primarily receiving instructions from the teacher on grammar and sentence structure. Part of this process may require writing teachers to learn beyond their field of training into areas such as psycholinguistics, learning theory, or discourse analysis.[148] Writing problems are often related to the social/emotional context in which students struggle, and the overcoming of the emotional and psychological obstacles to expression, i.e., obstacles to writing, is a dialectical process of negating the weight of oppression on one's psyche. At its very best, it is a social process through which the student, as well as the teacher, can develop his or her sociological imagination, cultivate political consciousness, and overcome feelings of alienation. Educating in such a manner is a political act, an act of class politics, because it seeks to educate in such a way that overcomes the isolated, social darwinistic,

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[147] See Mina P. Shaughnessy, *Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Also see, LaVona L. Reeves, "Mina Shaughnessy and Open Admissions at New York's City College," *Thought and Action*, The NEA Higher Education Journal (National Education Association), Winter 2001-2002, 117-128.

[148] Shaughnessy, 293.

mechanical, bank-deposit method of training that is endemic to Tayloristic capitalism. *In that* is the latent threat which open admissions and remediation pose to the right-wing interests, though they may couch their protest in terms of a perceived need for tax cuts, along with a demand to eliminate inefficiency and waste.

With Giuliani's State of the City speech that opened his second term in January 1998, the call was sounded and the gloves came off. Twisting and distorting the evidence, he criticized CUNY for low graduation rates, for low pass levels on basic skills test by *incoming* freshmen, and for the canard that open admissions was a failure that destroyed all standards of achievement.[149] It was not just at the senior colleges that he wanted to end remediation, but now the plan was to end it at the community colleges as well, and to farm it out to private test-preparation enterprises like Sylvan Learning Systems and Kaplan Educational Centers.[150] The *Daily News*, which had more than once called CUNY a "second-chance high school" in its editorial pages, cheered Giuliani's remarks on CUNY, bragging that he "seemed to be taking his cues from *Daily News* editorials."[151]

A few months later, in April, Giuliani had his famous "attendance" press conference in which he waved an attendance roll book over his head, sarcastically gave instructions on how to fill it out, accused CUNY faculty of not taking attendance, and

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[149] Although CUNY students do take a while to graduate given that they are often working full-time and/or dealing with family responsibilities, Bill Crain reports on CUNYTALK (February 2, 1999) that after 5 years, "the graduation rates at our community colleges exceed the national average for public institutions (28 percent to 24 percent). After 8 years, CUNY bachelor's degree students graduate at a higher rate than the national average for public institutions (45 percent to about 40 percent)." (Data culled from CUNY's Office of Institutional Research Fact Sheet).

[150] Reported by Karen W. Arenson, "How Open a Door? Ending Remedial Classes at CUNY Could Drastically Change Its Mission," *The New York Times*, March 25, 1998, B8.

suggested that students are regularly not attending classes – without any evidence to support his claim, and much evidence to the contrary. Unless this "problem" was resolved, he threatened to withhold the $110 million due to the community colleges, i.e., the City's obligation to CUNY.[152] Shortly after this episode, on May 6, 1998, he established the Mayor's Advisory Task Force on the City University of New York, which was commissioned to review the use of city funding by CUNY, to evaluate the effects of Open Admissions and remedial education, and to suggest reforms. Known informally as the Schmidt Commission, after its chair, Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., former President of Yale who was CEO of the Edison Project, a private, for-profit company that managed, at the time, 52 public schools. The Task Force also included Heather Mac Donald, Herman Badillo, an outspoken critic of open admissions and a longtime member of CUNY's Board of Trustees who would soon be appointed as its chair, Richard T. Roberts, a commissioner in the Mayor's Office, Richard Schwartz, a former mayoral advisor who had been involved in designing the Mayor's workfare policies, Jacqueline V. Brady, a financial specialist, and Manfred Ohrenstein, a former Democratic State Senator who was reportedly serving, at the time, as counsel to Stanley Kaplan Inc., the test-preparation company.[153] Badillo was known for repeatedly charging CUNY with grade-inflation – a charge picked up by his allies and presented as a fact throughout the campaign, even long

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[151] Editorial, "Rudy's Back in Town," *Daily News*, January 15, 1998, 38.; Also see: Editorial, "How CUNY Can Rise Again," *Daily News*, June 6, 1995, 24.

[152] Randal C. Archibold, "Yes, Teacher: Giuliani Scolds CUNY on Attendance Policy," *The New York Times*, April 25, 1998, B4.

[153] Letter to "Members of the Faculty" from University Faculty Senate Chair Sandi E. Cooper, May 11, 1998; Also see "Schmidt Report Restructures CUNY," *The Senate Digest* (Published by the University Faculty Senate of CUNY), July, 1999, Volume XXIX, Number 4.

after it was decisively debunked by convincing evidence to the contrary (leading some to charge them with being "data-proof"). It was a stacked deck, to say the least.

Many believed the Schmidt Commission report to be a foregone conclusion, and over the next year there was considerable debate and controversy over its anticipated outcome. Meanwhile, on May 26, 1998, the Board passed a resolution that would phase out remediation at CUNY's senior colleges over the next couple of years, much to the consternation of the opponents to the plan, and despite the fact that 150 people spoke out against the plan at public hearings and only 5 spoke in support of it.[154] This initial vote was voided by the court due to violations of the open meetings law in excluding and evicting members of the public, however, on January 25, 1999, the Board successfully voted a second time and remediation at CUNY's senior colleges would soon be a thing of the past.[155]

In defense of CUNY's move to eliminate remediation at the senior colleges, Louise Mirrer, then Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, wrote in the *Baltimore Sun* that the new policy cannot be thought of as "idiosyncratic or as solely a response to current political winds in New York."[156] Rather, she argues that it is part of a national preoccupation (citing cuts to remediation in other states) with "raising standards," and she points out that the common perception of those who support such changes is that "even a relatively small amount of remedial instruction… dilutes the educational quality

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[154] Reported by Sandi E. Cooper in "Remediation's End: Can New York Educate the Children of the 'Whole People'?" *Academe*, July-August 1998, 14-20.

[155] Reported by Jackie DiSalvo, "Board of Trustees Ends Remediation at Senior Colleges," *The Organizer, Newsletter of the New Caucus*, February 1999, Volume 2, Number 3, 1.

[156] Louise Mirrer, "Taking a Stand for Standards; Remedial instruction dilutes the quality of the institution," *The Baltimore Sun*, June 7, 1998, 1D.

of the institution."[157] The opponents to these changes would have agreed with Mirrer that it was not a local phenomenon unique to CUNY, but they would disagree that it was about standards. They would argue that it is part of a coordinated national trend to cut public sector spending aimed at some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

As in earlier epochs described in Chapter One, there have been powerful groups with deep pockets seeking to transform the nature and function of higher education in American society, and those groups that exist in the contemporary epoch have had a hand in the attacks on open admissions and on remediation at CUNY.[158] Through a network of right-wing foundations, primarily the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, the Scaife Family Foundation, and the Smith Richardson Foundation, a range of far-right programs have been funded and supported over the past couple of decades.[159] This includes significant funding for academic groups such as the National Association of Scholars, and for think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Manhattan Institute, the group noted above which provided an ideological backdrop for Mayor Giuliani's barbed criticisms of CUNY. Compared to the activities of these foundations, which heavily target their resources so as to create ideological incursions, progressive and liberal donors are not ideologically organized in such a comprehensive

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[157] Mirrer, "Taking a Stand for Standards; Remedial instruction dilutes the quality of the institution," 1D.

[158] See Alisa Solomon with Deirdre Hussey, "Enemies of Public Education: Who is Behind the Attacks on CUNY and SUNY?" in "The Village Voice Education Supplement," *The Village Voice*, April 21, 1998, 1-7; Also see *Buying a Movement*, a comprehensive report that Solomon and Hussey draw upon which carefully shows the network of right-wing foundations and how they have engaged in aggressive ideologically-based funding of an ultra-conservative movement, published by the People for the American Way Foundation, 1996.

[159] See People for the American Way, "Executive Summary" of *Buying a Movement*.

and coordinated manner. These right-wing foundation resources have an influence that is far beyond the numbers of their participants, though not beyond their financial power:

> Indeed the foundations are supporting the work at every station on the conveyer belt. They fund national conservative "think tanks" to package and repackage conservative issue positions; state think tanks to lend a local flair to these issues; national political groups to lobby in Washington and shape national media coverage; state-based groups to do the same in the states; grassroots organizations to stir up local activism; national and state media to report, interpret and amplify these activities; scholars to record the history of such activities and push the intellectual boundaries of the issues; graduate students to form the next wave of scholarship and movement leadership; and college newspapers to shape the milieu in which America's next generation of political leaders comes to their political awakening.[160]

The tactics of the organizations and individuals funded by these foundations helps to create a hostile environment for progressive causes, and when the time is right, the political, legal, and legislative campaigns begin, which are then funded by these same foundations.

Against this formidable array of well-funded forces was a relatively poor, but significant resistance.[161] Leading the opposition was the University Faculty Senate (UFS), that being led by the cool and resolute voice of Sandi Cooper. Also actively involved was the Community College Caucus of the UFS, the CUNY African American Network, activists from CUNY Adjuncts Unite!, student groups, most notably the Student Liberation Action Movement (SLAM), numerous local politicians including Assemblyman Edward Sullivan, a long-time supporter of CUNY in the state legislature, as well as City Council member Helen Marshall, community-based groups such as the

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[160] People for the American Way, *Buying a Movement*.

[161] Some of these organizations and individuals who were active in the opposition to the dismantling of remediation were identified in Nancy Romer's article, "The CUNY Struggle: Class and Race Politics in

People of Faith Network and the Baptist Ministers' Conference, Friends of CUNY, CUNY is Our Future, the PSC leadership, and the New Caucus.

In the course of this conflict the New Caucus vision regarding the potential role that a labor union could play gained greater resonance. In New Caucus newsletters, on CUNYTALK, and in other forums, the message was heard, over and over again, that the assaults on CUNY need to be met by a broad, active coalition where the union, both leadership and rank and file, plays a central role. The PSC leadership was criticized for their reliance on "back channel" maneuvering, on leader-to-leader phone calls, and for their acceptance of political "realities," all the while doing little to mobilize the membership.[162] When questions were raised suggesting that the New Caucus was asking the union to be involved in areas that are traditionally left to the faculty senate (i.e., curriculum issues), it was pointed out that the UFS does not have a significant budget, whereas the PSC does, and that there is much that can be done around these issues that fall short of encroaching upon non-union academic matters. Bill Friedheim responds:

> In this time of unrelenting attacks against CUNY, both the UFS and PSC have a major task in common: enlisting the intellect, energy and skills of the broadest number of faculty to defend public higher education and to build coalitions with students, staff, parents, community, labor, etc. PSC central leadership has generally said all the right things, funded an advertising campaign, and when pushed, drafted resolutions with all the appropriate "whereases" and "therefore be it resolveds." But there is something missing: an active faculty.[163]

Public Higher Education," *The Organizer: Newsletter of the New Caucus/PSC*, December 1998, Volume 2, Number 2, 2-4.

[162] Romer, "The CUNY Struggle."

[163] Bill Friedheim, posting on CUNYTALK, Subject: "Defending Public Higher Education," May 8, 1998.

As if to reinforce the New Caucus position, when asked at a Delegate Assembly meeting about the union's stance toward impending layoffs, given the proposed cuts to remediation, Polishook responded, "Layoffs are management's prerogative."[164]

Meanwhile, the New Caucus did not wait for the PSC leadership to begin mobilizing. Their members were prominent at Board of Trustee hearings, they organized several demonstrations, and they led rallies and protests. The PSC had one or two representatives at many of these events – Vice-President Richard Boris spoke eloquently at Board hearings – but they did not actively engage in organizing the community. The New Caucus did.[165] They mobilized colleagues to participate at the hearings. They helped to build solidarity networks both within the university and with outside groups such as religious and community organizations, as well as with supporters from literary and artistic circles, including Tony Kushner, Wendy Wasserstein, and Frank McCourt.[166]

Equally important to the organizing was the development of an intellectual analysis of the facts, events, and circumstances surrounding the conflict. University faculty are in a unique position to provide intellectual leadership for a democratic movement on behalf of public higher education. The members of the New Caucus were only too aware of this potential and that is one of the reasons why they organized several conferences to discuss the state of academic labor and of higher education, locally and more broadly. These conferences, which drew up to three hundred participants, helped to generate energy, develop ideas, create greater focus, and provide ammunition for the

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[164] Reported in Romer, "The CUNY Struggle."

[165] See John Hyland, "New Caucus/PSC Demonstrates Leadership in Fight to Save CUNY," *The Organizer, Newsletter of the New Caucus/PSC*, November 1998, Vol 2, Number 1; Also see Romer, "The CUNY Struggle," December 1998.

[166] Ibid.

continuing battle.[167] The strength of the faculty is not in their dollars – they could not compete with the foundations or the "think tanks" on this count. The faculty's strength was in their intellectual ability and in their ability to mobilize large numbers of people. However, it was not just the force of their ideas that gave them some leverage, but it was also due to the inherent justice of their cause *and* to the increasing boldness of their political enemies through the 1990s.

The political terrain had changed significantly from the mid-1980s to the last year of the millennium. This was true nationally, and it was no less true in New York City, as evidenced by its public higher education policy. As late as 1993, Chancellor Reynolds' "Goldstein" plan to reshape CUNY into a more rationalized, corporate model, managed from above, had caused howls of protest, but by 1999 the political discourse had became more vicious and many could only shake their heads in disbelief as Giuliani gave up any pretense of objectivity and civility when he said, in his State of the City speech, that, as far as CUNY was concerned, that he wanted to 'blow it up.'[168] The conflicts at CUNY in the 1990s revealed starkly the contours of power, and, for the growing base of New Caucus supporters, it also revealed the failings of the standing PSC leadership.

If the Spring 1999 PSC elections were any indication of the level of confidence that the faculty and staff had in their union leadership at that time, then the New Caucus

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[167] One such conference, held in February 1999, was titled, "The University in Tiers."

[168] He actually said that in his January 14, 1999 "State of the City" speech: Referring explicitly to CUNY, he said, "That's a system, literally, if we were rational people who really cared about kids being educated and people being educated – that's a system we'd blow up. Right? With that kind of graduation rate – if we had the guts to do it and we weren't scared politically. And I find a tremendous amount of frustration in making that happen." http://www.nyc.gov/html/rwg/html/99a/stcitytext.html

was making a relatively good impression.[169] They swept all of the positions in the chapter elections at LaGuardia Community College and at Brooklyn College, and most of the chapter positions at Hunter College and at York College, the home campus of PSC First Vice-President and CUUC member Richard Boris. They ran unopposed at Queens College and at City College. These six chapters reportedly represented 32% of the PSC's active membership. Also, there were unopposed fusion and "independent" slates with mostly New Caucus candidates who won at the Graduate Center and at Baruch College. The New Caucus' strength in the PSC Delegate Assembly now was up to, roughly, 37%. The CUUC ran unopposed at the Central Office, at John Jay College, and at Bronx Community College.

At Brooklyn College, the CUUC made a serious effort to unseat London, the New Caucus' 1997 candidate for PSC President. Interestingly, in the CUUC literature for this campaign, they spelled out their opposition to the implementation of the agency fee for adjuncts. They argued that enforced agency fee would present a "financial hardship" for some adjuncts and, therefore, they insisted on not having it deducted from the paychecks, but rather only having the union dues deducted if the adjunct chooses to join the union. This practice is more accurately described as an open-shop, though the CUUC called it an agency shop. This was a remarkable position for a labor union to take.

To support the CUUC position during the 1999 campaign at Brooklyn College, Israel Kugler, co-founder of the PSC, wrote an "open letter" pointing to some important victories that the PSC won over the years, such as the achievement of the Certificate of Continuous Employment (i.e., a kind of job security for lecturers, a job title for those

[169] New Caucus News Release, May 2, 1999; Stanley Aronowitz, "New Caucus Sweeps Chapter Elections," *The Organizer, Newsletter of the New Caucus/PSC*, May 1999, Volume 2, Number 4.

without the terminal degree), as well as the gains accomplished by their critical support of the efforts by Lilia Melani and others to fight discrimination against CUNY women faculty and staff.[170] However, the Certificate of Continuous Employment was established in the 1969 UFCT contract and Melani's legal victory took place in the mid-1980s. Under the circumstances, his call for "militant unity" rang hollow. London and the rest of the Brooklyn College New Caucus slate won decisively based on their strong record as chapter leaders since 1993.[171] However, given the battles fought over CUNY, and the battles yet to come, the academic labor mobilization still had a long way to go. This became evident with the long-awaited release of the Schmidt Report, ominously titled, "CUNY: An Institution Adrift."

Since remediation was already being dismantled at the senior colleges by the end of the Spring 1999 semester, the Schmidt Report, released on June 7, 1999, did not have the immediate impact that it might have had. Remediation was not outsourced to companies such as Kaplan or Sylvan, but it was limited to the community colleges and to the immersion institutes which had been developed earlier and continued to be expanded. This restriction of remedial students to the community colleges or to the immersion institutes – i.e., even those students who otherwise could have begun their studies at a senior college – was implemented despite the fact that research showed that students who needed remediation for only one or two semesters could successfully take non-remedial (i.e., college-level) classes concurrently. For example, students needing math remediation could successfully take college-level courses in reading or writing. Thus, the

[170] Israel Kugler, "An Open Letter to the Brooklyn College PSC Chapter," N.D., circa Spring 1999.

[171] London won about 58% of the vote – a decisive win, but also making clear that a significant social base still existed for the CUUC.

policy of denying students admission to the senior colleges on the grounds of their needing some remediation unnecessarily hinders their progress.[172] Despite these significant changes already made at CUNY, much of the Schmidt Report still dwelled upon remediation in the University.

Drawing attention to three of the key recommendations of the Report will back up the suspicions that there was a deeper agenda at work in its production, i.e., an agenda that includes reshaping the university in the form of a functionalist-corporate model. The recommendations on remediation, on restructuring, and on faculty power, if read properly, support this claim. Taken as a whole, it becomes clear that the Report had a clearly focused, but somewhat hidden agenda wearing a substantial amount of lipstick.

Firstly, the corporate agenda is evident in the Report's treatment of remediation and its recommendations regarding its privatization. The Report called for a voucher system that would allow for experimentation "with outsourcing remediation services in order to stimulate competition."[173] Remediation, it argued, was an "unfortunate necessity" that was a "distraction from the main business of the University."[174] Clearly the aim still was to farm out remediation to private companies. To justify this, the Report gives the impression that an excessive amount of CUNY's budget is spent on remediation, however, the University Faculty Senate response interprets the data

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[172] Reported in "CUNY: An Institution Affirmed, Response to the Report of The Mayor's Task Force, 'CUNY: An Institution Adrift,'" (University Faculty Senate, City University of New York, July 1999), 11.

[173] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," reprinted in *The Senate Digest*, July 1999, Volume XXIX, Number 4, Published by the University Faculty Senate of CUNY, Recommendation Number 5.

[174] Ibid., Recommendation Number 3.

differently and argues, using Rand Institute data supplied in an appendix to the Report, that *CUNY would actually lose money if it no longer provided remediation*.[175]

Secondly, the corporate agenda is evident in the Report's aim of restructuring the university in such a way so that it is more hierarchical in a functionalist manner, i.e., a tiered system with a traditional liberal arts curriculum at the top and a more vocationalist orientation at the bottom. Similar to the Goldstein Report of 1993, the Schmidt Report recommended that CUNY become a "a unified, coherent, integrated public university system for the first time in its history."[176] The University Faculty Senate's Community College Caucus viewed these proposals with alarm:

> Although the Report advocates the development of a more cohesive university, it divides the senior colleges into three tiers, high, middle, and low, based on student selectivity. The community colleges appear outside the tiered mainstream, relegated to an underclass status that downgrades and redefines their mission.[177]

This division reflects an old debate about the educability of all students. The Community College Caucus statement goes on to state the following:

> For the first time, students will be pre-sorted into associate degree and vocational programs based on their assumed ability to learn. This approach violates CUNY's existing belief in giving all students the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their academic potential.
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> Tiering is a euphemism for tracking. It favors already-advantaged students and further disadvantages those who have been ill-served by their prior educational experiences. It replicates the existing social structure

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[175] Reported in "CUNY: An Institution Affirmed, Response to the Report of The Mayor's Task Force, 'CUNY: An Institution Adrift,'" (University Faculty Senate, City University of New York, July 1999), 6; citing Arthur M. Hauptman, "Financing Remediation at CUNY on a Performance Basis: A Proposal," (Rand Institute), in the appendix to *CUNY: An Institution Adrift*.

[176] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," Recommendation Number 25.

[177] "Community College Perspectives on the Mayor's Task Force Report," Statement of the University Faculty Senate Community College Caucus, posted on CUNYTALK, June 16, 1999 by Joanne Reitano.

> and prejudges who can or should be allowed to succeed. It will erect yet more barriers for students interested in transferring within CUNY.[178]

Despite Burton Clark's earlier assertion that the post-war community colleges served a kind of "cooling out" function,[179] the fact is that the faculty and staff on-the-ground, so to speak, have something to say about it – they can act with human agency. The UFS Community College Caucus argue in their Statement that "CUNY's six community colleges are multi-faceted institutions of higher education that offer varied academic programs in liberal education and career education, both of which may lead to work or transfer, now or later."[180] They defend their curricula as being "of collegiate quality."[181] Ironically, it is the Schmidt Report, and other such plans for tiering of the university system, that most closely approximate the image of the university system as one that reproduces the inequalities in society. The role of the community college in that hierarchical image is very close to the one articulated by Clark.

Finally, and related to the proposals regarding restructuring, is the Report's recommendations on the role and power of faculty and on the lines of authority in the University. In the Report, it warns that the University must hold administrators and instructors "accountable" for improving students skills and that those campus presidents and faculty "who fail to vigorously enforce university policies… should be subject to

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[178] "Community College Perspectives on the Mayor's Task Force Report," Statement of the University Faculty Senate Community College Caucus, posted on CUNYTALK, June 16, 1999 by Joanne Reitano.

[179] See Chapter One of this dissertation.

[180] "Community College Perspectives on the Mayor's Task Force Report," Statement of the University Faculty Senate Community College Caucus.

[181] Ibid.

discipline, up to and including dismissal."[182] When questioned on this, Schmidt confirmed that this could mean breaking tenure.[183] It is asserted in the Report that campus presidents and faculty "must no longer be permitted to undermine – or even ignore – legitimate university-wide policies and initiatives."[184] Clearly these recommendations put forth a new paradigm of University power which includes a top-down chain of command. While "accountability" may sound like an efficient and democratic expression, the context in which it is presented makes it, at best, an authoritarian construct that flies in the face of academic freedom, faculty prerogative, the principles of tenure, and professionalism.

On close reading, it becomes manifestly clear that the role and power of faculty is a critical concern of the Schmidt Report. As argued throughout this dissertation, one of the functions of the growth of the contingent academic labor system is that it serves to break the power of faculty in the increasingly corporatized university, and the comments in the Report regarding the use of part-time faculty leave little reason to think that its proponents care to upset this dynamic. While the Report paid lip-service to the problems of the shrinking full-time faculty and the growth in the use of part-time faculty, it did not have any plan whatsoever for funding new full-time lines nor for remedying the situation in any fashion.[185] An indication of the intent of the Report can be seen in Recommendation Number 24, which says that, "Administrators and faculty must work

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[182] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," reprinted in *The Senate Digest*, July 1999, Recommendation Number 7 and Number 25.

[183] "UFS Scrutinizes Mayor's Task Force Report," *The Senate Digest*, July 1999, Volume XXIX, Number 4, Published by the University Faculty Senate of CUNY.

[184] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," Recommendation Number 25.

[185] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," Recommendation Number 18.

together to modify bylaws and collective bargaining provisions that thwart the pursuit of excellence."[186] The word "excellence" in this context, much like "accountability" above, is one of those loaded words with a meaning that conceals relations of power.

Critiques of the Schmidt Report came from several groups. Almost all of the responses point out how the Report disingenuously ignores countervailing data and only fleetingly recognizes the budget cuts already sustained by CUNY over the years. It downplays these cuts and, in a nod to Mayor Giuliani, discusses the problem as one of inefficiency and waste. Leading the critics of the Report, the University Faculty Senate presents a comprehensive rebuttal to "CUNY: An Institution Adrift" with a counter-report titled, "CUNY: An Institution Affirmed." It gets right to the point in its introductory statement saying, "The objectivity of the Mayor's Advisory Task Force on CUNY and the integrity of its investigation were compromised from the beginning."[187] It criticizes the premise of the Report – which assumes that CUNY is deteriorating – as being an untested premise based on premature assumptions. Similarly, the University Faculty Senate Community College Caucus argues in its Statement that CUNY is "less a university adrift than a university under siege."[188] Friends of CUNY had a number of press releases critical of the Report making similar arguments and offering their own set of recommendations. Curiously, the PSC took a more conciliatory tone as Richard Boris, First-Vice President, explains that "the Task Force report seems to be a more layered

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[186] "Recommendations of the Schmidt Report," Recommendation Number 24.

[187] "CUNY: An Institution Affirmed,'" (University Faculty Senate, CUNY, July 1999), 3.

[188] "Community College Perspectives on the Mayor's Task Force Report," Statement of the University Faculty Senate Community College Caucus.

analysis than anticipated."[189] He recognized that "there is great peril in this report," but he offers that "the document also offers some clear paths for this university that might deserve support."

As a political document representing a corporate, hierarchical vision of higher education during the sixth epoch, the Schmidt Report provided a long-range set of broadly conceived goals and a rationale for achieving them. The faculty and the union are clearly understood by the authors of the Report to be the major obstacles to the implementation of their vision of the University. The New Caucus had a trenchant critique of the Report that fully comprehended these deeper implications. Barbara Bowen writes that, "the Report is not a set of possibly useful observations by a commission with purely local interests, but rather… it is a local application of a national, even global strategy of aligning higher education with market values and undermining the professoriate."[190] Differing from the PSC leadership, which attempted to cherry-pick the positive points and criticize the negative points, the New Caucus critique showed a recognition that the implementation of many of the Report's thirty recommendations required a dramatic change in the practices of the academic labor force, and that this overarching implication placed faculty rights in the cross-hairs of the Schmidt Report.[191] The New Caucus viewed the Report as "an expression of a well-developed political

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[189] Richard Boris, "Editorial: The Schmidt Report: A questionable path to renewal," *PSCcuny Clarion (Special Issue)*, Volume 28, Number 9, June 1999, 4.

[190] Barbara Bowen, "The New Caucus Responds to Schmidt," *The Organizer, Newsletter of the New Caucus/PSC*, Volume 3, Number 1, October 1999, 2.

[191] Steve London and Stanley Aronowitz, Draft, "The Report of The Mayor's Advisory Task Force On The City University of New York and Academic Labor," (Circa Fall 1999), 1.

agenda that has the curtailment of public higher education and the deprofessionalizing of the faculty as its goal."[192]

By now, the New Caucus had through their activism, analysis, and leadership established a firm foothold in the union. The relationships between full-time faculty and part-time faculty within the New Caucus continued to be contentious, as noted above, but, though it sounds like a cliché, through common struggle, solidarity emerged. In the Fall of 1999, the New Caucus began their second attempt at taking over the central PSC leadership – the Executive Council. Irwin Polishook retired in February of 2000, and Richard Boris, his successor, replaced him for the remainder of the term, which would end in May. The New Caucus, once again, had a lengthy open process for nominating the candidates who would serve on their slate. The process included much debate and discussion in large open meetings. This time, Barbara Bowen was the New Caucus candidate for PSC President, with Steve London its candidate for First Vice-President, John Hyland the candidate for Treasurer, and Cecilia McCall for Secretary. Eric Marshall was the candidate for Vice-President for Part-Time Personnel, and Ingrid Hughes, an adjunct from BMCC, the candidate for one of the three community college officer slots. The new mix of candidates worked well together and a more confident energy emerged, which enabled them to gain greater support from faculty and staff throughout the University.

Like the 1997 elections, the contest between the City University Unity Caucus (CUUC or Unity Caucus) and the New Caucus challengers during the Spring 2000 election served to advance the debate over what kind of unionism would be most

[192] Bowen, 2.

appropriate today. A decade of relentless political assaults on CUNY had a catalytical effect on faculty efforts to organize themselves. As it became apparent that the best vehicle for waging the fight against those assaults would be the one that had the best resources, i.e., the faculty union, then the battle for that union took on a more urgent meaning. Once that urgency was recognized by most of the faculty and staff who would become New Caucus supporters, then the issues surrounding the contingent academic labor system became a central part of the debate. Both the contingent-academic-labor-system issue and the political-assaults-on-CUNY issue had each been brewing independently for some time, but the election for the PSC central leadership in the Spring of 2000 brought these conflicts together in a more synergistic fashion.

In retrospect, the 2000 campaign was last call for the old guard leadership at the PSC. The deeper fault lines that represented the limits of the professional model of unionism came into view and were in stark contrast to the New Caucus' democratic activist model. The New Caucus candidates were thoroughly prepared and well-organized in nearly every aspect of the campaign. The CUUC, by comparison, seemed to be imploding.

With regard to adjuncts and the agency fee issue, the CUUC this time took a more aggressive position. Previously they had disingenuously argued that it would be a burden on adjuncts to have to pay the agency fee, but this time, in their campaign literature, they spelled out their true concerns:

> …an agency fee for adjuncts… distorts the reality of our working relationships and advances a <u>political agenda</u> that is in the best interest of <u>no group other than the NEW CAUCUS</u>.
>
> Our opponents have wanted adjuncts as members to increase their ability to overthrow the UNITY CAUCUS strength among full-time faculty.

> There are more part-timers in the university than there are faculty [sic], HEOs, and CLTs combined. If the agency fee is forced through, and adjuncts then elected to join the union (why not), then part-timers would outvote all full-timers. This is precisely one strategy NEW CAUCUS sees as in its interest. Reject it![193]

The CUUC leadership mis-represented part-time faculty for almost 28 years. The alarm that they showed at the prospect of part-time faculty now having full membership and, thus, voting power in the union, speaks volumes all by itself. In terms of the history of organized labor, more broadly, this piece of campaign literature serves as a prime example of the workings of business unionism, in that it speaks volumes about the new men of power and the decline of organized labor in the sixth epoch – that is to say, it draws attention to the practice by organized labor of allowing the tiering of the work force, the privileging of one group of workers at the expense of another, followed by the deterioration of the power of organized labor and by excuses that justify the betrayal.

Throughout the campaign, including the debates, the CUUC tried to portray the New Caucus as being only about street demonstrations and protest. It was a bit surreal at times. It was as if they had not actually heard any of the detailed legislative strategies or plans coming from Bowen and London during the debate. Ken Sherrill, long-time University Faculty Senate leader and Department Chair from Hunter College, expressed his dismay after witnessing a debate between the leadership of the two competing slates. Originally he had intended on splitting his ticket in the union election, but after the debate, he changed his mind and expressed the following in a "Dear Colleagues" letter:

> I have decided to vote for Barbara Bowen and Steve London as well as for most of the New Caucus slate. The representatives of the CUUC slate –

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[193] The Unity Caucus Slate, "Unity Speaks About the Adjunct Question, Implications for Full-timers and Part-timers," (mimeo, n.d., circa Spring 2000.).

> notably Richard Boris – steadfastly refused to recognize that our union bears any responsibility for the tragedies that CUNY has experienced over the past generation. Not once did they indicate that they think the incumbents could have done a better job. The litany of horrors that Prof. Boris recited in his opening remarks made the case for overthrowing the current leadership of our union in a compelling fashion. For two hours, the representatives of the CUUC showed disrespect for the audience and for the faculty in general… His answer to the question about why we have done so badly in this year's budget process was to attack his adversaries… I ended up with the feeling that the representatives of CUUC were unable to pay attention, unwilling to listen… to what the people in the audience were saying. The response on adjunct issues was demeaning to many of our most valued colleagues….
>
> Barbara Bowen, to her great credit, has a masterful grasp of the issues we confront and articulated realistic strategies for dealing with them….[194]

As the CUUC became more desperate their campaign took an ugly turn. Thinly-veiled attempts at red-baiting by CUUC supporters found their way into the discussions and debates on CUNYTALK and, finally, into the CUUC campaign propaganda. Sherrill addressed this tactic as he continued in his public letter:

> I had not intended on writing so blunt a statement, but something else happened today. I received a mailing from CUUC quoting from one of Barbara Bowen's publications in which she refers to "the revolutionary movements Marx had in mind." The CUUC mailing labels it "beware!"
>
> I took four course from Belle Zeller (who founded the PSC) as an undergraduate and now I teach the courses that I took from her. As an undergraduate, I once told Prof. Zeller that the Communists had taken over the Student peace Union at Brooklyn. She questioned me closely: what was my evidence? She warned me never to say such things without hard evidence and to be aware of the great damage that could be done to people by such accusations. Belle Zeller heroically fought against red-baiting during the McCarthy era and I learned from her how to treat people who engage in it: Don't vote for them.
>
> …On a personal level, the affront to Belle Zeller's memory in today's CUUC mailing disqualifies them from receiving my vote.[195]

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[194] Originally posted by Ken Sherrill on CUNYTALK, March 27, 2000, but later used by the New Caucus in their campaign literature.

[195] Ibid.

It was a powerful statement coming from a well-respected faculty leader who had been a prominent figure in University politics, but who had for many years stayed away from the internal politics of the PSC.

The New Caucus won the 2000 election, taking 17 of 21 positions on the Executive Council, including all of the top seats. Bowen won 54.72% of the ballots for PSC President, with Boris taking 42.81%. The election seems to have been the death blow for the CUUC, which soon faded from the scene, though their social base lives on. For the part-time faculty activists, as well as for many others, there was now a ray of hope mixed with feelings of uncertainty.

Report Card

New York City has come a long way since the fiscal crisis of the 1970s. And CUNY seems to be in better fiscal shape than it was just ten years ago. The part-time faculty have made some gains both in working conditions and in their status within the union. Despite the fiscal improvements, overall, it is difficult to imagine the part-time faculty making the gains that they have made without the victory of the New Caucus. There is still a long way to go.

The new PSC leaders wasted no time in implementing the enfranchisement of part-time faculty. The earlier campaign by CUNY Adjuncts Unite! for the enforcement of the agency fee provisions and for a dues restructuring had become a central tenet of the New Caucus platform, and once they won control of the union they worked to change the policy so that the agency fee was soon deducted from the part-time faculty members'

paycheck. Accompanying this, a new formula for calculating union dues (or agency fee for those who chose not to join the union) was implemented based upon percentage of income rather than on a flat rate, with those in the upper income brackets among the full-time faculty paying a slightly higher percentage.[196] This was a more equitable formula, and it did not unduly burden those part-timers who were teaching, for example, only one class per semester.

The new PSC leadership did not merely implement the agency fee and leave the rest to chance. A continuous campaign was instituted to bring adjunct faculty into the union as full-fledged dues-paying members. The position of Associate Executive Director was reestablished and Mary Ann Carlese was hired to fill that slot and to coordinate adjunct organizing drives and events, as well as other campaigns. Currently, there are sixteen part-time adjunct organizers serving on fifteen campuses. These are part-time faculty who are paid for about four hours per week to organize other part-time faculty on a particular campus. This entails, primarily, encouraging the part-time faculty to sign a union membership card and become active members, but it also includes the tasks of keeping the part-time faculty informed of important work place issues, of telling them about the benefits for which they are qualified, and of providing a regular channel of communication that can facilitate the development of solidarity. The commitment to funding the adjunct organizers is, by comparison to the old regime where there was virtually no communication with or outreach to part-time faculty, a sea change in the union's relationship to the part-time faculty. It is a tremendous undertaking that shows a sincere belief in the platform that the leadership campaigned on to win their positions.

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[196] Under the new formula, adjuncts and junior faculty pay 1%, whereas upper level faculty pay 1.05%.

Today there are over 4000 part-time faculty members at CUNY who are dues-paying members of the PSC, making them eligible to vote and to participate in union affairs.

CUNY Adjuncts Unite! found a strong ally in the new PSC leadership and this was evident at the March 9, 2001 legislative hearing on the reliance on part-time faculty by CUNY and SUNY, jointly sponsored by the New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Higher Education and the Assembly Standing Committee on Labor. CAU! requested the hearing, which had a very large turnout of over 150 people – the largest group that the Higher Education Committee's chair, Assemblyman Ed Sullivan, had ever seen at a legislative hearing. Though this event was initiated by CAU!, it would be difficult to imagine a similar energy had the New Caucus not won the election for the PSC Executive Council the year before (recall the overlapping membership between CAU! and the New Caucus part-time faculty). The room was packed, and speaker after speaker gave testimony, including a strong representation from the PSC leadership, part-time and full-time faculty from CUNY, SUNY/FIT, NYU, and LIU, students, union leaders, as well as advocates from a variety of citizen groups. Marcia Newfield, one of the lead organizers of the hearing, and the editor of CAU!'s *Adjunct Alert* at the time, witnessed the alliances building and observed that "it has taken adjuncts a long time to find our voice, but we're going to keep going, just as did the longshoremen, and the garment workers, the coal miners and the hospital workers, the actors, screenwriters, transit workers, and musicians."[197]

CUNY Adjuncts Unite! also found voice in the new leadership with regard to their other major effort – the office hours campaign. In the first contract under the new

[197] Marcia Newfield, quoted in "Spotlight on Adjunct Concerns at Legislative Hearing," *PSCcuny News Bulletin*, April 2001, 6-7.

leadership, which was ratified in May 2002, part-time faculty who teach at least six contact hours per week at the same college won an additional professional hour paid at the part-time faculty member's hourly wage, effective September 1, 2002. For example, if a part-time faculty member is teaching two three-credit classes per week (i.e., six classroom hours), they get paid for an additional hour per week to be used for academic responsibilities. This was a huge victory as it increased quite substantially the pay of those part-time faculty who were teaching more than one class at a single college.[198] It is also a concrete example of how an alliance between part-time and full-time faculty can succeed at improving teaching conditions for both part-time faculty and for students.

In terms of adjunct representation in the upper ranks of the PSC leadership, Vice-President for Part-time Personnel Eric Marshall pushed for changes to the PSC constitutional structure which would give part-time faculty three more positions on the PSC Executive Council. Though it met with some reluctance, as there were concerns among the leadership about issues of timing given the host of changes that had already been done advancing adjunct representation in the union, the Constitution eventually was amended to include three new Part-Time Instructional Staff Officers as members of the Executive Council to act on behalf of part-time faculty interests, as well as for common interests. Marshall took a position with New York State United Teachers as a labor relations specialist in the Fall of 2002, and he was replaced by Newfield. The new Executive Council positions began with the next round of elections in the Spring of 2003.[199]

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[198] Newfield reports that the professional hour has been used by 51% of the teaching adjuncts and represents a 24% increase in their wages (Internal document: Status Report, August 2005).

[199] I was elected to one of the three positions, along with Susan DiRaimo and Diane Menna.

Newfield, elected for her own full term as Vice-President in Spring 2003, took the already established PSC Adjunct Affairs committee, where a few elected committee members and some invited guests met monthly, and she turned it into an open-door "First Fridays" monthly event that would typically attract 20 or more part-time faculty activists. The committee continues to play an important role in the development of policy and practices regarding contingent academic labor at CUNY. It serves as a vital life-line for adjuncts, graduate teaching assistants, and CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP) teachers. Newfield has proven to be a strong voice for adjunct interests at all levels of the union, as well as in national bodies such as COCAL, and she has proven to be adept at getting others involved.

The new leaders of the PSC did not shy away from their reputation for mobilizing the membership and for organizing the unorganized. One of their most notable activities was a CUNY-wide teach-in which took place on March 28, 2001, known as "Teach CUNY." It was an extraordinary day where the PSC coordinated events throughout CUNY with student governments, NYPIRG, and other groups to discuss how "the PSC's contract demands and budget proposals would help to restore the University."[200] Nancy Romer explained that "We made the case that good teaching and working conditions equal good learning conditions."[201] Many faculty built lessons around the politics and economics of CUNY and incorporated it into their teaching.

The PSC has extended their efforts to include the organizing of the unorganized at the CUNY Research Foundation, a private, independent institution that is closely tied to

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[200] Gregg Morris and Peter Hogness, "'Teach CUNY' Reaches 18 Campuses, Hundreds of Classrooms," *PSCcuny News Bulletin*, April 2001, 1.

[201] Ibid., 1.

CUNY (i.e., the Chancellor is the Chair of its Board of Directors), and where the primary job is to administer grants and research funds at CUNY.[202] Many of the thousands of Research Foundation employees have jobs "that are hard to distinguish from those of CUNY employees."[203] PSC President Barbara Bowen argues, "If the PSC is to retain its power as the representative of the CUNY faculty and staff, then we must represent the *whole* instructional staff, however it is configured."[204] The new PSC set out to organize the unorganized workers of the Research Foundation and has had success at LaGuardia Community College and at the University Applications Processing Center. Hundreds of Research Foundation employees are now members of the PSC, but there are still thousands who have no union protection.

There have been numerous rallies and demonstrations organized by the PSC around the contract and other issues, which have helped to create a continuous visible presence for the union. The new PSC has won over many of the doubters both within the labor movement and in the broader CUNY community. From the yearly Labor Day parade to city-wide municipal labor union rallies to support for other local academic labor protests (NYU, Columbia, the New School), to anti-war demonstrations, the new PSC has been a visible presence which has helped to build alliances and to develop a broad sense of solidarity and community.

This solidarity and coalition-building has extended to national and international participation as well. The new PSC has sent six or seven adjunct activists to each of the

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[202] See Nancy Romer, "Organizing the Research Foundation, Academic Workers Need a Union for a Voice on the Job," *Clarion*, April 2004, 6.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid.

COCAL conferences since 2000, providing funds for expenses and extending support and solidarity to the growing contingent academic labor movement. Additionally, the PSC, through its International Committee, chaired by Renate Bridenthal, organized an October 2002 conference titled "Globalization, Privatization, War: In Defense of Public Education in the Americas," which included representatives from a coalition of educational organizations from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. These activists came together to examine the forces of neo-liberal globalization, to better understand how our lives as academics, scholars, and students here at CUNY are shaped by these forces, and to develop ways to contest them. A pamphlet of the speeches by the keynote speakers and a summary of the workshops was produced by the PSC International Committee, placed on the PSC web site, and hard copies were received with great enthusiasm by hundreds of labor movement allies who share these concerns. The PSC has also actively participated in U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW), a coalition of labor unions that have influenced labor union resolutions and policy statements at NYSUT, the AFT, and the AFL-CIO, recognizing that the elective war abroad dramatically diminishes public sector spending at home for education, infrastructure, and social welfare.

One can still hear the occasional complaint from those who believe that the union should focus more narrowly on bread and butter issues. Protracted contract struggles can lead to dissension. Despite these complaints, most members seem to understand the connection between our own jobs, local economics and politics, and the larger issues in the labor movement and in the world. The PSC has been tough and effective on the local academic issues, such as in fighting against administrative assaults on the tenure system, in aggressively fighting to protect academic freedom at a time when it is being attacked

from numerous directions, and, importantly, they have also been diligent in fighting to enforce the contract.

The PSC caused a buzz in New York State labor circles when they won what seemed to be a major victory in the Appellate Division of State Supreme Court of New York in June 2005, but, alas, it was recently lost on appeal.[205] The PSC was demanding that the University negotiate over intellectual property rights, and the University was arguing that the management rights clause, negotiated with the PSC in 1973 when Belle Zeller was at the helm for its first contract (the zipper clause discussed above page 257-258), gave CUNY the right to unilaterally make decisions over matters concerning terms and conditions of employment providing that it was not already covered in the contract. However, the PSC argued that the contract had, in fact, expired and the University was, therefore, required to negotiate over, in this case, certain issues regarding intellectual property rights. The intermediate appeals Court agreed with the PSC and found that the Triborough Amendment to the Taylor Law (which extends the conditions of the contract for public employees after the contract expires, i.e., the old contract terms and conditions are 'still in effect' until a new contract is agreed to), was meant to protect employees and not employers. That is to say, the intermediate appeals Court agreed that the University was incorrect in assuming that once the contract had expired, that they still had the privileges of the management rights (zipper) clause because the Triborough Amendment extended the terms of the contract. Unfortunately, the highest Court in New York

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[205] Matter of Professional Staff Congress-City University of New York v. New York State Public Employee Relations Board, 2005 NY Slip OP 14511, June 7, 2005, New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Department. Text of decision can be found at *New York State Law Reporting Bureau*: http://www.courts.state.ny.us/reporter/3dseries/2005/2005_04511.htm. The unanimous decision at the New York State Court of Appeals (the highest court in New York State) on October 17, 2006 can be found at: http://www.nycourts.gov/ctapps/decisions/oct06/91opn06.pdf.

disagreed and ruled against the PSC. That ruling, however, unintentionally brings into relief the pretense of so-called professional unionism and its vaunted cooperation with management when the Court argues:

> The fact that there is no "sunset" language in Article 2 [*i.e. the zipper clause* - vt] suggests that the parties intended the waiver provision to remain in effect after expiration of the [Collective Bargaining Agreement]. *And nothing in the parties' past practices of bargaining history indicates a contrary intent. More than 25 years elapsed without the PSC's demanding collective bargaining on the intellectual property issue and during that period CUNY had previously amended the policy under the notice and consultation procedures set forth in Article 2 without objection by PSC*. [emphasis added][206]

Of course, over most of those 25-plus years the PSC was under the control of President Polishook and the City University Unity Caucus.

The institutional and cultural changes that have been instituted within the union since the New Caucus victory have brought adjunct faculty into the fold, have succeeded at mobilizing the membership, developed solidarity through activism, promoted the building of alliances, helped to develop a powerful critique of academic labor politics, and encouraged the aggressive defense of the contract. These changes have turned the PSC into a formidable foe of the corporate university. Bowen's democratically inclusive public demeanor has served as a sturdy rudder during difficult times. It has not been an easy task for the leadership to balance all of the different classifications of workers within the union so that it does not capsize or run aground. Solidarity between all in the bargaining unit is necessary, but bringing up the adjuncts is the key to fighting the corporate system, to preserving academic freedom, and to defending against the attacks on faculty prerogative. The adjuncts are the key because they embody the flexible, just-

[206] From the decision by the New York State Court of Appeals, October 17, 2006.

in-time-like "production" that characterizes the post-Fordist, sixth epoch of late capitalism. Without the exploitation of the adjunct faculty, the corporate system could not flourish. Breaking the work force and the power of the union is the ideological aim of elites and their managers in this epoch. Whether it is through direct conscious understanding or through an unexamined ideological predisposition, one cannot say, but the agents of management find a way to play their roles. It is an old employer game of playing divide and conquer.

Adjuncts have not received everything that they wanted under the New Caucus union leadership, but at least now there is a forum, a place to discuss and engage in politics and a democratic process to continue to develop ideas and practices. Despite the fears of the CUUC, the adjuncts have not "taken over" the union (they do not have the time or the inclination). They have been good citizens of the union and the solidarity has made it stronger. There has been little headway on gaining pay parity, even if we consider the important office hour, nor have there been any gains on seniority or job security rights. Job security for part-time faculty, or some kind of seniority provision, such as the preferential rehiring provision that was lost in the first PSC contract in 1973, is the demand that strikes at the heart of the corporate university.[207] To gain this right would probably take a major campaign (like the CAU! office hours campaign, which emphasized the benefit to students). Part of the problem is that many members of the union do not yet seem to have seniority and job security for part-time faculty on their radar. Based on my observations, I believe that there is still the residue of class distinction that prevents this demand from being raised to the level that it deserves – a level that would warrant a fully supported campaign. Having said that, it should be

understood that this demand has been and will continue to be fought fiercely by University management. Properly understood, this virtually costless demand is even more crucial, from management's perspective, than pay parity because it is the keystone of the corporate university and it, more than most anything else, would serve to strengthen faculty power.

There are other pressures that sometimes create schisms between part-time and full-time faculty, and they result in a continuous process of development. Due to the persistence of Newfield and the other part-time faculty officers on the Executive Council, a second adjunct, Diane Menna, was recently added to the negotiating committee (Newfield being the first). This is a crucial position in the union, and given the number of part-time faculty in the bargaining unit, it is one that deserves this modification.

Another area of conflict that generates a lot of heat is the workload restrictions on part-time faculty. This is known as the 9/6 restriction. That is, part-timers can teach up to 9 credits on one CUNY campus and one class up to six credits on another. Some of the adjunct activists wish to see a loosening of the caps on workload. Whereas, the union leadership argues that it would create a kind of super-exploitation and undermine the union's bargaining power, some part-time faculty advocates argue that the desperate conditions that adjuncts face warrant the loosening of the restrictions so as to at least make a bad situation a little bit more bearable right now. Better pay and job security would help to alleviate these conditions, but there is a long way to go on those. The union has recently negotiated for 100 conversion lines of long-time adjunct faculty to the title of full-time lecturer, a line that carries with it a permanent status after five years of qualified service. It is just a spit in the ocean, but it is a step in the right direction.

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[207] See above 261-264.

Finally, there has not been much of an effort made in terms of developing alliances with and reaching out to the local communities served by CUNY, such as the kind of community organizing done during the best days of the old College Teachers Union. As with the schools, the increasing centralization of the University undermines the structural foundations for those kind of relationships to "naturally" emerge. The ability to establish such alliances would greatly increase the ability of the faculty union to resist the corporate university. Thus far, the implementation of social-activist unionism has pushed the limits of the old models of unionism, but the path beyond those limits is still not clear. To go further would mean to resurrect the community organizing model and to fashion a bold new kind of unionism that breaks the mold – to go from mobilizing the membership to mobilizing the communities served by CUNY as well.

This case study presents evidence that the use of part-time faculty at CUNY is not only due to economically driven, budgetary limitations, but that the contingent academic labor system is deeply rooted in politics, and it is driven by an ideological construction of the University that is based upon the corporate model. Further, this study supports the hypotheses of this dissertation regarding the need for democratic organization, strategic alliances, and the development of a shared understanding among the activists as well as the broader community. This is evident in the narratives of the PTU, CAU!, and of the New Caucus. When adjunct faculty made important gains, it was most significantly due to their own organizing around the issues, and because that organizing played into a broader political field where they were able to gain allies. Obviously, the most decisive alliance that was made by the adjunct activists has been with the New Caucus. In that, they have gone beyond a loose alliance to become part of the association itself – in on the

ground floor, so to speak – but many adjuncts still feel that their voice is lost in this relationship. Some fear that the "Iron Law of Oligarchy" is slowly making its way into the hierarchy and that there is too much centralized control at the top, as opposed to a model that allows initiative and activism to emerge from below, i.e., a model that encourages spontaneity and authentically democratic participation. Nevertheless, the fact that this type of reflective deliberation regarding process is openly taking place is indicative of the dramatic change that has occurred in the culture of the union. The New Caucus PSC leadership has been very effective in building a more democratic union, and it has made important gains in developing further alliances, in mobilizing the membership, in organizing the unorganized, and in standing strong against the further tiering of the polarized and fragmented work force. It has been strong in enforcing the contract, in enfranchising part-time faculty (as promised), in opposing the corporate university, and in continuing to raise consciousness with their analysis and activism. There is still a lot of work to be done.

Chapter 5/ Case Study: Graduate Teaching Assistant Unions

The events at CUNY give us a good example of some of the problems and possibilities faced by part-time faculty, but the problems faced by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) have some unique characteristics that deserve further exploration. Though they share with part-time faculty a common existence within the same broadly conceived contingent academic labor system, this chapter will focus on the distinctive issues faced by GTAs. It will begin with a brief look at the first independent graduate teaching assistant union, the Teaching Assistants Association at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and then focus on the Graduate Employee Student Organization (GESO) at Yale, which played a significant role in gaining a national audience for GTA union-organizing efforts in 1995 and 1996, thereby inspiring efforts among both GTAs and part-time faculty from coast-to-coast. In terms of the chronology of events, it should be made clear that GESO's grade strike took place at about the same time that the New Caucus was officially in formation at CUNY – Fall 1995. It should also be noted that Benno Schmidt, the current Chair of the CUNY Board of Trustees and the former Chair of the Mayor's Task Force, i.e., the Schmidt Commission, appears in this chapter's narrative in a kind of prequel as President of Yale from 1986 to 1992.

There are some differences between graduate teaching assistants and part-time faculty, in addition to the difference in their demographic distribution as indicated in Chapter Two. Obviously, GTAs are younger and have less experience teaching than part-time faculty, in general. It follows from this, that the GTAs position in relation to the academic labor system is different, too. They are at the stage of entering this system, as opposed to part-time faculty, many of whom have been in the midst of it for many

years. And they have a greater rate of turnover, given the time limitations on the degree-granting process. These temporal and spatial distinctions no doubt influence the perceptions held regarding potential possibilities, both personal and collective. In this regard, through my own long-time observation of GTA activism, it has become clear that they are aware of the academic labor market that awaits them, which is undoubtedly an important part of what spurs them on to organize. That is to say, though many of them may be among the relatively privileged, e.g., the graduate students at Yale, Berkeley, the great state universities, etc., they nevertheless recognize their place in the contingent academic labor system and see the increasingly tenuous chances for a good tenure-track job down the road. If they simply had to "pay their dues" by living in relative poverty while in graduate school, and then thereafter could be reasonably assured of finding a solid, secure, professional career ahead of them, then they might not be as concerned about union organizing while pursuing their doctorates. However, given their academic abilities, it is not too difficult for them to read the writing on the wall, despite the cries of their critics who argue that they should not be organizing because they are "the privileged." This is not to say that high ideals do not also play a role in their devotion to organizing for a just cause.

The key issue faced by graduate student employee union organizers on private campuses is that, like their full-time faculty counterparts, they do not have the proper legal status to organize as members of a recognized collective bargaining unit. They key difference between these two groups is that the full-time faculty cannot engage in such organizing because in *National Labor Relations Board v. Yeshiva University* 444 U.S. 672 (1980) it was determined by the U.S. Supreme Court that they fulfilled management

functions and were therefore disqualified from forming a union, whereas the graduate student employees in the private universities cannot join a union because the Bush-dominated NLRB has determined in the *Brown University* case (2004) that graduate student employees cannot organize as members of a union because they are primarily students rather than employees. Thus, the NLRB has shut the door, at least temporarily, to union recognition at private-sector campuses. In the public universities, of course, such determinations are the jurisdiction of the various State public employee relations boards. The first of these efforts is where this narrative begins.

Early Stirrings

Recognized graduate student employee unions exist on over a dozen public state university campuses including the University of California (noted above in Chapter Two), the University of Michigan, the University of Oregon, and the University of Iowa, to name a few. There are also graduate student employees in unions jointly with full-time faculty at Rutgers University, and with full-time faculty and staff at CUNY. Ongoing graduate student employee union campaigns continue to be conducted at public and private college campuses, most notably at New York University, which will be briefly discussed later in this chapter. The first graduate student employee union was the Teaching Assistants Association (TAA) at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. It was formed in the Spring of 1966. By May of 1969 they had won a representation election by a wide margin.[1] In the Spring of 1970 they had "the first contract in the U.S. between a

[1] Daniel Czitrom, "Reeling in the Years: Looking Back on the TAA," *Will Teach for Food, Academic Labor in Crisis*, edited by Cary Nelson, with a forward by Barbara Ehrenreich (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 218.

university and its graduate students."[2] The TAA is an interesting place to begin this inquiry, partly because they were the first (independent) graduate student employee union, but more so because their experience, as described in their own historical literature and in an essay by Daniel Czitrom, provides us with a rich example of the dynamics, possibilities, and limitations that exist in this kind of political organizing.

Czitrom, a participant in the organization in its early days and at the time of writing this essay a history professor at Mount Holyoke, emphasizes the intensified political awareness that existed at the time of the founding of the TAA. When they first formed in the spring of 1966 the members of the TAA were especially concerned about the draft laws which left males with failing grades vulnerable to being sent off to war.[3] In the fall of 1967, they engaged in "a four-day strike to protest police brutality against antiwar students who had sit-in to protest Dow Chemical recruitment on campus."[4] In addition to their anti-war activities at this time, the TAA also engaged in educational reform efforts at the University of Wisconsin, including efforts to improve course syllabii and to participate in departmental curriculum committees.[5]

The radical political culture of the 1960's was the context for the activism and intensity that the TAA had in its formative period. Many at this time became willing to see new ways of looking at the world and at themselves. The world had been turned

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[2] See "TAA History," *Teaching Assistants' Association*, http://www.taa-madison.org/history.html; Also, see "TAA History, The First Thirty Years," *TAA Membership Handbook, 1996-1997*, Teaching Assistants' Association, AFT/WFT Local 3220, AFL-CIO, 21-23; Notably, CUNY's United Federation of College Teachers (UFCT) included Teaching Assistant among its titles in its collective bargaining agreement of Fall 1969, but they did not have a separate unit as did the graduate students at the Madison.

[3] Czitrom, 217.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

upside down, and the TAA was born. Czitrom points to this early political experience as being helpful to the TAs when they "found themselves under economic attack" in early 1969.[6]

This attack came in the form of a legislative proposal that sought to deny out-of-state tuition remission to graduate assistants and it "provided the spark that brought a majority of TAs… into the TAA."[7] The TAs affirmative strike vote was followed by a quick withdrawal of the bill. Czitrom indicates that the withdrawal occurred due to the TAA strike vote and because of university concern that the bill would hinder recruitment of new graduate students.[8] Whatever the reason for withdrawal, the genie had been let out of the bottle, and the TAs had witnessed their collective strength. They were now determined to establish themselves as a labor union. Out of the nineteen hundred TA's from the Madison campus who were sent union authorization cards, approximately eleven hundred responded positively.[9] Czitrom explains that they were motivated by three issues: "the realization that, as university employees, TAs had to work collectively to improve their lot; a desire to end the isolation and inequities between TAs of various departments; and the goal of creating a new power bloc that could act as a force for

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[6] Czitrom, 217.

[7] "TAA History," http://www.taa-madison.org/history.html.

[8] Czitrom, 217.

[9] Ibid.

democratizing the university as an institution."[10] In addition, this new type of union was based on a "recognition of the place of the university and white collar labor in society."[11]

The University at first resisted the demand for collective bargaining, but political agitation, the threat of a strike, and "the possibility of attack from the state's organized labor movements forced the university to give in."[12] Since Wisconsin statutes had no provision to govern the relationship between the two parties, a Structure Agreement was signed which set forth the necessary guidelines for this bargaining relationship. Once the TAA secured the support of 77% of the vote and were, thus, the exclusive bargaining agent for TAs at Madison, they then began to bargain with the university for what would become the first bargaining agreement in the United States between a university and a separate graduate assistant's union.[13] But this agreement did not come easily.

The TAA put forward eight basic demands.[14] Six of them were economic and/or workplace issues: grievance procedures that included neutral arbitrators; a uniform workload; a job security measure that would guarantee appointment for the duration of a TAs graduate career; fair procedures for discipline, discharge, and evaluation; open files for all TA evaluations; and a demand for health insurance that covers TAs and includes their families. In addition to these six issues, the TAA also put forward two other proposals that "connected the university's internal hierarchical power relations to

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[10] Czitrom, 217.

[11] "Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA)," *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, edited by Rachel Lanzerotti, Melissa Hayes, and Jon Curtiss, written by members of the individual organizations and published by the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining, Frank R. Annunziato, Director, unpaginated, undated, circa 1994.

[12] Czitrom, 218.

[13] See "TAA History," http://www.taa-madison.org/history.html.

inequality in the larger society."[15] These latter two proposals consisted of a call to end discrimination through hiring, admission, and education policies that would be developed by the university and the union, and an educational planning proposal "calling for each department to bargain with its TAA affiliate to establish mechanisms by which undergraduates and their TAs could participate with faculty in planning and structuring courses in which TAs were involved."[16]

After eleven months of "fruitless" collective bargaining, the TAA went on a strike that lasted twenty-four days and "revealed some of the key fault lines in university life."[17] The strike was voted on affirmatively by over two-thirds of the TAA membership.[18] Importantly, they had the support of the undergraduate activists, who called for a boycott of classes which led to a drop in class attendance to about 25% of the enrollment in the College of Letters and Science.[19] The also had the support of the Teamsters, Local 695, which disrupted campus bus service and deliveries.

Not all of the news was good, however, for the TAA and their supporters. The overwhelming majority of the UW faculty strongly opposed the educational planning proposal viewing it as an infringement upon their prerogative. Under the threat of mass firings, a state court injunction that declared the strike illegal, and the subsequent

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[14] Czitrom, 218.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 219.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

weakening of support from both the more moderate members of the TAA, as well as from the undergraduates, the strike had "reached a stalemate."[20]

On April 8, 1970 the membership voted to accept a contract. The TAA had won some important gains, including the "establishment of an impartial grievance procedure, a guarantee of four-year appointments for TAs, health insurance coverage, limits on the size of class sections… and fair procedures for discipline and discharge."[21] The contract, however, made "virtually no concessions on the educational planning issue."[22]

Since this first contract, the TAA has continued to function as a representative of the graduate assistants, affiliating with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in 1974, and negotiating four more contracts up till 1980 when they voted to strike again after working without a contract for seven months.[23] The University of Wisconsin was seeking across-the-board concessions, including that some TAs should work without pay "on the pretext that these TAs were not really working but merely fulfilling degree requirements."[24] The strike lasted for five weeks, and then they returned to work in May, still without a contract. "Three months later, Chancellor Shain of UW… [announced] that he was terminating the Structure Agreement."[25] The court upheld UW's right to pull

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[20] Czitrom, 219.

[21] Ibid., 219-220.

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA)," *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, edited by Rachel Lanzerotti, Melissa Hayes, and Jon Curtiss.

[24] See "TAA History," http://www.taa-madison.org/history.html.

[25] "Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA)," *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, edited by Rachel Lanzerotti, Melissa Hayes, and Jon Curtiss.

out of the agreement.[26] But the TAA persevered. A Legislative Committee was set up to coordinate outreach, lobbying, and research designed to "secure passage of a bargaining rights bill."[27] Unionists throughout the state of Wisconsin supported the bargaining bill, and, in October 1985, it passed despite strong opposition from the administration.[28] They continue to be an active union that promotes active and democratic participation by its membership. Through intensive lobbying of the state legislature, in January of 1998, a full tuition waiver for TAA members was implemented.[29]

Czitrom's contribution to the TAA history is important as a first-hand account of the formation of the first TA union, but it is also important for the insights that he provides in his analysis:

> The 1970 strike demonstrated the effectiveness of united action with other student and labor groups. And it established the TAA as a new economic and political formation, one that combined traditional collective bargaining on behalf of its members with serious efforts to challenge the university's—and larger society's—power structure.[30]

He points out that it was this broader commitment that attracted himself and many others to the TAA in the first place. Many of the more radical TAA members belonged to its stewards council. Among these, many of them belonged to left political organizations such as the International Socialists, the Progressive Labor Party, the Young Socialists of

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[26] "Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA)," *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, edited by Rachel Lanzerotti, Melissa Hayes, and Jon Curtiss.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] See "TAA History," http://www.taa-madison.org/history.html.

[30] Czitrom, 220.

America, and the Communist Party.[31] He recalls how their debates and discussions ranged from "nuts-and-bolts union business" to "how to build the *real* worker-student alliance."[32]

In addition, Czitrom points to an interesting structural aspect of the TAA that could be instructive with regards to organizing contingent labor in general. Due to the nature of a graduate employee's career, there is a big turnover in the ranks of union members, as well as of the leadership. This "revolving door" gave the TAA a "unique internal political culture."[33] This might be a disadvantage in terms of building an experienced and skilled union leadership, however, he points to two positive elements that, in fact, may further the idea and the culture of union democracy.

Firstly, the union participants needed to consciously articulate and to pass on a "sometimes contested collective memory."[34] This meant that in almost all union speeches, pamphlets, and other activities that provided a forum for outreach, there would be the invocation of the union's history.[35] This characteristic of the union's culture serves as an important means of maintaining continuity with regard to the principles of the TAA, and, in more practical terms, it showed the new members the concrete gains that the union had won, thus giving them reasons to join and to participate. It is also a way to train new recruits, to maintain a dynamic energy and vitality within the union ranks, and to promote a participatory democratic culture within the union.

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[31] Czitrom, 221.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 221-222.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

Secondly, the TAA serves "as an incubator for political activists" and as an introduction not just to unionism but to a "radical critique of American education and society."[36] These activists carry their experiences with them, some for the rest of their lives. For example, with regard to the TAA merging with the AFT in 1974, Czitrom makes critical remarks of Albert Shanker, but he also views the TAA's affiliation as a positive thing. On the one hand, it gives the TAA entrée to the rest of organized labor, thus, giving them more strength through unity, and, on the other, he views this as a means of "helping to democratize that labor movement[37]" He points to many former members of the TAA who have become "leading figures in the Madison Federation of Labor, the Wisconsin Federation of Teachers, and the Wisconsin AFL-CIO," as well those who have become "activists and staffers in Teamsters locals and teachers unions around the country."[38]

Czitrom's perspective of the TAA history is a valuable starting point for examining graduate teaching assistants' unionizing efforts. He views labor unions as positive alternatives that can help TAs and other faculty to address the bread-and-butter concerns that they face and, also, that can help to connect "larger political struggles both within and outside universities."[39] That is to say, he helps to frame the issue by situating the organizing efforts not just in a context of wages and benefits, but as part of a "political and moral crises facing higher education and the larger society."[40]

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[36] Czitrom, 222.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., 228.

[40] Ibid.

The Conflict at Yale

The Graduate Employee and Student Organization (GESO) at Yale University is an interesting case for study because it has become a very prominent symbol of the intransigence of private universities when it comes to engaging in collective bargaining with graduate students. In a decision that put graduate employee union organizing efforts in the spotlight of major newspapers across the country and alerted many to what only a handful had been previously aware of, the NLRB General Counsel, in November of 1996, determined that graduate teaching assistants are employees under federal law, and issued a complaint charging that Yale had violated federal labor law when they threatened striking teaching assistants with reprisals.[41] Despite the fact that the decision, ultimately, was reversed in a later ruling, the case itself still serves as an example that can be built upon by future movements. The legal conflict is only part of the story. In addition to providing a detailed chronology of the conflict between the Yale Administration and GESO, this section will also examine Yale's relationship to other unions on campus as well as its role in the New Haven community. These additional aspects will provide a fuller framework for understanding Yale's policies towards its graduate student employees.

There is "widespread agreement" that Yale and its labor unions have a more pronounced conflict and hostility between them than exists at other Ivy League schools.[42] Princeton University, for example, is also the largest employer in that city, but it does not

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[41] Gordon Lafer, Research Director, Federation of University Employees at Yale, press release, November 19, 1996.

[42] Steven Greenhouse, "In Ivy League, Yale is Leader in Labor Unrest," *New York Times*, April 4, 1996, B6.

dominate the local economy as does Yale. Johnson and Johnson and the nearby state capital contribute jobs to the local economy.[43] Also, Princeton does not "have the same town-gown, blue-collar-versus-blue-blood rancor as Yale, partly because the town of Princeton is far wealthier than New Haven."[44] Princeton and its unions have had a relatively peaceful coexistence when compared to Yale.

Yale's conflict with its unions has become a central part of its public identity. John Wilhelm, who in 1997 – the time of his writing about this conflict – was the general secretary-treasurer of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE), AFL-CIO, and who is also a 1967 graduate of Yale, describes the struggles of the unions at Yale in "A Short History of Unionization at Yale."[45] The workers from the Department of Heat, Light, and Power were the first to organize.[46] This struggle took place at Yale from the late 1930's to the early 1950's.[47] HERE Local 35 emerged from it. In 1968, during a six day strike, they suffered a huge defeat at the hands of Yale. They survived as an organization, but the contract settlement was disastrous.[48] They worked for low pay, just above minimum wage, and they were laid-off in the summer, at

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[43] Greenhouse, *New York Times*, April 4, 1996, B6.

[44] Ibid.

[45] John Wilhelm, "A Short History of Unionization at Yale," in *Will Teach for Food,* edited by Cary Nelson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 35-43. On July 8, 2004, HERE merged with UNITE!, the garment and textile workers union, and formed UNITE HERE!. Wilhelm is currently the President, Hospitality Industry of UNITE HERE! Bruce S. Raynor is the General President. In 2005, they disaffiliated with the AFL-CIO and formed the Change to Win coalition with the Teamsters, SEIU, and other unions.

[46] Ibid., 35.

[47] Also see Deborah Sue Elkin, "Labor and the Left: The Limits of Acceptable Dissent at Yale University, 1920s-1950s," (Phd diss., Yale University, 1995).

[48] Wilhelm, 36.

Christmas, and at Spring break.[49] In addition, they had poor benefits, and many were on welfare. After this defeat, they began a campaign that resulted in strikes in 1971, 1974, and 1977.[50] By the early 1980's they won year-round work, which had been a longtime demand.[51] These strikes helped unionists to realize that there "needed to be a little bit better balance of power in New Haven."[52] This meant that other workers at Yale would have to be organized.

The white collar employees have also had their travails and have organized, with some help from Local 35. Their first efforts began in the 1960's with the "Association of Clericals and Technicals." By the early 1980s, Local 35 and the white collar employees from Local 34 had joined together to "enlarge the scope of unionization at Yale."[53] This led to the third successful labor board election and to the strike of 1984.

When Local 34 began its strike in September of 1984, Yale threatened to fire any worker who honored the picket line. However, even in Ronald Reagan's America, the members of Local 35 honored it anyway.[54] They struck for ten-and-a-half weeks. With the support of Local 35 they were able to succeed and to win major improvements for Yale employees, including improvements in pension plans, health benefits for workers

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[49] Wilhelm, 36.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 37.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 38.

[54] Ibid.

families, and more. Wilhelm views the 1984 strike as not being just about wages, but "it was a struggle for people's freedom."[55]

In 1986 Benno Schmidt became Yale President, replacing the popular A. Bartlett Giamatti, who became the Commissioner of Baseball. Schmidt was not as popular as his predecessor. He was reportedly viewed by students as being inaccessible.[56] He was brought to Yale, in part, for his fundraising skills.[57] During his six years as president he succeeded in raising more than $570 million for Yale.[58] Despite this success, however, a general sense of crisis hung over the campus during his tenure. This was partly a result of his personal management style, but it was also due to conflicts over Yale's operating budget and to decisions made regarding the curriculum.

The late 1980s and early 1990s were tough economic times for the nation's colleges and universities. Even the elite private institutions faced difficult times, relatively speaking, with rising costs and falling revenues. At Yale, they also faced the problem of a crumbling physical infrastructure that had been neglected for years. Though Yale's endowment increased during the 1980s from $650 million to $2.6 Billion, they expected a decrease in donations, as well as a "stabilizing" of Federal funding of research grants and contracts.[59] The repairs to the physical infrastructure alone were reportedly

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[55] Wilhelm, 39.

[56] Anthony DePalma, "After Tough '91, Yale Finds 'Healer' in Acting Chief," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1992, Section B, 7.

[57] Katherine Farrish, "Faculty, graduate students rebel as Yale tries to cut back; Lean times at Yale stir rebellion," *The Hartford Courant*, February 23, 1992, A1.

[58] Chris Black and Stephanie Plasse, *The Boston Globe*, April 16, 1993, Metro/Region 25.

[59] Anthony Flint, "Yale to join ranks of budget cutters," *The Boston Globe*, January 31, 1991, Metro/Region, 19.

being estimated in early 1991 at half a billion dollars.[60] A year later, the repairs were reportedly estimated by Yale officials as being closer to one billion dollars.[61]

In addition to the plans for renovations to the physical infrastructure at Yale, on two well-publicized occasions Schmidt initiated controversial plans to renovate the academic infrastructure as well. The first, in November 1988, was a proposal to change the curriculum of the School of Organization and Management, reportedly defended by Schmidt and his administration "as necessary to ease financial problems and improve faculty relations."[62] The School had a dual focus giving "equal emphasis to preparing students for public administration and private business."[63] Michael E. Levine had been appointed by Schmidt to be the new Dean of the management school. It was considered to be a unilateral appointment which violated "the school's own emphasis on the value of consensus."[64] The new plans downgraded the emphasis on organizational behavior, teamwork, and human relations, the very aspects of the program that made it unique.[65] Critics of this approach wanted the school to emphasize economics and a more traditional business curriculum. Schmidt had said of this innovative model that it was "a school

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[60] Anthony DePalma, "Yale Plans Cuts as Income Fall and Costs Rise," *The New York Times*, January 30, 1991, Section B, 6.

[61] Anthony DePalma, "Yale Panel Proposes Deep Cuts in Faculty and in Departments," *The New York Times*, January 17, 1992, Section A, 1.

[62] Constance L. Hays, "Views Collide Over Changes at Yale," *The New York Times*, November 9, 1988, Section B, 11.

[63] Constance L. Hays, "Change Protested at Yale's Business School," *The New York Times*, November 3, 1988, Section B, 1.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

perhaps headed in a more eccentric direction."[66] Several faculty members were fired from this branch of the management school which weakened it considerably.[67] It created a bitter fight at Yale and led to a demonstration of 250 Yale graduate students who protested the changes.[68]

The second highly controversial plan for academic restructuring was put forward in early 1992. It proved to be less successful than the plan to reshape the management school and it created an acrimonious conflict at Yale. The Committee on the Restructuring of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, comprised of 12 senior professors and several administrators, had spent a year looking for ways to cut back on costs.[69] In early 1992, the committee came out with their report. It recommended a 10 percent reduction in faculty positions, and the elimination of the departments of linguistics and operations research (a mathematics discipline), as well as the elimination of the Institution for Social and Policy Studies, and deep cuts in the engineering and sociology departments, the latter facing a 40 percent reduction in faculty.[70] In addition, a limitation on new graduate enrollment, as well as other lesser cuts across the board had been proposed. The recommendations unleashed a rebellion by both faculty and graduate students. Many of the faculty objected to being left out of the decision-making loop. One professor of

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[66] Nick Ravo, "'Where's Benno?' New Refrain at Yale Belies Record," *The New York Times,* May 26, 1989, Section B, 1.

[67] Anthony Flint, "Turmoil at Yale Management School," *The Boston Globe*, November 24, 1991, Learning Section, A29.

[68] Hays, *The New York Times*, 1.

[69] Anthony DePalma, "Yale Panel Proposes Deep Cuts in Faculty and in Departments," *The New York Times*, January 17, 1992, Section A, 1.

[70] DePalma,*The New York Times*, January 17, 1992; Andrew L. Yarrow, "Yale Panel Faults Plan to Cut Costs," *The New York Times*, March 7, 1992, Section 1, 31.

English and African and Afro-American studies, Hazel V. Carby, reportedly said, "The faculty would not object to any restructuring if there was any debate about vision, about where the university is going."[71] In a reference to students picketing nearby in front of the Hall of Graduate Studies, Carby added, "They're having imposed upon them a way of life in which they feel they had no input."[72] Schmidt resigned as President of Yale in June of 1992 to head the Edison schools, a private, profit-making venture that would seek to capitalize on the privatizing efforts being implemented on the public sector. The academic restructuring plans were soon dropped.

Despite the economic "crisis" during Schmidt's tenure, the negotiations between Yale and Locals 34 and 35 were peacefully resolved in 1988 and, again in 1992.[73] In 1992 the parties had developed a labor-management committee to deal with issues of productivity, service delivery, costs, effectiveness, and subcontracting.[74] This worked well for two years. By Spring 1993 they had completed their search for Schmidt's permanent replacement, Richard Levin, an economist and a Yale insider who understood the culture better than Schmidt and who was able to boost morale among the students by participating in campus life. Schmidt was considered by many to be more of a detached manager, whereas Levin came across as a scholar who understood the students. However, Yale soon abandoned the labor management committee and attempted to

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[71] Reported by Katherine Farrish, "Faculty, graduate students rebel as Yale tries to cut back; Lean times at Yale stir rebellions," *The Hartford Courant,* February 23, 1992, Section A, A1.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Wilhelm, 39.

[74] Ibid.

implement a two-tiered wage system with new workers getting four dollars an hour less.[75] They wanted to do away with the full-year employment of workers and put them back to 30 weeks a year.[76] They also wanted to increase subcontracting and take back health insurance for retirees.[77]

If one were to compare President Levin with President Schmidt, then an analogy with modern U.S. Presidents might serve to highlight the distinctions. William N. Parker, Professor Emeritus of Yale, compared Schmidt to George Bush Sr. He pointed out that "both men tried to govern by a combination of neglect and crisis, using the 'crises' created by neglect to justify harsh action… Both showed disinclination to get their hands dirty with the machinery of government. Both showed little grasp of real issues or any guiding principles, whether in government and social welfare or in the education of the young and the advancement of knowledge."[78] If we extend the analogy, then Richard Levin can be compared to the popular Bill Clinton. Clinton was widely referred to as "the first black president" even as he dismantled the social welfare system as we knew it and replaced it with a less kind, less gentle neo-liberalism. And in a retrospective look by one journalist, "Mr. Levin… has managed to pursue much of Mr. Schmidt's agenda, but without the turmoil."[79]

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[75] Wilhelm, 39.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] William N. Parker, "The Yale Schmidt Leaves Behind," *The New York Times*, July 26, 1992, Section 6, 4.

[79] Karen W. Arenson, "Rejuvenated Yale Marks Bountiful Fund Drive," *The New York Times*, October 6, 1997, Section B, 4.

By 1996, Locals 34 and 35 were engaged in a "rolling strike," with each taking a turn disrupting campus life. First, Local 34 went on strike for four weeks. During that time, Local 35 members each contributed $100 per week to a strike fund, although they did not strike themselves. A couple of weeks after that, Local 35 went out on strike for four weeks and members of Local 34 went to work and they contributed $100 to the strike fund.[80] The University engaged in a public relations campaign against the unions which cost them millions.[81] The unions focused on strengthening their organizing committee "in each department on the campus."[82] This created a grass-roots organization that was able to do outreach to elected leaders, clergy, neighbors, and families.[83] The Greater New Haven Clergy Association got behind them and 105 clergy members signed a statement, published in a local newspaper, that depicted the Yale administration as Goliath and the unions as David. Shortly thereafter a demonstration in which 312 people, among them unionists, clergy, civil rights leaders, and elected officials, participated in civil disobedience on Yale campus.[84] A week later, on December 17, 1996, a settlement was reached.[85] Six hundred jobs that Yale had wanted to contract out remained intact, they received "good raises," and there was no increase in the cost of health insurance for workers or retirees.[86] The role of the grass-roots organizing, the support of the

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[80] Andrea Cole, "How Yale Workers Defied Union Busting," *Dollars and Sense*, Sept/Oct 1998, Number 219, 22.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 23.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., 24.

community, and the public exposure all helped the unions to win. The union campaign helped the people in the community to understand the impact that Yale's policies have on New Haven's neighborhoods.[87]

The role that Yale plays in the community is analyzed by Rick Wolff, University of Massachusetts-Amherst economist and Yale PhD recipient, 1969. He puts forward a theory of why Yale behaves aggressively towards its work force. In his essay, which was written on the occasion of the 1996 strike by non-faculty staff, we get a picture of a University that follows a model of management that is characterized by changes from above and a narrow focus on the bottom line.[88] Yale's claim, summarized by Wolff, "that it 'needs' to save money by gaining the contractual right to replace current unionized workers by outsourcing, hiring temporary labor, or otherwise obtaining lower-paid employees…" is suspect.[89] This, Wilhelm reminds us, is an institution that had its endowment increase from $1.1 billion in 1984 to over $5 billion by the time of his writing in 1996.[90] By late 1997 Yale's endowment was $5.8 billion, "third highest among American universities after Harvard and the University of Texas."[91] By Spring 2003 Yale's endowment would surpass $10 billion. The question that is begged for is this: If Yale is so rich, then why be so tough on their employees? Wolff portrays the outcome of Yale's policies in stark, yet familiar, terms as he explains:

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[87] Cole, "How Yale Workers Defied Union Busting," 23.

[88] Rick Wolff, "Why Provoke This Strike? Yale and the U.S. Economy," *Will Teach for Food,* edited by Cary Nelson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 124-128.

[89] Ibid., 124.

[90] Wilhelm, 40.

[91] Karen W. Arenson, "Rejuvenated Yale Marks Bountiful Fund Drive," *The New York Times*, October 6, 1997, Section B, 4.

> [it is Yale's broader market strategy to take] …full advantage of hard economic times, not merely by lowering workers' wages but by taking full advantage of Yale's economic and political power in the community while remaining indifferent to any damage these maneuvers create. For example, the reduced wages Yale seeks to achieve through the 1996 strike will further collapse the economy of New Haven. This will worsen an already extremely tense and often violent environment… At the same time, Yale continues to refuse to make tax payments or otherwise compensate New Haven for the vast properties it takes off the tax rolls. This leaves New Haven with the highest property taxes of all 169 towns in the state of Connecticut.[92]

The responsibility of Yale with regard to local taxes has been a long-running conflict. It is estimated by members of the New Haven Revenue Commission that New Haven loses $60 million per year in tax revenue that Yale might be charged.[93] Yale benefits from New Haven services. For example, New Haven pays $100,000 per year to clean the streets bordering Yale.[94] Cornell, by contrast, pays for its own street cleaning.[95] These practices further erodes the tax revenue for New Haven, thus leaving less for city services at just the time when it is needed more.

Yale President Richard C. Levin has responded to the claim that Yale is taking advantage of New Haven by saying, "The very idea that we would want to pauperize New Haven, it's completely contrary to everything we're doing… It's not credible on its face."[96] This somewhat familiar cycle of urban decay would seem to go against Yale's own interest, however, Wolff finds a perverse logic to Yale's relationship to this once-vibrant industrial city:

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[92] Wolff, 126.

[93] Francis Engler, *Yale Daily News*, October 3, 1995, www.yaledailynews.com.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Greenhouse, "In Ivy League, Yale is Leader in Labor Unrest," *New York Times*, April 4, 1996, B6.

> The mass of the poor will be made to leave as jobs, decent public education, government supports, and affordable housing disappear. The remaining portions of downtown not already owned by Yale will be bought or converted into a colony of businesses catering to Yale students, employees, and one another (banks, architects, accountants, lawyers, restaurants and bars, boutiques, etc.). The residential neighborhoods will be "renewed" to house the workers who staff Yale, local governments, the utilities, and the colonized businesses listed above.[97]

The city politicians strapped for cash will be grateful for the one-shot revenue gained from the purchase by Yale of local properties, now depressed in value.

Yale's policies and practices with its labor unions and with the town of New Haven, as outlined here, has also helped to forge a united opposition. As a more than three decade observer of Yale, Wilhelm views the "structure and style of the institution…[to be] certainly not fundamentally democratic."[98] He argues that it is unsettling to the administration for those with the least status to come and say to them that they want to talk about the conditions under which they work.[99]

Wilhelm expresses hope, however, because the Yale employees are viewing the struggle not as a business deal, but "as a struggle for justice, as a movement."[100] He says,

> Where else in America do you see a scene like you would have seen at Yale in February 1996 if you were in the Methodist church across from the intersection where the union offices are? On the first floor was the membership meeting of Local 35 – blacks, whites, young people, old people, men, women all talking about how to deal with the latest challenge from Yale. On the second floor, members of Local 34, clerical and technical workers, were talking about dealing with the challenge from Yale. On the third floor, graduate students and undergraduate students – a

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[97] Wolff, 126-7.

[98] Wilhelm, 40.

[99] Ibid., 40-41.

[100] Ibid., 42.

> whole bunch of undergraduate students – were calling alumni, talking about what a mess Yale had become.[101]

It is in this confluence of struggles that the graduate student employee organizing has flourished. Their struggle has unfolded in a context that includes the continuing labor struggles at Yale, and the conflicts between Yale and the city of New Haven which are themselves tied to national trends that have impacted urban populations adversely, as described in Chapter One, above.

GESO

The graduate student employees have material interests at stake in their conflict with Yale, but they also have put their case forward as a conflict over values. The case of Yale GESO exemplifies the key obstacles that graduate student employees face, especially in the private universities. It also presents us with some examples of some successful alliances, as well as instances where alliances were lacking and where potential allies turned into opposition.

Graduate Student union organizing attempts occurred at Yale as early as 1972, and although they were not successful at gaining collective bargaining status, they did win some concessions from the Administration.[102] In the early 1980's graduate students who were unhappy with the low wages and "inequitable job classifications" formed a

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[101] Wilhelm, 43.

[102] Lanzerotti, et al, ed., *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, published by The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, circa Fall 1994.

group called T.A. Solidarity.[103] This group pursued official channels for several years with only limited success.[104]

In 1988, the Prown Committee, commissioned by the administration of Yale President Schmidt, made recommendations which resulted in policy adoptions, which included plans to cut the TA budget by 25% over three years, teaching restrictions for fifth year students, and a six-year registration cut-off. According to Michele Janette and Tamara Joseph, writing in 1994 as team leader and Chair of GESO, respectively, "These changes were ostensibly designed to help graduate students to complete their degrees more quickly, but were informed by a desire to lead a national trend in the nature of graduate study and by a view of graduate students as mercenery malingerers."[105] The graduate student concerns about employment and academic issues were "exacerbated" by these actions and their mobilization was spurred on by these policies.[106]

The Graduate Employees and Students Organization (GESO) was formed out of T.A. Solidarity in the fall of 1990 when its members voted to unionize and to affiliate with Locals 34 and 35 of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE).[107] By the end of April of 1991, "over 1200 students had signed a pledge

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[103] Lanzerotti, et al, *Directory of Graduate Student Employee Bargaining Agents and Organizations*, published by The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, circa Fall 1994.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Michele Janette and Tamara Joseph, "Making it Work: Scholarship, Employment, and Power in the Academy," in *Higher Education Collective Bargaining During a Period of Change*, Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Conference of *The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions* - Baruch College, City University of New York, April 1994.

[106] Lanzerotti, et al.

[107] Ibid.

stating that they wanted GESO to represent them as a union."[108] Their members consisted of Humanities and Social Science graduate students, and not students from the natural sciences who "receive financial aid from outside grants, instead of being paid by Yale."[109]

In April 1991, the Graduate-Professional Student Senate's Committee on Graduate Student Life published a report which examined the effects and implications of what was the recent policy changes in the Graduate School under the Kagan-Pollitt plan.[110] The Kagan-Pollitt plan was put forward as a means of implementing the recommendations of the earlier Prown Committee report, however, according to the Student-Senate's report, the Kagan-Pollitt plan fell short of those recommendations on many important issues.[111] The Student-Senate report argued that if Yale is so concerned about the time that graduate students take to complete their dissertations, that they "must seriously discuss raising teaching salaries" which the Prown Commission report had suggested.[112] Without these raises, the report argued, the Kagan-Pollitt plan posed "a threat to the teaching program at Yale."[113] On top of this, the new policy created a great deal of anxiety for seventh-year students who were concerned that they would be cut off

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[108] Lanzerotti, et al.

[109] By The New York Times, "Yale Group Is Seeking Recognition As a Union," *The New York Times*, April 2, 1995, 42.

[110] GESO newsletter, "Senate Committee Reports on Pollitt Plan, Unionization," *The GESO Voice*, April 1991.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

from registration.[114] A memo from Spring 1990 from Dean Pollitt to department chairs insisted that "'there will be no immediate change in our existing procedures' for extending registration," in recognition that advanced students embarked on their course of study with different expectations and planned their time at Yale with that time-frame in mind.[115] Nevertheless, in Spring of 1991, Associate Dean Debra Thomas reportedly stated that, as of the Fall 1991 semester, extensions would be granted "on a case-by-case basis to students with special reasons (such as serious illness) for 'delay' in the completion of their degrees."[116]

When the Fall 1991 semester began, "dozens of students in their seventh year were not allowed to register… and a second wave of TA budget cuts resulted in overcrowded classes and left some TAs without a job."[117] These actions by the Yale administration, along with the soon-to-be released plan of the Committee on the Restructuring of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences which proposed the cutback of programs and faculty (discussed above), served to add to the sense of crisis at Yale during Schmidt's tenure as President. It was in this climate that support for GESO grew emphatically.

Through the early 1990's GESO had intermittent actions to draw attention to Yale's refusal to recognize them as a union. On December 4, 1991 they staged a one-day

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[114] GESO newsletter, "Senate Committee Reports on Pollitt Plan, Unionization," *The GESO Voice*, April 1991.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Lanzerotti, et al

strike.[118] It forced postponement of dozens of undergraduate classes and shut down most of the dining halls at Yale.[119] They were joined by other union members, including "maintenance workers, custodians, clerical and food service workers."[120] There were reportedly 2500 people picketing at the height of the protest. In addition to their call for union recognition, they also demanded larger stipends for TAs, lower health care fees, and a grievance procedure system similar to full-time employees.[121] The Rev. Jesse Jackson spoke at their rally in the afternoon. Yale spokeswoman, Martha Matzke said in response that Yale has increased funding for graduate students stipends and fellowships by 16.4 percent that year.[122]

On February 17 1992, GESO, which represented at this point approximately 1,300 of 2,200 graduate students, began a three-day strike, and the members of Locals 34 and 35, having just reached contract agreements with the Yale, agreed to honor the picket lines of the graduate students.[123] GESO was demanding recognition, a formal grievance procedure, better salaries for TAs, and an "easing of new time limits for completing Ph.D. requirements."[124] The administration, while paying some mind to the legitimacy of student complaints and offering to work on these issues, continued to be adamant about

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[118] Denise Lavoie, "Graduate Teaching Assistants Strike at Yale, Two Unions Join In," *The Associated Press,* December 4, 1991, Domestic News.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Staff, "Yale Workers Reach Contracts, But Honor Grad Student Pickets," *The Associated Press*, February 17, 1992, Domestic News.

[124] Ibid.

not recognizing GESO as a collective bargaining agent. Given the support of the union members from the other unions on campus, "Yale President Benno C. Schmidt said it was unfortunate employees were being asked by union leaders to sacrifice three days' pay for 'a cause that really has nothing to do with unions.'"[125] His policy was that he would agree to meet with graduate students as individuals to discuss their concerns, but he refused to meet with them as union representatives.[126] On Monday, by the university's count, approximately 49 percent of union employees at Yale did not report to work in solidarity with the graduate student employees. Tuesday saw 44 percent of the university union employees continue the show of solidarity.[127] On Wednesday, the GESO suspended the strike and pledged to continue the fight for union recognition.[128]

After a period of transition and gestation, on April 3, 1995 GESO initiated another strike, "without any apparent support from faculty members," who were committed to teaching their classes as usual.[129] In this effort, while Locals 34 and 35 expressed support for the strikers, they also agreed not to walk out themselves.[130] Yale President Richard Levin affirmed the position that Yale would "unequivocally never

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[125] Larry Rosenthal, "Grad Students Strike At Yale; Unions Honor Pickets," *The Associated Press*, February 17, 1992, Domestic News.

[126] Gordon Lafer, Telephone Interview, March 19, 2003.

[127] Staff, "Union Workers Honor Picket Lines on Grad Student Strike's Second Day," *The Associated Press*, February 18, 1992, Domestic News.

[128] Staff, "Graduate Students End Strike; Pledge to Continue Fight," *The Associated Press*, February 19, 1992, Domestic News.

[129] By The New York Times, "Yale Group Is Seeking Recognition As a Union," *The New York Times*, April 2, 1995, 42.

[130] Ibid.

recognize" a student union.[131] The graduate school dean, Thomas Appelquist asserted that "Graduate students are here as students… [and that their work] is a kind of apprenticeship."[132] In a Feb 27th vote, students approved the one-week strike by 384 – 38.[133] *The New York Times* reports, without giving any precise details, that "many undergraduates blame labor expenses for increases in Yale's tuition bill… and few supported graduate student picket lines in 1990."[134] At this time, there was an election among the graduate students in the humanities and social sciences, which was conducted by the League of Women Voters, for representation. A majority of those students who voted supported representation, but Yale continued to reject GESO's call for recognition.[135]

In late 1995, however, GESO escalated their action and placed the issue of graduate student employee unionism more prominently in the national news. The bold and controversial action -- a grade strike -- caused everyone in academia to take notice. On Thursday night, December 7th 1995, about 400 Yale TAs voted to withhold grades from undergraduate papers and tests.[136] Yale officials made clear that they would not tolerate a grade strike, and left open the possibility of expulsion of those TAs who

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[131] By The New York Times, "Yale Group Is Seeking Recognition As a Union," *The New York Times*, April 2, 1995, 42.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Yale University *and* Graduate Employees and Students Organization, 330 NLRB No. 28, Case 34-CA-7347, November 29, 1999, p. 254.

[136] Diane Lewis, "Assistants at Yale seek to organize," *The Boston Globe*, December 9, 1995, 68.

withheld grades.[137] They also threatened that graduate students taking part in the strike could be affected in terms of their evaluations and their teaching appointments for the spring semester. [138] The graduate students receive almost $10,000 for two semesters of undergraduate teaching and "90 percent of them receive fellowships for full Yale tuition."[139] Whereas professors teach the smaller courses, the graduate student employees teach the discussion sections and are responsible for grading students enrolled in the large lecture courses.[140] GESO had threatened a full strike for the Spring semester, and leaders of Local 34 and 35 said they would honor any picket line that GESO set up.[141] Davidson Goldin of *The New York Times* reported that there seemed to be little support for the grade strike among undergraduates on campus who were studying for final exams. He also cited the chairwoman of the art history department, Mary Miller, as reportedly saying that those "from her department who participated in the grade strike would probably not be hired again as teaching assistants."[142]

One professor of Political Science at Yale, Steven B. Smith, sent a letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, which said, in part:

> At a time when real workers find their wages cut and their jobs in jeopardy, most faculty members at Yale, like myself, find it hard to imagine that students receiving this range of benefits can consider

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[137] Davidson Goldin, "Yale Teaching Assistants Vote for a Grade Strike," *The New York Times*, December 13, 1995, Section B, 16.

[138] George Judson, "Yale Aides Withhold Grades In Bid to Lift Union's Profile," *The New York Times*, January 3, 1996, Section B, 6.

[139] Goldin, *The New York Times*, December 13, 1995, Section B, 16.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid.

> themselves exploited laborers who require a union in collective bargaining.[143]

The graduate student employees might take issue with this characterization of them as being "unreal" workers.

Three graduate students, Cynthia Young, Diana Paton, and Buju Dasgupta, faced disciplinary charges when they were accused by Yale of "giving undergraduate test papers to union organizers to prevent professors from grading them."[144] Yale spokesperson Thomas Conroy, firmly asserted the often-stated Yale position that "they are students, not employees."[145] President Levin set a deadline, Tuesday January 9, 1996, for those graduate students who teach their own classes, after which if the Registrar did not receive the course grades that the offer of a teaching appointment for the coming term would be withdrawn.[146]

GESO was successful in mobilizing support from faculty members throughout the country who participated in a letter-writing campaign to Yale's president, Richard C. Levin. The focus of this campaign was to protect the striking TAs from reprisal. The Modern Language Association, in a meeting of their Delegate Assembly, approved a resolution to "censure" Yale…

> …for permitting the use of union activity as a criterion for academic evaluations and for failing to protect the right of Yale's graduate teaching

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[143] Letter to the Editor, "Yale Doesn't Exploit Its Graduate Students," *The New York Times*, December 26, 1995, Section A, 20.

[144] Staff, "Three Face Sanctions in Yale 'Grade Strike,'" *The Times-Picayune*, December 28, 1995, A3.

[145] George Judson, "Yale Aides Withhold Grades In Bid to Lift Union's Profile," *The New York Times*, January 3, 1996, Section B, 6.

[146] President's letter reprinted as attachment in Modern Language Association's "Letter to members", February 9, 1996.

> staff to participate in union activities, including job actions, without fear of reprisal against their academic careers.[147]

Along with the resolution censuring Yale, the MLA also provided letters of response by four Yale faculty members from the English Department, as well as a letter from the Office of the President at Yale signed by President Levin, Provost Alison Richard, and Deans Appelquist and Brodhead. In their responses, they all asserted that the withholding of grades is an infringement of teaching responsibility, not an expression of free speech. The President's letter states that it "constitutes a serious dereliction of the responsibilities graduate students assumed when they accepted their teaching opportunities." Among the faculty, they noted that the Yale College faculty voted overwhelmingly just prior to Christmas to condemn the threatened grade strike. Annabel Patterson, Professor of English at Yale, writes that of 170 persons at that faculty meeting, only about a half dozen voiced an opposition to supporting President Levin's policy of refusing to recognize GESO. Another English Department Professor, Margaret Homans, wrote in her letter that she objected to the accusation that faculty members who "mention such activities [i.e., union activities] in recommendation letters …[are engaging in] 'academic reprisal,'" as suggested by the MLA resolution. She writes, "I would see it as a violation of my own academic freedom to be prevented from alluding to the judgment and ethics exhibited by a student while engaged in university activities if I thought they were predictive of a student's future behavior as a colleague."

The Boston Globe ran an editorial which compared the undergraduates to hostages and GESO's demands for recognition as tantamount to a ransom.[148] The editorial

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[147] Modern Language Association, "Letter to members" by Sandra M. Gilbert, President, and Phyllis Franklin, Executive Director, February 9, 1996.

acknowledges that there may be some merit to the demand for a "real contract between the university and it's teaching assistants," as opposed to the promises of closer ties made years earlier which never materialized. But it goes on to say that "wreaking havoc on the careers of innocent undergraduates" is inexcusable. The writer also points out that it is no coincidence that GESO's move came when it did since the contract for Yale's unions (Local 34 and 35) expires at the end of the month (January 1996), and that these unions played a role in financing GESO.

Alice Dembner reports in *The Boston Globe* that about 50 undergraduates have pressed Yale to negotiate, while others – seniors applying to graduate school – complained that incomplete transcripts might hurt their chances.[149] While 27 students faced losing their teaching jobs, three others (named above) were charged with "harassment, disruption of the university and defying orders," and they faced expulsion.[150] Cynthia Young, one of the three, said that they were named because they were union leaders.[151] She claims that "well over 200 teaching assistants are doing the same thing," and that she did not think that her student status should be affected because of action that she took as a worker.[152] Yale spokesman Thomas Conroy, however, affirmed Yale's position and said, "There's no union to recognize because there are no

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[148] Editorial, "The degrading of Yale students," *The Boston Globe*, January 7, 1996, 32.

[149] Alice Dembner, "Union drive erupts at Yale; Graduate students could be expelled," *The Boston Globe*, January 10, 1996, Metro/Region, 17.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

employees to recognize… The graduate students are receiving everything the university guaranteed to them when they accepted admittance to Yale."[153]

When the disciplinary hearings began, union members from Locals 34 and 35 and graduate students engaged in a peaceful protest outside the Hall of Graduate Students.[154] The non-faculty union members also were concerned about the pending expiration of their contract, as noted above. Approximately 300 – 500 persons participated in the rally, and 138 were arrested for refusing a police order to vacate an intersection. They were charged with creating a public disturbance.[155] At this time, a spokesman for Yale, Gary G. Fryer, said that they had not received grades from 87 of 439 teaching assistants in the humanities and social sciences.[156] The "student group" (the press seems to avoid referring to them as GESO), however, claimed that nearly 200 teaching assistants were participating in the strike.[157]

On January 15, 1996 GESO ended the grade strike. Gordon Lafer, research director for the Federation of University Employees at Yale, said "We were met by a level of reprisals that nobody expected, and we thought it was irresponsible to put all of our membership in the position of losing all of their income for the spring semester. For quite a lot of people that would have meant leaving New Haven."[158] However, GESO

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[153] Dembner, "Union drive erupts at Yale; Graduate students could be expelled," *The Boston Globe*, January 10, 1996, Metro/Region, 17.

[154] George Judson, "Yale's Labor Woes, In and Out of Class," *The New York Times*, January 11, 1996, Section B, 1.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Reported by George Judson, "On Deadline, Yale Students End a Strike," *The New York Times*, January 16, 1996, B1.

filed an unfair-labor-practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board, which has proved to be significant. Yale's response to the end of the strike was voiced by Dean Richard Brodhead, who said, "I very much hope that we can now get down to the business of reconsidering the many issues of graduate education and building a more fruitful structure of dialogue."[159] This approach had been tried before, and its failure was one of the reasons the GESO initiated the grade strike. Following this, a graduate student government was formed, which is the favored medium of the Administration for discussion of graduate student employee issues.

In November 1996, the NLRB General Counsel determined that Yale teaching assistants are employees under federal law and have full rights to collective bargaining.[160] He issued a complaint charging Yale University – the administration and sixteen faculty members – with violating federal labor law. The charge alleged that they intimidated and attempted to coerce the participants of the previous winter's grade strike by threatening them with reprisals which included a ban on future teaching, academic discipline, negative letters of recommendation, and expulsion. David Montgomery, the noted Yale professor of labor history, said of the decision, "We are witnessing labor history in the making…. Universities across the country have come to rely more and more on both teaching assistants and adjunct professors as part-time workers carrying out more and more of the teaching responsibilities. This decision puts the protection of the law

[159] Judson, "On Deadline, Yale Students End a Strike," B4.

[160] Gordon Lafer, Press Release, Federation of University Employees at Yale, November 19, 1996.

securely behind their efforts to improve their conditions and that should improve the security of everyone in the academy."[161]

After the decision of the General Counsel, the case went to trial before Administrative Law Judge Michael Miller. The trial took place in New Haven. To represent them in the case, Yale hired Proskauer, Rose, Goetz and Mendelson, a notorious anti-labor law firm based in New York. As a tactical move, Yale attorneys acknowledged, for the time being, the General Counsel's determination that Yale graduate students are employees. This allowed them to argue that the strike was not protected because it was only a "partial" strike, which is not protected under the NLRA. Thus, if they had engaged in a complete work stoppage, then this would not be an issue. However, between December 7, 1995, when the strike vote was taken, and January 2, 1996, the original grade-submission deadline date, most of the teaching fellows "continued to perform job-related duties, including meeting discussion sessions, proctoring exams, and grading student materials."[162] Even after January 2nd, some of them wrote letters of evaluation and recommendation for their students. Given these circumstances, Judge Miller issued a decision on August 6, 1997 in which he concurred with Yale's position that this was an unprotected partial strike and that the striking graduate teaching employees were withholding the University's property (i.e., the tests and grades), and determined that the Unfair Labor Practice charges were not valid. However, he did not overturn the determination of the General Counsel that they are "employees." This would continue to be the prime issue.

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[161] Gordon Lafer, Press Release, Federation of University Employees at Yale, November 19, 1996.

[162] *Yale University and Graduate Employees and Students Organization*, 330 NLRB No. 28, Case 34-CA-7347, November 29, 1999, 247.

On November 26, 1999, the NLRB came to a decision on a related matter that affected Yale and all of the other private college graduate employee organizing efforts. This case involved Boston Medical Center, the employer, and House Officers' Association/Committee of Interns and Residents, the petitioner.[163] Without getting into the details of this case, suffice it to say that the long-time governing NLRB precedents, *Cedars-Sinai Medical Center*[164] and *St. Clare's Hospital and Health Center*[165] which had established that those who are "primarily" students were not employees under Section 2(3) of the NLRA, were overturned. The hospital house staff were therefore considered to be employees and, thus, by law entitled to collective bargaining rights. This important precedent-setting decision opened the door for graduate student teaching and research employees.

Just a few days later, on November 29, 1999 another decision came down from the NLRB. The General Counsel and GESO filed an exception to the decision by Judge Miller. This time, a three-member panel of the NLRB heard the case. They affirmed Miller's findings regarding the partial strike. However, they disagreed with his finding that the allegations by the General Counsel regarding five specific threats made by faculty and administrators were not in violation of the NLRA because the grade strike was partial, and, thus, unprotected. The NLRB thought otherwise. They agreed that the first statement, a letter from Deans Applequist and Brodhead, was limited to the grade strike, and, thus, not a violation of the NLRA. The other statements, however, by the

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[163] *Boston Medical Center Corporation and House Officers' Association/Committee of Interns and Residents, Petitioner*, Case 1-RC—20574, 330 NLRB No 30, November 26, 1999.

[164] *Cedars-Sinai Medical Center*, 223 NLRB 251, 1976.

[165] *St. Clare's Hospital and Health Center*, 229 NLRB 1000, 1977.

French Department's faculty, members, and Director of Graduate Studies, as well as a statement by Professor Brad Westerfield, "encompassed more than just a grade strike," according to the decision, which continued as follows:

> Thus, both the second and third statements [i.e., French Dept faculty and members] broadly declared that a union is not appropriate in academe. The fourth statement [i.e., Director of Graduate Studies] is not limited to the grade strike because it referred to the "[f]ailure to perform *any* aspect of a graduate teaching assignment" as providing grounds for negative evaluations and loss of teaching opportunities… The final statement [i.e., Professor Westerfield] condemned strike activity by graduate students "under any circumstances."[166]

Thus, these statements by faculty were violative of the NLRA, they argue, because they were not just concerning the grade strike, but regarding the right to organize a union, in general. They constituted "overbroad threats."[167] The Board sent the case back to Miller to be decided on this count, and they also sought a finding of fact and conclusions of law on the issue of employee status – i.e., are they employees or students.

The Yale administration responded to this decision by asserting that even if graduate students are recognized as employees, that they will still have to file an NLRB petition seeking certification. In a letter to the Yale community by Provost Alison Richard dated November 30, 1999, she outlines why unionization would be undesirable. She argues that it would impinge on the "flexibility" of the Graduate School with regard to students' concerns.[168] She asserts that with a union in the mix, students "would have to await the outcome of bargaining of multi-year contracts, possibly delaying… [stipend

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[166] *Yale University and Graduate Employees and Students Organization*, 330 NLRB No. 28, Case 34-CA-7347, November 29, 1999, 249.

[167] Ibid., 250.

[168] "Letter by Provost Alison Richard to the Faculty of the Graduate School, Graduate Students and Undergraduates," November 30, 1999, obtained on January 20, 2000 from http://www.yale.edu/opa/gradschool/gradschool.html.

increases] for long periods and perhaps even years."[169] GESO responded that the claim of "flexibility" is a false one because the system, as is, has "plenty of rules that are binding on graduate students, but none that are binding on the administration," thus, flexibility is a one-way street.[170] A contract would make what has been the result of "administrative fiat" subject, instead, to negotiations.[171]

The Provost also argued that labor issues could possibly interfere with academic considerations. GESO answers this claim by pointing out that "some issues, like wages and benefits, must be negotiated. Other issues, such as housing, can be negotiated if both sides agree. Other issues, such as academic evaluation of students, cannot be covered in a collective bargaining agreement."[172] In addition, they point to a 1999 study of universities with TA union contracts, which "found that over 90% of the faculty felt that the collective bargaining process had no influence on their relationship with their graduate students"[173]

Provost Richard also argued that it would result in a "stream of litigation" on matters of academic policy, create an "adversarial relationship" between students and faculty, and would allow for divisive strikes.[174] As was already pointed out, "academic" policy is not within the purview of the collective bargaining agreement, and an

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[169] "Letter by Provost Alison Richard to the Faculty of the Graduate School, Graduate Students and Undergraduates," November 30, 1999.

[170] "GESO Frequently Asked Questions, Response to Administration," November 30, 1999, obtained on January 20, 2000 from http://www.yale.edu/geso.

[171] Ibid.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Ibid.

[174] "Letter by Provost Alison Richard to the Faculty of the Graduate School, Graduate Students and Undergraduates," November 30, 1999.

adversarial relationship is exactly that – a relationship, where two sides participate. The graduate students have sought unionization because they already have an adversarial relationship. Strikes occur sometimes when this relationship breaks down, and sometimes they are even a legally recognized means for employees to exert leverage on their employers.

Thus, the stage was set for a union certification election on campus, which the Yale administration's by their public statements seemed to assume was the next step. Meanwhile, on March 29, 2000, Yale agreed to a settlement on the Unfair Labor Practice charges, in anticipation, perhaps, of the imminent likelihood of the NLRB's New York Regional Director making a decision in favor of the graduate student organizers in a case regarding the petition of NYU's Graduate Student Organizing Committee (GSOC-UAW Local 2110), the union seeking to represent New York University's graduate student employees. Yale agreed to post notices that clearly affirm the right of all employees to "engage in self-organization; To form, join or assist any union; [and] To bargain collectively through a representative of their own choosing."[175] These notices were posted throughout the campus in "conspicuous places" and maintained for 60 consecutive days.[176] In return, the NLRB withdrew its complaint, and dropped "all charges against Yale based on … statements by faculty members."[177] The settlement did not require Yale to concede that its graduate students who are serving as Teaching Fellows or Part-Time

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[175] Antony Dugdale, "Yale Settles Grad Labor Charges," March 29, 2000, e-mail sent out via geso-list@pantheon.yale.edu, received by cgeu-list@cgeu.org on March 30, 2000.

[176] In the Matter of: Yale University, Case No: 34-CA-7347, National Labor Relations Board Settlement Agreement, March 29, 2000.

[177] Letter by Provost Alison Richard to Faculty and Students of the Graduate School, March 29, 2000.

Acting Instructors are employees under the NLRA.[178] Thus, Yale was able to get the unfair labor practice charges dropped, and perhaps prevent further public embarrassment.

Subsequently, the favorable decision that was issued regarding the petition by NYU's GSOC-UAW was reversed in the *Brown* decision of 2004, which was a great setback to graduate employee union organizing efforts on all of the private campuses. This decision will be briefly reviewed below. What is most relevant, however, for purposes of this study is that the strategies and tactics by the activists of GESO politicized the issues facing graduate teaching employees and, for a time, kept the public spotlight focused on these issues, thus contributing to the growth of solidarity and to a national awareness regarding the changing shape of higher education.

As the media focused on the decisions of the NLRB during these conflicts, GESO used the glare of publicity to their advantage. While waiting for the decision regarding the unfair labor practice charges, GESO released a study in Spring of 1999 entitled *Casual in Blue: Yale and the Academic Labor Market*. It received a lot of media attention, including articles in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*[179] and in *The New York Times*.[180] The report highlighted the gradual increase in teaching responsibilities from full-time faculty to part-time faculty and graduate TAs, and it argued that this

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[178] In the Matter of: Yale University, Case No: 34-CA-7347, National Labor Relations Board Settlement Agreement, March 29, 2000.

[179] Robin Wilson, "Yale Relies on TAs and Adjuncts for Teaching, Report Says," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 9, 1999, A15.

[180] Karen W. Arenson, "Staff on Tenure Track Is Teaching Less at Yale, a Study Says," *The New York Times*, March 30, 1999, B4.

casualization of teaching undermines the quality of education, diminishes faculty governance, and creates a crisis in the job market.[181]

In the report, they measure teaching by three different methods: the official listed name of the instructor; the actual contact hours with students; and by who grades the students essays, exams, homework, and assignments.

The first method is the preferred method of the Yale Administration. The course is taught by the faculty name formally attached to it. By this method, 9 per cent of the courses are taught by graduate students as primary instructors.

In the second method, teaching is measured by assessing the number of "contact hours" with students. This reveals who spends time instructing in a lab, giving a lecture, leading a discussion session, etc. It is the direct interaction with students that counts in this method. The report finds that "graduate teachers spend more time instructing Yale undergraduates than [do] ladder faculty." Further, it contends that approximately 70 per cent of undergraduate teaching at Yale is done by "teachers employed on a non-permanent basis." In the Language departments, 81 per cent of the teaching is done by casual academic labor. More than 50 per cent of the teaching contact hours is performed by adjunct lecturers and instructors, and, in addition, 30 per cent is performed by graduate teachers. In the Sciences, graduate teaching is relied upon even more extensively. Over 65 per cent of the contact hours in these course are performed by graduate teachers, often as supervisors of undergraduate labs, but, also, in front of the lab or classroom where they spend about three times as many hours as ladder faculty.

The third method examined in *Casual in Blue*, titled the "Art and Science of Grading," is not as thoroughly researched, GESO argues in the report, because "Yale has

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[181] GESO, *Casual in Blue: Yale and the Academic Labor Market*. 2.

refused publicly" to release the raw data. Instead, they sampled two largely enrolled undergraduate departments, History and Chemistry, and concluded that the History graduate teachers graded 90 per cent of the work and the Chemistry graduate teachers graded 96 per cent of the work.

The Yale Administration defended their position by reportedly arguing that the "report exaggerates the role of graduate students in teaching by combining courses they teach with those offered by adjunct instructors."[182] Obviously, this is a detail offered in the report and carefully spelled out by category in the second method of analysis, as noted above. In addition, the Yale spokesperson, Tom Conroy, is reported to have said that only 10 per cent of the approximately 2000 courses offered each year at Yale are led by graduate students.[183] Again, this is a detail offered in the report and explained through the first method of analysis, as noted above. Finally, in a "Letter to Members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Students in the Graduate School and Yale College," Provost Alison Richard responds to *Casual in Blue* as follows:

> In one popular history course, for example, an undergraduate attends two hours of lectures given by a faculty member each week, and a third meeting in which the full class is broken up into eight different discussion sections, each led by a graduate student teaching fellow. From the undergraduate's perspective, two-thirds of classroom time is spent with the professor, and one third is spent in a section.[184]

Anecdotes aside, the Yale administration did not respond with a counter-report to the overall data presented by GESO.

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[182] Robin Wilson, "Yale Relies on TAs and Adjuncts for Teaching, Report Says," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 9, 1999, A15.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Provost Alison Richard, "Letter to Members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Students in the Graduate School and Yale College," April 14, 1999.

By keeping the issue in the spotlight with the release of *Casual in Blue*, GESO has helped to shape the debate as not simply one of a few graduate students who are unhappy about their working conditions, but rather it casts it as an issue that faces all of those who are involved with higher education. It portrays the issue as a crisis of academic labor which has repercussions for undergraduates, and for the state of higher education, as well. In this way, they have helped to widen the scope of the conflict, and to pave the way for broader alliances.

In this way, *Casual in Blue* helps to deflect one of the more obvious criticisms of the graduate student union organizing efforts. That is, that they are among the most privileged students in the country – the "blessed of the earth" as Yale humanities professor Peter Brooks called them. Why should anyone get excited about their efforts to unionize? Why should we think of them in the same way as we think of garment workers, or cafeteria workers, or maintenance staff?

Antony Dugdale, a GESO leader, calls it Yale's "dirty little secret" that there is a contradiction at Yale that is mediated by the use of graduate teaching assistants.[185] The contradiction is between the way that Yale attracts top faculty by promising them a reduced teaching load, frequent sabbaticals, and a focus primarily on research versus the public image of Yale where its undergraduates work closely with star professors of international renown. Dugdale writes, "We lead the sections, staff the labs, and above all do the grading for the vast bulk of undergraduate courses, allowing the professors to give a lecture or two a week and be done with it."[186]

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[185] Antony Dugdale, "Union organizing in the Ivy League," www.workplace-gsc.com/workplace2-1

[186] Ibid.

Kathy M. Newman, a former leader of GESO, concurs with this view and she explains how it is in the University's interest to live with this contradiction:

> Graduate students are often gifted and dedicated teachers, but their teaching experience in graduate school, even when combined with their Ph.D., will not guarantee them an academic job – or any other kind of job.
>
> Administrators cannot admit this to the public, to the graduate students they recruit, and perhaps not even to themselves. In a downsizing economy, their job is to cut at the margins, and graduate students are an easy target. The number of students applying to graduate school increases every year and so do universities teaching needs, making graduate students vulnerable to financial cutbacks… When graduate students vie for more power by forming unions, the easiest counter for administrators is to claim that graduate students want to form unions simply because they are monstrously privileged social misfits -- a view that popular culture will corroborate.[187]

Since they get free tuition, some stipend support, along with a degree, the argument is that they have no right to complain.[188] The graduate student activists have complained, and taken a lot of heat for it, but they have also contributed to the burgeoning national debate over academic labor and higher education politics.

Thus, it is not just the conditions of work that makes the graduate student activists dissatisfied and ready to organize. Looming over their heads are the gloomy prospects for future work in academia. On June 10, 1999, the debate over this issue spilled over onto the pages of *The New York Review of Books*. C. Vann Woodward, the noted historian, wrote a letter to the editor criticizing Andrew Hacker's review ("Who's Sticking to the Union?" *The New York Review of Books,* February, 18 1999) which supported the union's claims. Hacker, a Queens College Political Science Professor, pointed out that rather than graduate students getting teaching jobs as part of their

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[187] Kathy Newman, "Poor, Hungry, and Desperate? or, Privileged, Histrionic, and Demanding? In Search of the True Meaning of 'Ph.D.,'" *Will Teach for Food,* edited by Cary Nelson, with a foreword by Barbara Ehrenreich (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 93.

training, they often get jobs "in fields removed from their sphere of research. These assignments are not for their benefits, but occur because the university needs bodies. (Yale's economics department has even recruited teaching assistants from the school of forestry)." Woodward argues that to consider graduate student teachers as "employees" would be a "disastrous revolution in basic relations between students and faculty in the training of professional scholars and academics for the future. It transforms trainee into hireling and trainer into manager or boss for employers." He acknowledges that labor unions have legitimate reasons to organize, but he does not view graduate students who teach as having the same rights. He argues that "the tight job market is the main problem facing present-day graduate students, one where unions are no help." This last assumption is a central point of dispute, and the graduate student activists clearly disagree with Woodward's claim.

As the debate expands, and the issues become more politicized, the scope of understanding grows as well. How much of the graduate student employees' dissatisfaction is due to an understanding of these broader trends within academic labor, i.e., casualization, downsizing, tiering, inequality, and the other changes in work that accompany the processes of globalization? If the tactics they employed are any indication, then we can surmise that their understanding grew as their activism advanced. One can infer from their practices, such as their strong alliance with Locals 34 and 35, that they did develop an understanding of the broader implications of this struggle. Newman points out that they shifted their focus between the 1991-92 campaign and the 1995-96 campaign. In the earlier actions, they focused on their role as consumers,

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[188] Newman, 97.

whereas in the 1995 strike they focused on their role as teachers.[189] While this made it harder for them to gain the level of support among undergraduates and faculty that they had in 1991-92, it allowed them to strengthen their alliances with other employees on campus.[190] In this way, they found a way to explain themselves to "the outside world" in a way that could be better understood.[191]

One of the lead organizers of the 1995 grade strike, Corey Robin, suggests that the broader understanding of higher education politics was not explicit, at first, but that it evolved as the struggle developed.[192] The initial impetus to union organizing for many of the graduate students employees was related to their feelings of anger at their low-regarded status at Yale, as well as feelings of outrage over the hypocrisy of Yale with regard to its public posture versus the actual way that they treated their graduate students. Gradually, most of the graduate student activists realized that their struggle was tied to a larger trend towards a tiered work force, which has also characterized other sectors of the economy, including the steel industry, Wall Street, and public employment, to name a few. At CUNY, we have seen that there was a similar shift in the understanding of the organizers that became clear in the campaigns against the corporatization of the university and with the emergence of the New Caucus.

Labor organizing at Yale has many lessons for us. The local organizing by the graduate students, at first weak and ineffective through the 1980s, became more forceful once they began to pursue collective bargaining rights, and once they allied themselves

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[189] Newman, 113.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid.

[192] E-mail correspondence with author, April 24, 2000.

with Locals 34 and 35 under the umbrella of the Federation of Labor Unions at Yale. The strong ties that the Federation has made with the community of New Haven has been crucial to the successes that they have had. As noted above, the rolling strikes of 1996 brought with them a community education project by the unions that helped the people of New Haven to understand the role of Yale in their community. And the demonstrations attracted clergy, civil rights leaders, and local elected officials. The graduate students found natural allies in other groups of workers. The Yale administration seemed to recognized this too, given that much of their criticism was directed at disparaging and distorting the notion that being a part of a union that nominally protects restaurant workers (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, [HERE] - the parent organization of GESO) was somehow inappropriate for an academic setting.

The general hypothesis of this study is that labor success depends largely on political mobilization and not just apoliticized market forces. The 1995 grade strike and the subsequent conflict at Yale confirms this hypothesis in several ways. The graduate students there were able to form an organization that could mobilize the work force, and they developed strategic alliances that clearly helped them to have more leverage. They still encountered much student and faculty opposition including opposition from many lifelong leftists. This is where they have been weakest. Additionally, the local political and economic conditions have shaped the conflict in unique ways, especially the role of Yale's position in relation to the New Haven community. In terms of the broader levels to the conflict, the fact that Yale is a private institution, and thus subject to the NLRB as opposed to state public employee laws placed the conflict more squarely within the national political debate over graduate students' status as “employees” versus their being

defined as "students." This has been a factor that goes beyond the campus gates of Yale and has had a significant impact in encouraging graduate teaching assistants to organize elsewhere. Finally, the experience of graduate students working together with other union locals may have generated a common understanding among them. The vital issue for the graduate students here is whether that understanding will get passed on to the next generation. Given that they have been in the street getting arrested with other unionists from clerical and maintenance unions, as well as leading figures in the local community, then we can infer that there is some common understanding with the New Haven community and with other unions, but the key will be to win the hearts and minds of the other Yale graduate students, and to win over the undergraduates, as well as the full-time faculty.

The tactics and ethics of the dramatic grade strike at Yale can be debated for a long time, but it is certain that it put the issue on the national map and gave energy to a movement that continues to grow. The November 1996 decision by the NLRB general counsel caused a sensation, and it enlarged the scope of the debate. This was a major victory not just for the Yale graduate employees, but for graduate student employees nationwide. It inspired union organizing drives and activism among graduate student employees and part-time faculty throughout the system of higher education in the United States, but the struggle continues.

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

As anticipated, the Graduate Student Organizing Committee (GSOC-UAW) at NYU won the case before the NLRB on October 31, 2000. In that decision the Board

referred to the previous *Boston Medical Center Corporation and the House Officers' Association/Committee of Interns and Residents* case[193] and found that graduate assistants and employees (teaching assistants, graduate assistants, research assistants) "are employees within the meaning of Section 2(3)" of the NLRA.[194] In April 2001, GSOC-UAW won a union election, thus becoming the first recognized union for graduate employees at a private university. Nine months later, in January 2002 they won their first contract , which included full health care coverage, a minimum of 38 percent increase in stipends, overtime compensation, a grievance procedure and more.[195] Things were looking up for graduate employees and there was a buzz of excitement on the private college campuses with organizing efforts taking place at Brown, Yale, Columbia, Tufts, and the University of Pennsylvania, to name a few. However, things would abruptly change.

On July 13, 2004 the NLRB, now dominated by appointees of the Bush Administration, considered a request for review of the NYU decision by Brown University.[196] In this case, the Board reversed the NYU decision concluding that the

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[193] *Boston Medical Center Corporation* and *House Officers' Association/Committee of Interns and Residents, Petitioner*, Case 1-RC—20574, 330 NLRB No. 30, November 26, 1999.

[194] *New York University and International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultureal Implement Worker of American , AFL-CIO, Petitioner*, Case 2-RC-22082, 332 NLRB No. 111, October 31, 2000, 1205

[195] Information derived from GSOC-UAW web site: http://www.2110uaw.org/gsoc/Comparison.htm

[196] *Brown University and International Unioni, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of American, UAW AFL-CIO, Petitioner*, Case 1-RC-21368, 342-NLRB No. 42, July 13, 2004.

NYU decision "was wrongly decided and should be overruled."[197] Interestingly, there was a scathing dissent by Members Liebman and Walsh:

> …the majority has overstepped its authority, overlooked the economic realities of the academic world, and overruled *NYU* without ever coming to terms with the rationale for that decision. The result leaves graduate students outside the Act's protection and without recourse to its mechanisms for resolving labor disputes. The developments that brought graduate students to the Board will not go away, but they will have to be addressed elsewhere, if the majority's decision stands. That result does American universities no favors. We dissent.[198]

History Professor Nelson Lichtenstein concurred with their dissent when he said that "Unionization not only contributes to graduate students' well-being, but helps vitalize humane learning and the democratic ethos. These young men and women should not allow a partisan, parochial NLRB to stanch their organizing efforts."[199] They have followed his advice. The activism has continued.

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[197] *Brown University and International Unioni, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of American, UAW AFL-CIO, Petitioner*, Case 1-RC-21368, 342-NLRB No. 42, July 13, 2004, 483.

[198] Ibid., 500.

[199] Nelson Lichtenstein, "Graduate Eduation is a Seamless Web of Learning and Work, Not Class Warfare," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 6, 2004.

Conclusion: Towards a Seventh Epoch.

This dissertation demonstrates the increasingly complex and intimate relationship between the system of higher education and the structure of power through the ages, and it does so by employing the use of a historical narrative, guided by C. Wright Mills' epochal stages of the power elite. It examines the role of elites, the resistance to their power, and the process by which these struggles are dialectically reproduced in the institutions of higher learning. It articulates a theory of how the corporate university has developed in the sixth epoch and of how the contingent academic labor system has simultaneously emerged and serves to provide legitimation for it. In doing this, this dissertation puts forth an analysis of the role and potential of the "invisible faculty" who occupy that system, including a look at the development of practices and strategies of resistance. Having established a historical and theoretical foundation for the emergence of this class of academics, I then put forth the case studies, which further exemplify the connection between the corporate university and the system of academic labor, and, moreover, indicate some of the ways in which the mobilization of this labor force has worked to resist this system and to protect the rights and livelihood of academic labor, as well as the quality of higher education.

The university is both a site of knowledge production and a site of contention in class conflict. Both the historical narrative and the case studies demonstrate the political foundations for the creation of the contingent academic work force, and dispel the notion that it is simply a matter of economics and budgetary needs, thus sustaining a central hypothesis of this dissertation. Additionally, the case studies each address the *three claims of the sub-hypothesis* of this dissertation and serve to validate them. Firstly, both

at CUNY and at Yale, relatively *democratic labor unions* developed and they acted to mobilize the work force, leading to varying degrees of success. This lends support to the first claim of the sub-hypothesis that democratic labor unions are a necessary component if a strategy is to be successful. The CUNY case, especially, shows how the formational process of the New Caucus, which consisted of conflict, struggle, and a commitment to democratic procedures, led to a vibrant and energetic local movement which gained power in the union and refocused its direction to justly include the interests of the part-time faculty. Likewise, the active involvement of GESO's membership in the strike of 1995, and the participatory process that kept it aroused, though not leading to a legal victory, clearly spurred on a movement among graduate employees, providing ample evidence of the need for democratic processes as a component of success.

There are also numerous examples, in each case, which support the second claim of my sub-hypothesis that there is a significant need for the *development of strategic alliances* with other groups of workers and with community groups if these efforts are to succeed. At CUNY, the PTU's formation through a multiplicity of associations led to significant gains for adjunct faculty, and, later, CUNY Adjuncts Unite! was able to make gains due to their alliance with the full-time faculty in the New Caucus. At Yale, to the extent that GESO was successful, it was because of its strategy of making alliances, most importantly with the other unions at Yale, but also within the local New Haven community. Additionally, GESO gained allies through its politicizing of the conflict and broadening its scope through such forums as the MLA, and through the grade strike itself, which made international headlines and catapulted the movement into a higher state of visibility, gaining numerous nationwide allies in the process.

The case studies also support the third claim of this dissertation's sub-hypothesis that suggests the need for a *shared understanding of conditions and events* that can help to create solidarity and to focus a movement, if it is to be successful. Intellectuals have an uncommon ability to provide analysis, to persuade, and to communicate with others. Both at Yale and at CUNY the struggle came to be understood as encompassing much deeper implications having to do with the generalized crisis of academic labor, as well as with the trend towards the casualization of labor in other sectors of the society. At Yale, GESO's study, *Casual in Blue: Yale and the Academic Labor Market*, speaks to these broader conditions facing academic labor, and the activism of GESO members over time, as noted, came to be influenced by this larger perspective. The biggest problem that they face, given the turnover in their positions, is in conveying this understanding to each new generation of graduate student employees. At CUNY, the framing of the struggle as being a response to the corporatization of higher education – a reasonable analysis made persuasively by the New Caucus in their struggle – helped to generate a feeling that it is "the good fight" being fought, and that more than just the gains of a labor struggle for better working conditions and benefits were at stake – an understanding that only developed fully as the process and experience of activism grew through the struggles of the 1990s against retrenchment, cutbacks, and in defense of remediation.

The cases presented in this dissertation show that democratic labor unions, strong alliances, and a common understanding of conditions and events are important elements that need to be present if academic labor is to succeed at organizing, even though the outcome, at times, seems to have consisted of only meager material gains. The community that emerges through the continuous *process* of struggle, organization, and

conflict constitutes the most fundamental of the gains that have been made. In serving as resistance against the institutional will of elites, the local struggles that build solidarity and community are the basis of an ongoing commitment that cannot be artificially bounded by the temporal limitations of a case study (i.e., the struggle continues). It is in this experience through which a common understanding can emerge, and that process is both a personal one *and* a collective one. Thus, men and women are still social animals.

In following the framework established by Mills and adapted in this dissertation, the obvious question that remains is, where do we go from here? If *freedom is comprehended necessity,* as put forth above in Chapter One, then how do we understand and find the objective and subjective boundaries of that freedom in our own age within the institutions in which we live? What is necessary to push those limits, so as to go beyond them and approach positive freedom? How might we better navigate the coming age as the ice melts and the coastal waters rise? And what role does the university play in it? As spelled out in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, one approach to understanding the shape of power is to map out its structure, including the possibilities and potential for democratic resistance that lie within those structures, and beyond them. This is a continuous process, but we can provisionally point towards a direction.

If history provides any example, then we can look for clues to the contemporary structure of power that indicate its shape. Just as Mills' noted of the fifth epoch, there has continued to be an enlargement and centralization of the means of power in the contemporary period.[1] This is evident as the power elite today spans nearly the entire earth, with designs on the heavens surrounding it. To continue following the framework

[1] See Mills, "The Structure of Power in American Society," 25.

presented by Mills, we can look for the clues to the shape of the power elite today in the political, economic, and military structures of society.[2]

In so far as the structural clue to the contemporary power elite lies in the political order,[3] that clue can be found in the Presidential disregard for the rule of law, including the spying on American citizens in violation of the fourth amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the justification of torture in violation of the Geneva Conventions and basic human decency, and the detaining of prisoners without due process – in brief, the use of arbitrary power, speciously justified as a response to the attacks of September 11, 2001. These clues are indicative of a more brazen grab for power that reflects perhaps the hubris acquired through the decades since World War II in which the corporate "chieftains" have been able to dominate the political directorate. Both political parties have served the big moneyed interests, but the deference has been more flagrant and unabashed from the Republican side of the aisle. Oil, pharmaceutical, defense, and lesser lobbies have driven a governmental policy marked by deregulation, corruption, greed, scandal, lies, war and war profiteering. On top of this, the problems of accountability with the new electronic voting machines have created the potential for a complete breakdown of democratic processes. The mid-term elections of 2006 showed some signs of life in the electorate, but unless this develops into social movements of significant scale, the body politic will continue to have a weak pulse.

In so far as the structural clue to the contemporary power elite lies in the economic order, that clue is that we are *still* "at once a permanent-war economy and a

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[2] See Mills, *The Power Elite*, 274-275.

[3] Ibid.

private-corporation economy."[4] The biggest difference between Mills' day and ours is that the reach of these economic powers is now more global than ever and the domestic social safety net has been diminished. On the flip side, elite power now faces the contradictions that have been surfacing and are inherent in the imposition of "democracy" on other countries through economic domination. These practices no longer carry with them the automatic acceptance of U.S. interests by the neo-colonized, as evidenced by the revolt from the U.S. bloc by several Latin American countries, led by Venezuela. Moreover, the rise of the corporate media has created concerns of Orwellian-like thought-control, though democratic politics has found sustenance and vitality through the internet and the myriad of possibilities that it presents for networking and organizing (i.e., e-mail lists, the "blogosphere," instant access to information, etc.).

Insofar as the structural clue to the contemporary power elite lies in the military order, it is evident, as per Mills, that "the military structure of America is now in considerable part a political structure… [V]irtually all political and economic actions are now judged in terms of military definitions of reality."[5] Even more so today than in Mills' day, the privatization of military operations in the form of the growing use of war contractors, primarily Halliburton and its subsidiaries, and the expanded use of private armies, such as Blackwater Security, have created a mercenary force that serves as an adjunct to the regular army. At the same time, wars and military budgets are breaking the ability of the nation to provide for the general welfare, thus creating potential for social

[4] See Mills, *The Power Elite*, 274-275.

[5] Ibid., 275.

unrest. And even some retired generals and intelligence officials have come to openly criticize Administration policy.

However, the coming seventh epoch is far removed from the simplicities of the previous epochs, in that it brings with it a factor that neither Mills nor Marx had anticipated. Aside from the political, economic, and military structures, and the resistance to those structures, the seventh epoch brings with it another factor that cannot be ignored. Under the old "growth model," nature was to be conquered and used for the benefit of humankind. Unlike the native American philosophy which views the earth as something to be cared for as it provides us with nurture and sustenance, European and Anglo-American thought typically portrayed the earth as something to be conquered and exploited. The growth and progress paradigm is no longer viable – not unless progress is measured in terms of sustainability and renewability.

Global warming and environmental degradation present us with the most challenging objective limits to our freedom and to our lives that we have ever faced as a species. Can we go beyond the subjective boundaries that limit us so as to socially, politically, and economically evolve and, thereby, survive? Part of our survival will depend upon developing institutions that can serve to help us to collectively and individually work towards that end. Among the institutions that are central to this development are: political parties, which need to be responsible and accountable; participatory and democratic labor unions; a free and independent media; and, last but not least, a democratic system of education at all levels.

The university is one of the few places where we can critically develop, share, and spread our knowledge not only of science, but of politics, social life, the fine arts, and all

of the forms of knowledge we will need if we are to take that step beyond the limits, but the corporatized university that has emerged hinders such development, for reasons indicated hereinabove. While the university and its managers are desperately trying to stay afloat in a corporate economy, the civilization is heading towards a deluge of ecological and social problems. Changing the practices of the university from being those of a corporate entity to those of a democratic one requires that the central institutional mechanism be transformed by the participants themselves. Only through the process and practices of resistance will the habits of democracy grow.

The invisible faculty are in a critical place – they have the standpoint that is in direct opposition to the corporate university. The seventh epoch can be a dark time, or it can be a turning point in human history where the great mass of human beings learn to marshal their knowledge and resources and turn them towards a sustainable future. If we make that choice, it seems apparent that the university system needs to become one of the key institutions which makes it work. If the university is to play that role, then the corporate outlook must give way to a new ethos. And if that battle is to be won, then the contingent academic labor system, which is a cornerstone of the corporate university, as noted throughout this dissertation, must be overcome.

It is difficult to know which steps to take in practice, as each situation is unique, and this dissertation is not a blueprint for tactical approaches. Practically speaking, however, some things have become clear. The idea of shared governance in a university setting, which has been defined as "a division of authority and decision-making responsibility between faculty and administration based on distinctive expertise," needs

reevaluation.[6] The tenured and the tenure-track faculty run the show, according to this theory, alongside the academic managers and trustees. This theory is the basis for the decision in the 1980 *National Labor Relations Board v. Yeshiva University*. It has a kinship to the idea of professional unionism, where management and academic labor view themselves as having areas of common concern that lead them to cooperate in a collegial manner, rather than the typical adversarial relationship between labor and management. With the advent of the corporate university, however, these models have become anachronistic, if not an outright sham. From the viewpoint of the managers of the corporate university, "traditional notions of shared governance and faculty autonomy are a nuisance that impedes administrative 'flexibility.'"[7] The rules of the game have changed, and nobody bothered to tell the players.

What is to be done? Academic labor needs a radical new unionism that embraces a democratic ethos in spirit and in practice. It needs to reach into the communities served by the university and form binding ties and alliances. It needs to forge new governance structures for the University – governance structures that do not still adhere to the forms of elitism and business-rule criticized by Veblen a century ago. The age of shared governance is over, more or less, and the model of professional unionism, such as it has developed, has little to offer in the age of academic capitalism. The invisible faculty are at the crossroads of these transformations and the position which they occupy is filled with contradictions. They are the exploited, the workers on the lower-tier, the academic proletariat. And, yet, they are also the sleeping giant with the potential to act as the

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[6] Gary Rhoades, "Capitalism, Academic Style, and Shared Governance," *Academe, Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, May-June 2005, Volume 91, Number 3, p. 39.

[7] Ellen Willis, "Why Professors Turn to Organized Labor," *The New York Times*, May 28, 2001.

"transformative intellectuals" envisioned by Aronowitz and Giroux.[8] The future has not been written. Freedom is a process – one that requires intelligence. Will the giant awaken?

[8] Aronowitz and Giroux, *Education Under Siege*, passim. Cited above in Chapter One.

Appendix

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of all faculty and instructional staff, by employment status and institution type: Fall 2003.

Institution type	Employment Status	
	Full-time	Part-time
All Institutions	56.3	43.7
Public Doctoral	77.8	22.2
Private not for profit doctoral	68.7	31.4
Public master's	63.3	36.7
Private not for profit master's	45.1	54.9
Private not for profit baccalaureate	63.2	36.8
Public associate's	33.3	66.7
Other	49.3	50.8

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF: 04). Detailed notations by NCES of the categories have been excluded here for purposes of brevity, with the exception of the following: under the new Carnegie classifications (2000) the "doctoral" category now includes research/doctoral institutions (in previous surveys the "research" category had registered fewer part-time faculty than any other category); Also, that the "other" category, above, includes public baccalaureate institutions, as well as private not-for-profit associate's, and other specialized institutions. See: http://nces.ed.gov/das/library/tables_listings/show_nedrc.asp?rt=p&tableID=1308

Table 6: Percentage distribution of employment status of all faculty and instructional staff, by institution type and program area: Fall 2003.

	2-Year Institutions		4-Year Institutions		2 & 4 Yr Institutions	
	Full-Time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Total	33.2	66.9	66.1	33.9	56.3	43.7
Principal Field of Teaching:						
Agriculture and home economics	40.8	59.2	78.4	21.6	69.8	30.2
Business	35.6	64.4	54.0	46.0	49.0	51.0
Education	28.7	71.3	51.3	48.7	44.5	55.5
Engineering	40.7	59.3	78.2	21.8	70.4	29.6
Fine Arts	30.3	69.8	53.0	47.0	47.5	52.5
Health Sciences	38.6	61.5	69.7	30.3	61.9	38.1
Humanities	30.1	69.9	65.4	34.6	53.1	46.9
Natural Sciences	34.8	65.3	76.5	23.5	62.8	37.2
Social Sciences	37.5	62.5	70.3	29.7	62.7	37.4
All other programs	29.8	70.2	62.6	37.4	50.0	50.0

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Study of Post-Secondary Faculty: 2004, 3/30/2006.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of the highest postsecondary attainment of 1992 12th-graders who were likely postsecondary participants, by race/ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1992-2000.

Selected Characteristics	None	Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's	Some post baccalaureate enrollment	Graduate
Total	42.1	4.9	8.1	31.0	8.2	5.7
Race/ethnicity						
White	37.3	4.9	8.5	33.8	9.0	6.4
Black	59.2	5.3	4.9	24.1	4.4	2.1
Hispanic/Latino	63.1	5.0	8.2	15.1	6.0	2.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	36.5	4.5	7.6	33.6	9.7	8.1
American Indian / Alaska Native	77.4	1.2	6.1	10.5	3.1	1.7
Sex						
Male	47.6	3.8	7.4	29.3	7.3	4.6
Female	37.2	5.9	8.7	32.5	9.1	6.7
Socioeconomic status quintile						
81st-100th percentile (high)	22.6	1.5	3.7	46.2	14.1	11.9
61st – 80th percentile	44.6	3.9	7.0	33.0	6.8	4.6
41st – 60th percentile	48.6	5.5	12.0	24.6	6.3	3.0
21st – 40th percentile	54.3	6.8	11.5	20.2	4.9	2.4
1st – 20th percentile (low)	59.5	12.9	11.4	11.9	3.7	0.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Postsecondary Attainment, Attendance, Curriculum, and Performance: Selected Results from the NELS:88/2000 Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS), 2000," in *Education Statistics Quarterly*, Volume 5, Issue 3, Topic: Postsecondary Education, by Clifford Adelman, Bruce Daniel, and Ilona Berkovits, Table A: Percentage distribution of the highest postsecondary attainment of 1992 12th-graders who were likely postsecondary participants, by race/ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1992-2000. This table is based on sample survey data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), a survey which measures the attainment of a sample of eighth-graders from 1988 through 2000, i.e., eight years after their scheduled high school graduation. As shown, racial categories and socio-economic status have remained important markers of educational attainment. Detailed notations excluded for brevity. For further information, see Table A at: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/quarterly/vol_5/5_3/4_2.asp

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