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BEING LEFT IN EAST NEW YORK:

TENSIONS BETWEEN RACE AND CLASS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, 1954-1980.

by

Martin E. Eisenberg

Volume I

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

1999

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ABSTRACT

BEING LEFT IN EAST NEW YORK: TENSIONS BETWEEN RACE AND CLASS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, 1954-1980

by

Martin E. Eisenberg

Advisor: Roslyn W. Bologh

This is a sociological history of an interracial Brooklyn community center committed to community organizing as a vehicle for moving people to learn about and respond democratically and collectively to the larger social, political and economic forces that affect them and their collective lives. The dissertation describes the activist role of the organization within New York City as a proponent of racial integration and integrated community struggle which it sees as necessary for a larger, working class based movement. The organization was guided by a theory, derived in part from American Marxian theory and democratic philosophy about the need of people to socialize, work and struggle together -- across differences -- to address the needs of the community and to create a vibrant social life. It used the term, "richness of difference", as its guiding theme and struggled to realize a unique vision of intercultural urban living, education and social struggle.

This dissertation covers the period when New York City changed from an industrial to a post-industrial city with more complex occupational, demographic, and political structures in the metropolitan area; when civil rights integrationism was superseded by black nationalism in the black movement; and, when the austerity

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resolution to the City's fiscal crisis portended the national mobilization of a political ideology committed to reducing government services; and, when women's participation in the labor force accelerated. As its community changed from primarily white to African-American and Latino, the organization battled black nationalism/pluralism in the area of education and sought to organize against cutbacks in city services. This dissertation examines the effects upon the community of these political, social and economic processes and their significance for community organizing.

The analysis examines external and internal social and theoretical factors that diminish the organization's effectiveness. It focuses upon both the practical tensions produced when a theory that presupposes the industrial city confronts a post-industrial social economy, and the tensions produced by a theory that understands race as the convergence of class and ethnicity, not as a relatively independent structure of power and conflict based upon the unequal distribution of social honor.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I began writing this dissertation more than two decades later in life than when people usually finish up. Also, the dissertation itself consists of an analysis of a collective effort, in which I participated, to give direction to a larger social history. So, there are lots of people to acknowledge.

To the members, boards of directors, adult volunteers, young people and staffs of the United Community Centers, before my time and during my time with the organization, whose ideas, struggles and stamina are the substance of this work.

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As a graduate of the College of the City of New York, of the State University of Iowa, and now of the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, I am deeply appreciative of the opportunities afforded me by public higher educational institutions. In particular, the time I spent and work I accomplished while taking courses at the Graduate Center was pleasurable and enlightening. Almost all of my courses were taught by teachers/scholars of the first rank who demonstrated to me by their seriousness as teachers and by the quality of their scholarly work that the community of scholars dedicated to advancing knowledge is not an abstraction. The CUNY Graduate Center is a public gem.

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Volume II

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INTRODUCTION

This work is a sociological history of a community organization: the United Community Centers (U.C.C.) located in the East New York (ENY) section of Brooklyn. It covers the period between 1954 when the organization was founded to 1980 when it ceased to be able to achieve its organizing goals. In this period, the integrationist civil rights movement emerged on a national level and was superseded by black nationalism. By the end of the period, blacks were more fully incorporated into the national and local polity. It is also the period in which the current political assault upon the U.S. welfare state began to mobilize and when one of its first major successes was the austerity resolution to New York City's major fiscal crisis.

The organization's history is of special interest because its leaders attempted, over a period of three decades, to give direction to their community organizing practice with an explicit theory and value system. The theory from which their ideas were derived held that the forces of political economy were the most important forces affecting people's lives. It was a theory about how those forces work, beneficially and harmfully, and how the ways they are harmful can be changed. The leadership and eventually many of the members believed that social life could be rationally reflected upon and re-created, guided by their theory and by a democratic philosophy. Their theory addressed the importance of developing the consciousness of working people and their ability to act upon the social forces affecting them.

Based on that theory, which derived from American Marxism and American democratic philosophy, they believed that the only way to create the necessary changes to

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make a more rational and progressive world was through large popular efforts, in particular through the creation of an organized and united working class. They believed that one of the major obstacles preventing this unity were the ideas that people held about one another across difference, especially differences of race and ethnicity. This group, therefore, committed itself to changing people's ideas and to fighting for integration and democratic planning of social life outside the workplace.

In 1954, when the U.C.C. began, East New York was a predominantly white, lower middle class and working class area. By 1980, it was predominantly black and Hispanic, working class and poor. As the East New York community's racial and economic character changed so did the U.C.C. membership. The organization defined itself as a problem-oriented, social change organization, not as a service organization. Nevertheless, as a community center, much of U.C.C.'s energy was taken up with providing services. U.C.C. provided programs in day care, summer camping for youth, services for the elderly and for the disabled, and a wide range of social, cultural and education programs for its several hundred members and their families, and for several hundred more community young people and adults. Over time, leaders and the more involved members used what became their value system as a guide for elaborating the content of the internal programs they developed for youth and adults. Central to this value system was the idea of "'the richness of difference" as a guide for struggle and social life. They attempted, for example, to create a social life together based upon the recognition and critical appreciation of ethnic and racial difference.

Along with its continuous investment in the provision of services, the

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organization tried to inform residents about community problems. They also tried and sometimes succeeded in organizing residents to give direction to the political decisions made about the community. Leaders and members fought for integrated schools and housing, for traffic lights, playgrounds and bus routes. During the 1960s and 1970s they participated in the anti-war movement and organized in opposition to budget cuts in public services. They made deliberate and energetic efforts to involve African Americans, Latinos and whites in all their campaigns. At the same time, their theory and practice incorporated a recognition that most of the problems that the community faced -- segregated and inadequate schools, racial prejudice, unemployment -- could not be resolved within the borders of the community because these problems were consequences of larger economic and political structures.

United Community Centers leaders and members combined their class analysis and value system to struggle with relative consistency for their ideas throughout this period. In the early 1960s, after a significant setback, U.C.C. was revivified by the civil rights movement. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, U.C.C.'s militant racial integrationism propelled it into conflict with black nationalism in the community and on two college campuses. In the 1970s, its political economic analysis provided the basis for U.C.C.'s early opposition to the austerity resolution to the NYC fiscal crisis and its recognition of the broader political meaning of that austerity resolution. In the 1970s also, the organization developed an elaborate social, educational, recreational and political range of activities with the considerable participation of community resident volunteers. But, by the end of the 1970s, despite this range of activities, it ceased to be

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able to recruit members willing to take on responsibility for the organization. By 1985, the organization had become a service organization dependent for its survival upon foundation and government funding, the kind of organization it had always prided itself on *not* being.

This is a case study with all the particularities of people, location, and moment that make generalization hazardous. But, I believe that it is possible to see U.C.C.'s struggles as emblematic of the strengths and inadequacies of the American Marxist theory of the 1930s-60s, especially for political practice. U.C.C.'s political economic analysis in the 1970s, for example, was able to account for the conditions and politics of the attack on the U.S. welfare state and the attack upon the idea that 'government was responsible for people' with far greater power and continuity than competing racialist or mainstream analyses that were current at the time. U.C.C.'s form of Marxism was weak, on the other hand, in its conflation of economy and society, that is, in the excessively reductive ways its analyses derived social and political processes from what it perceived as more basic economic ones.

Further, U.C.C.'s organizing strategy and aim to reconstitute class political identity presupposed the socio-spatial and occupational structures, and political constellation of the industrial city at a moment when those structures were dissolving. During the period I cover, New York shifted from being an industrial to being a 'post-industrial city' with all that term signifies about changes in the City's industrial and occupational structures, the diminution of private sector unions, the demise of labor as a movement, and with it, the decline of working class-oriented politics. Associated with

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this post-industrial shift were social economic changes in the metropolitan area that included the accelerated movement of women into the labor force, a shift in the City's racial and ethnic population, and a split between the central city and suburbs in terms of economic activity, political power, and racial and ethnic residential patterns.

In addition to a weakness in theorizing the changed nature of the city, U.C.C.'s analysis failed to theorize other social structures of power and conflict independent of, but related to class and to the dynamics of capitalist economy, such as race. Black nationalism's emphasis upon race as a social structure of power and conflict was a valid corrective to U.C.C.'s conceptualization of race as the convergence of class and ethnicity, but one which U.C.C. dismissed. At the same time, and with validity, U.C.C. opposed black nationalism's elision with respect to political economy and its limited vision of social transformation and struggle. Although black nationalism faded quickly as a political force, it served as a template for later identity movements. It is possible, therefore, to see in U.C.C.'s struggles an anticipatory criticism of those later movements.

This is a work of sociological history, not narrative history. By a "narrative history" I mean one in which sociological theory is implicit but not explicitly related to the narrative. In contrast, I explicitly frame the particular experiences of United Community Centers within a set of sociologically familiar problems and ideas. For example, I analyze U.C.C.'s robust ability to sustain its militant integrationism as due in part to its blending of communal and associative relations which simultaneously, over time, impeded its ability to be reflective about its theory and practice. I analyze U.C.C.'s ineffectual organizing efforts in relation to the new black ethnicity that emerged in the

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1970s as due in part to its inability to theorize race as a social structure of status. By a "sociological history", I also mean the drawing of connections between the changing political, economic and cultural currents of the period and U.C.C.'s early vitality and its unavailaing organizing practice at the end of the period.

This dissertation is a story about an organization but it does not claim to be *the* story. Having worried for a few years over how to tell *the* story (if there were such a thing), I finally gave it up. This story does not analyze or tell how the political, social and economic changes in the larger society intricately affected the interpersonal lives of individuals through the medium of a small organization with an oppositional stance toward many of these changes. I worked with the organization full-time from 1966-89 (and part-time, since then). In my own memories, from the 1960s-1980s, the figures of individual leaders and members stand forth, multi-dimensional, wonderfully detailed and mysterious. I am struck by how little of the complex individuality of the participants, or the group's overlapping interpersonal relationships, or how individuals and relationships changed in time and in reaction to larger social forces, exists in what I have written.

I have also neglected other dimensions of the larger story. The United Community Centers did far more organizing against the war in Viet Nam than any other organization in East New York. In the late 1960s, it sent one or two buses full of members and community residents to almost every anti-war demonstration in Washington, D.C. and Manhattan except one. It consistently set up tables of petitions, telegrams and flyers in front of supermarkets and shopping centers throughout the community to enable thousands of residents to register their protest against the war. On

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the night after the first Cambodian bombing was announced, U.C.C. volunteers distributed 5,000 flyers under the doors of residents urging them to register their opposition. The U.C.C. newspaper reported on the war for eight years. The organization's leaders and members felt themselves to be a part of the anti-war movement. I have barely mentioned this part of U.C.C.'s history.

In the first part of this dissertation I emphasize the importance of gender roles in the formation of the organization. Throughout this period, the organization struggled for an atmosphere of equality between men and women within the organization. The men and women leaders insisted upon the importance of women's leadership and women's dignity and fought with the men who resisted. Yet, in the 1970s, they criticized the women's movement as too middle class in its concerns and ignored aspects of the movement from which leaders and members could have learned. At the same time the women's movement emboldened women within U.C.C. to hold the organization and the men within it accountable to their professed ideas about gender equality. I have not addressed these gender issues theoretically in this dissertation. The sociological history herein is only one dimension of a far more complex history.

I focus mainly upon issues of race and class in East New York and New York City, in the context of the organization's theory, philosophy and practice and the relationship between its theory and practice. In the main, I think of this dissertation as a story about the importance of philosophy and of theory (good and bad theory) and especially about the importance of one's attitude toward theory. U.C.C.'s leaders and members, staff and volunteers were serious about theory and philosophy. They acted

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upon it politically and they lived by it. The leadership professed and many members accepted the notion that there could be no adequate test of a social and political theory as a hypothesis without discipline and commitment to its application over time. What this meant was that a conscious political and social life for social and political goals was an adventurous experiment, a step toward an unpredictable future. Since U.C.C.'s theory derived from a theory of epochal change, leaders and members had to recognize that at any time, including their time, there might be no broad acceptance of the relevance of their theory and philosophy. They had to learn to live with small and local victories in the context of much broader political failure because evidential verification of their theory was in short supply.

But if every theory and every life lived according to theory is hypothetical, then U.C.C. had to allow intellectual space for reflection upon new ideas and new empirical evidence, as well as space for considering that their hypothesis as formulated and applied was flawed. This kind of reflection and self-criticism is very hard to do under any circumstances. But, it is even harder to do when the necessary reflection is upon ideas that are the basis of a group (and individual) life and of an organizational direction. U.C.C. was unable to do it. To the extent that U.C.C.'s story illustrates this far from unique process and several others, its telling is partly a cautionary tale.

But, the organization's legacy is more than a warning. A legacy of the organization that I do not much discuss in this work but about which I have some certainty, is its impact upon the social development and character of the individuals -- the members -- who participated. Although they might have learned it elsewhere, somehow,

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the U.C.C. is the place where they learned to think of themselves as members of a larger world with many different kinds of people for which they carried responsibility. The U.C.C. was also the place where they learned how to listen to and hear people socially different from themselves, and how to use ideas to deal with conflict across difference in a democratic direction. If this is of value, and I think it is, then some of U.C.C.'s ideas may still have some pertinence within a context of diversely constituted social movement for change.

I hope it is not too dramatic to say that I think that U.C.C.'s course has a tragic element. The psycho-social, cultural, and organizational dynamics that allowed U.C.C. to pursue its philosophy and theory with intensity, commitment and continuity -- that enabled its leaders and members to rigorously test their theory -- were strengths. Over time, as the world changed, some of U.C.C.'s strengths constrained leaders' and members' ability to reflect upon their theory and promoted U.C.C.'s failure to achieve its organizing goals. According to Aristotle, tragedy requires large and powerful heros like kings, princes and generals. None of these lived in East New York. But, the earnestness with which the U.C.C. group, composed mainly of quite ordinary people, dealt with large ideas and large events for 25 years warrants, I think, a viewing of their experience with conceptual lenses fit for a broader stage than their narrow storefront office.

Chapters I-IV cover the early history of U.C.C., 1954-1961. I emphasize the cultural commonalities of the people who first organized U.C.C.; the importance of the women in developing the organization and its meaning to them; the theory and philosophy of the leadership; and the rationale for the organization's commitment to

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integration to which it gave unique meanings. I also discuss the importance of the Civil Rights Movement for community organizing and, in particular, for maintaining the morale, and eventually finances of U.C.C.

Chapters V and VI roughly cover the period 1966-67 (and beyond) and discuss the U.C.C. leadership's conception of the relationship between theory and practice; the meaning of the nationalist/separatist turn that emerges in the black movement; and U.C.C.'s emphasis upon educational issues regarding "the disruptive child" and public funding for parochial schools, even when those issues were not winnable on a local level.

Chapter VII and VIII cover the period 1967-1970 and discuss the arguments about the decentralization of the NYC school system, the impact of the teacher's strike of 1968 upon NYC-based community organizing and the involvement of the U.C.C. on a local level. Chapter VIII discusses the confrontation of the integrationist and class perspective of U.C.C. with the pluralist and nationalist perspectives of the local anti-poverty program over the issue of constructing an Educational complex in ENY, and the impact of U.C.C.'s defeat upon the organization.

Chapter IX is a sociological reflection upon the inadequacy of U.C.C.'s form of Marxism in the context of a changing political economy and changing cityscape. U.C.C.'s form of Marxism presupposed the industrial city when the political constellation and economic structure of that city had dissolved.

Chapters X-XII describe U.C.C.'s work with young people in the period 1965-72. Chapter X focuses upon U.C.C.'s development of a concept of intercultural identity in its work with teenagers. Chapters XI and XII describe and analyze two campaigns of

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U.C.C. college students on a State University of New York and City University of New York campus. U.C.C. college students opposed nationalism and separatism and became involved in a campaign to end the Third World Corridors at Harpur College, SUNY, Binghamton. They also opposed the imposition of tuition at CUNY and conducted a campaign to establish free, public higher education throughout the New York State.

Chapter XIII is another sociological reflection, this time upon the limitation of U.C.C.'s concept of race and the need to theorize race as a structured process. I urge consideration of Max Weber's conception of status as the unequal distribution of social honor among groups as a useful way to conceptualize race, and I discuss the implications for U.C.C.'s struggle of the cultural fusion of ethnicity and status.

Chapters XIV-XVI cover the period 1972-1980. I discuss the general and particular obstacles within U.C.C. to theoretical reflection; how it maintained its commitment to integration; its inability to deal with the new black ethnicity or affirmative action because of its inadequate conceptualization of race; and, how, nevertheless it was able to appeal to other dimensions of identity (citizenship and parenthood) to conduct effective community campaigns (1977-78) in relation to the Community School Board.

Chapter XVII covers another aspect of the period 1972-1980. I discuss U.C.C.'s opposition to the ideological attack upon the welfare state; its opposition to the ideological justification of the austerity solution to the NYC fiscal crisis; and its efforts, ultimately unsuccessful, to find allies to oppose the large and crippling cuts in city services, especially in the area of day care.

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Chapter XVIII brings the story to a close. It attempts to provide a rationale for pondering about U.C.C. and briefly surveys some of U.C.C.'s work in the 1980s and 1990s when it continued to provide services but could only organize an occasional locally oriented campaign to address a specific problem. The period of the 1970s was a time when the organization stood virtually alone in its efforts to organize against the social and political forces undermining the quality of life in East New York. By the end of the 1980s, most of the active membership developed in the 1950s-1970s had dispersed. Although the organization remained, its *raison d'etre* as a catalyst for developing class conscious community activism, committed to racial integration, no longer seemed viable, or even intelligible in the community. Hence, the ambiguity in "Being Left in East New York".

The last section, "On Methodology" provides general details concerning my personal relationship to the U.C.C. and contains a brief discussion of my efforts to address the issue of subjectivity and objectivity in this work.

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CHAPTER I

STARTING OUT IN EAST BROOKLYN

Between 1950 and 1959, the New York City Housing Authority (hereafter NYCHA) completed construction of six housing projects in the southeast corner of Brooklyn, then a fringe of the City. The construction was partly a response to a housing shortage experienced by young families after World War II and NYCHA gave preference to the applications of veterans for apartments. Much of the land occupied by the projects had been unused except by an occasional dairy farm (the last one closed in 1966) and the quonset huts occupied by WW II veterans and their families. Brooklyn boys growing up in Flatbush in the 1930s expressed their sense of outer limits with the expression, "I'll knock you from here to Canarsie." Of the six projects, NYCHA built five of them east of Canarsie. Three were for low income families and three for middle income families. The six projects contained a total of 8,112 apartments and sheltered approximately 27,600 people.

Much of the new NYC public housing constructed around this time was built with community center facilities -- spaces for meetings, recreation rooms and kitchens -- based on the belief that these new populations needed a range of services for adults and children. In 1959, NYCHA Chairman William Reid wrote in a memo, "We are convinced of the need and validity of community center programs in our developments. To this end we have continued to build community center facilities despite the lack of ready sponsors and despite constant pressure from lending agencies not to build without guaranteed sponsors. We cannot see building housing projects without these facilities."

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Throughout the City, in 1956, there were 67 community center programs (out of 85 projects), 38 of which were run by NYCHA, settlement houses or other non-profit agencies, and 29 of which were operated by the NYC Board of Education ("Memo", Reid to Preusse, 6/12/59).

The United Community Centers was formed in 1958 with the merger of two community centers that were located in two of these "middle income" housing projects, but its history began with the opening of the projects which cradled its first years. Glenwood Houses, situated in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, opened in the summer of 1950 with 1,188 apartments and a population of 4,274. Boulevard Houses, situated on the flatlands in the southern tip of the East New York section, opened eight months later with 1,441 apartments and a population of 4,710. A few years later, in 1958, Linden Houses was built geographically contiguous to Boulevard Houses, and opened with 1,586 apartments and 5,812 people. No separate community center was built in Linden Houses. Its residents used the facilities and staff of the Boulevard Community Center. These were areas of Brooklyn, not yet built up and without all the schools, libraries, synagogues and churches and diverse services that the new residents wanted, especially given the high concentration and large number of young children they were raising.

Demographics of the Two Housing Projects: 1960

Children 13 years and under composed more than 40% of the total population of the three projects and approximately 18% were five years and under. Mothers stayed home in large numbers to care for them. In 1960, in New York City, 40% of all women

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and 50% of all non-white women, 14 years and over, were in the labor force; and, in Brooklyn 36% of all women and 47% of all non-white women were in the labor force. In the two census tracts comprising Linden and Boulevard Houses, only 22% of all the women were in the labor force, although 43% of the non-white women went off to work. The difference between the white women in NYC and Brooklyn as a whole and the housing projects was probably in part due to the high concentration of young mothers with children. In NYC as a whole and in Brooklyn, 30% and 28% respectively of all married women with husbands present had paid jobs in 1960, whereas for non-white women, the figures were 38.4% in NYC and 37% in Brooklyn. In the projects, only 18% of all married women with husbands present went off to work, considerably less than the city-wide and Brooklyn rate, although 45.6% of non-white women with husbands present held jobs. In fact, however, the stay-at-home rate was substantially higher. In 1960, the unemployment rate among women in Brooklyn was 6% and higher than 6% in the projects. In addition, many of the jobs these women held were part-time. In fact, most of these women were oriented toward a traditional domestic role and felt no compulsion to seek employment. It was a time in which the men, that is, the white men, earned a "family income", sufficient to support their families' needs as they defined them (U.S. Census, 1960, "Age, Color and Marital Status of the Population", "Labor Force Characteristics of the Population", and "Characteristics of the Non-white Population").

Glenwood Houses and Boulevard Houses were called middle income housing but it is important to understand what that means. In 1949, for a veteran's family to be eligible for admission, maximum family income for a family of four could not exceed

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$6,125. By July 1953, a family of four was declared ineligible and ordered to vacate if their income exceeded $7,500 ("Memo from George Genung to Managers of City Projects, 9/25/53). In 1959, median family income in the New York City was $6,091. In Boulevard and Linden Houses, median family income was $5,357 and 6,372 respectively. Median family income for non-whites in NYC was $4,437, and in Boulevard and Linden Houses was around $5,100 (U.S. Census, 1960, "General Characteristics of the Population").[1]

Employment figures (see footnote 1) indicate a population in the projects that had completed high school at a higher rate than in NYC as a whole and where a few residents had probably accumulated some years of higher education. In fact, while median school years completed in NYC in 1960 for adults over 25 was 10.1, and in Brooklyn was 9.5, the median of school years completed for adults in the projects was a relatively high 12.6 years (U.S. Census, 1960, "General Characteristics" and "Labor force Characteristics").

Approximately 10% of Glenwood's and Boulevard's residents were African American when they opened, as was approximately 6% of Linden Houses. The proportion of Puerto Ricans (who made up almost all the Latino population) in all three housing projects upon opening was less than one percent. This can be contrasted with the two nearby, recently opened low income public housing projects in East New York. The composition of Cypress Houses (1955) was 26% Black and 11% Puerto Rican, and the composition of Louis Pink Houses (1959) was nine percent Black and five percent Puerto Rican. The much lower incomes of Blacks and Puerto Ricans at that time determined that the proportion of minority residents in low income housing over-all

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would be greater than in middle income housing.

Ninety percent of Glenwood and Boulevard residents were white, as were 93% of Linden. Most of these were Jews, according to former residents, although it is difficult to estimate precisely their proportion of the total population. A good guess will be sufficient here. According to the 1960 Census, out of a total population of 11,155 residents in Boulevard and Linden Houses, there were 6,215 adults. Of the total adult population, 5,646 individuals (91%) were of foreign stock, that is, either immigrants themselves or with at least one immigrant parent. It is probably safe to assume that most of the adult residents of foreign stock were adults who were mainly descended from the 1880-1910 wave of immigration from southern, central and eastern Europe. Of these 5,646 individuals, 4,224 (75%) were themselves or had parents born in the U.S.S.R., Poland, Austria, and Hungary (in that order of magnitude). It is probably also safe to assume that most of these were Jews. In short, Jews made up approximately 65% of the entire adult population (U.S. Census, 1960, "General Characteristics").

Cultural Commonalities

Overall, the residents of these housing projects shared extensive demographic traits. They were mainly working class and lower middle class. Except for the black families in which almost one-half of the women worked, it was mainly the men who were employed and the women who stayed at home. They were mainly families with young children, and the men were mainly veterans. They were mainly white, the majority were Jews, and they were all new residents in new public housing, in an area of Brooklyn without many of the services provided in older areas. Demography tells only

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part of the story, however.

They also shared extensive cultural characteristics. As Americans only one or two generations from their immigrant ancestors, they shared a powerful concern for their own and their children's opportunities and upward social mobility at a moment of precipitous national economic expansion. As Jews and as veteran families, they identified with immediacy the experience of World War II as a war for democracy against fascism, anti-Semitism and also against racism. As one woman, an ex-Navy Yard worker with a background in Left politics remembered, "we looked forward to the period after the war with high hopes for a peaceful world and the expansion of democracy." They were all acutely conscious of anti-Semitism. Many Jews, especially after the revelations about the death camps and the establishment of the state of Israel, pursued a deeper identification as Jews that took various forms including, but not only an identification with Zionism. As working class and lower middle class Jews and other ethnics, many shared a political consciousness born out of their understanding of what was required of Jews and out of their knowledge and identification with their parents' experience with labor struggles in the 1930s and 1940s as well as before that. Some had participated in these struggles. As a result, most were instinctively liberal and voted reflexively for Democratic Party candidates. A sizable number knew people on the Communist left, and a small minority had themselves been a part of the Left experience. An even smaller minority still thought of themselves as Left.

Day-times in the projects were filled with young children and unemployed women who were literate, high school graduates of NYC public high schools. One ex-

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Glenwood woman remembers the day-times of this period as a world of children racing about, with women filling benches outside the buildings watching the pre-schoolers and toddlers, giving lunch to school age children who came home, and talking with one another. Their talk and their relationships stitched together the new communities based upon the multiple commonalities of class, race, life stage, and ethnicity reinforced by the experience of the Depression and World War II. The rhythms of the week were structured mainly by men going off to work in the morning and returning in the evening, children hurrying off to school and returning for lunch and at 3 o' clock, daily domestic chores, and weekends with husbands at home.

The Center Begins

The Glenwood Community Center began in 1953 when residents organized a Board of Directors and hired a professional executive director. By September, 1954 the first director had been replaced by Morris L. Eisenstein who would work as executive director first for Glenwood, then for Boulevard also, and then when the centers combined, for the United Community Centers until his death in 1979. The Center's programs involved substantial numbers of residents almost immediately. In June, 1955, the Glenwood Community Center News (GCCN) reported that in the five months between November, 1954 and April 1955, the Center served 200 people of all ages per day and 300 families enrolled as members. Over the next few years these numbers would increase. The programs included day camp, pre-teen and teen programs, a variety of adult interest clubs, and perpetual social group and family activities. Volunteers, mainly women, were involved is taking responsibility on every level of planning and

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execution, and in every area of the Center's activities. At a Volunteers Party for volunteers and spouses in June, 1956, at the end of the second program year with Eisenstein as director, 42 volunteers, 41 of whom were women, were presented with scrolls for having contributed more than 50 hours work. If 50 hours was the minimum (an average of one hour each week), several volunteers remembered that as many as one-third contributed 10 to 15 hours each week. The number of volunteers and the amount of time they spent working at the center probably doubled in the next two years, even before the Glenwood Community Center and Boulevard Community Center decided to combine their efforts.

The Role of Working Class Women In Community Work

Working class women's *community* (i.e., not household) work in industrial society since the beginning of the 20th century and the institutionalization of the 'family wage' is of two kinds. Both kinds are based on the distinction between the workplace seen as the sphere of men, and the community seen as women's sphere, an extension of their role as home-makers and child care-givers. The first kind of work is pre-associational. The everyday practical activity of these women implied a recognition that the care of the family as well as their own self-maintenance as persons required efforts outside the home. Through their everyday negotiations, women connected one family to another and to a community, defined community problems, and established the 'day-time culture' and the sense of a place. "Gossip", for example, the sharing of news of suffering and celebration, of bargains and cheaters, of opportunities and dead-ends, of evaluations of individuals, local institutions and their agents, and the on-going reinforcement and

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modification of norms through talk and shared activity stitched together the emotional and normative ties that wove the substance and solidarity (more or less) of the community. Women's work extended the care of the family outward and formed the infra-structural trust and mutual recognition that was the basis of organized groups and public opinion formation in working class communities. It is only a little stretch to conceive the benches --not just the kitchen gathering places -- of the working class housing projects as an analogue to the opinion- forming literary salons of the early modern bourgeoisie.

The other kind of work is associational. In narratives of community organizing activities, leadership seems equally distributed among men and women (perhaps with more men in leadership). The disproportionate numbers of women who are the actual community activists and who do the actual community work including organizing (Komorovsky 1964; Haywoode 1988; but also see Delgado, 1986) is thematized more often in the literature on women. Besides their work in churches and PTA's, women might campaign to get a library branch or a school constructed, a playground refurbished, fair prices in local markets, designate and attempt to deflect threats to family and community. These forms of action required not only talk but also organized intervention in public arenas where women confronted and negotiated with agents of the state or the local economy. This action was definitely not a private sphere of nurturance. It was often and deliberately conflictual, and required the development of publicly oriented political and social skills and knowledge that extended considerably beyond what was traditionally understood to be required of wives and mothers[2]. It was both the extra-

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associational and associational work of women that created a sense of place, and the ground of trust and connectedness upon which many social movements of subordinate groups, e.g. the labor movement, the civil rights movement, the tenant movement, were based, even when not restricted to particular territories. It is probably correct and may be useful to point out that the public/private distinction does not capture the intermediate nature of women's community work. Women's work in communities has a 'dual aspect', to use Nancy Fraser's (1987) term, in the sense that it is simultaneously public and private, an intermediate sphere between the private world of the family and the public world sphere of political opinion formation and participation.[3]

On The Women's Desires For A More Public Life

The adult women in the projects were mainly young, in their late twenties and early thirties, mainly mothers and married, mainly unemployed. Almost all of them had completed high school and were strongly literate, and a small minority had completed some years of college. Almost of all of them had been employed and earned income before their children were born. They were mainly Jews, though very religious and there were sizeable minorities of Italian-Americans and African Americans. In the main, they accepted and barely questioned a traditional familial division of labor in which they assumed responsibility for child-rearing and household keeping. Most of them did not envision careers. Most of them had lived through and were conscious of the consequences of the Depression for their families, and most of their husbands were veterans.

They knew they lived in and had been shaken by a world of powerful economic

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and political forces beyond their control that had produced the Depression and World War II. Some had married before the war and had worried about their husband soldiers throughout their husbands' service. Some had worked in war industries and some had travelled across the country to work in strange places in the U.S. to be near where their husbands were stationed before being shipped overseas. Their lives and times and their educations had opened their minds and toughened them. Many had experienced a sense of independence, of self-reliance and of making choices for themselves because the times they lived in had demanded it of them. Like many of the women in their generations, they hungered and would work hard for what one writer in the GCCN (April, 1959) described as: "a sense of their own worth, a knowledge of their competence and growth as effective human beings, new skills, human relations with friends and associates, a sense of being related to exciting new developments in our community". They wanted to fulfill their responsibilities as mothers and wives, but they wanted more than these roles promised. They also wanted to grow and be recognized, and to accomplish all this in relation to meanings that made sense to them.

More than 4,500 adult women lived in the Glenwood, Boulevard and Linden Housing Projects. They did not all share the same political and religious perspectives. But, a substantial number of these had developed a broad social awareness as more or less secular Jews with an awareness of anti-Semitism, as Blacks with an abiding awareness of racism, as working class and lower middle class women with an awareness and identification with working class struggles, and as Americans and wives of soldiers for whom the War was a fight for democracy against fascism and dictatorship. If these

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meanings could be realized in a process that affirmed their roles as wives and mothers and also met their desires for growth, recognition and social relationships, they were, however apprehensively, willing to seize their chance. They would tackle the challenges to self and to their intellectual and emotional limitations that such processes entailed. That included struggles with husbands who were jealous of their wives' new involvements and wary of their wives' developing assertiveness.

By stressing the understanding and desires of the women, and their responsiveness to an opportunity they saw, I mean to highlight these women as the pivotal collective energy that developed and sustained the community center. But, I do not mean to suggest that some men, within their time constraints, were not equally responsive. They, too, had lived through large historical events. On the one hand, as working class and lower middle class men, they, too, sought opportunities to develop themselves, and to be recognized for their competence and their ability to reason and deal with ideas. Some of these men also sought opportunities for developing a sense of social self-worth, in sometimes less ideologically infused activities, such as the management of a Little League, the coaching of a team, or dancing weekly in the Social Dancing Club. Some also sought activities that resonated more with broader historical and social meanings that made sense to them. Of course, even the Social Dancing Club was aware of itself as an interracial group different from and in opposition to the basis on which most social dancing clubs were organized. These men's lives had by no means been protected from hidden and non-so-hidden injuries of class and race. On the other hand, where men's sense of self-worth hinged upon their command of their wives' time

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and energies, some men effectively blocked or limited their wives' involvement. How to negotiate the objections of husbands was a frequent topic of discussion among the women, with some men and with the leadership. Women dragged, pushed and persuaded their husbands to accompany them to family or other social events (Interview with Harris). They tried to figure out ways to limit the nagging and aggravating objections of husbands. And, sometimes they succeeded in persuading their husbands to open themselves up and assume significant responsibilities in the community center program.

On The Leadership

Similar demographic and cultural groups in similar situations lived in housing projects and communities throughout the City, but the full-fledged, locally-based, membership-run organization represented by the United Community Centers developed only in the three housing projects where U.C.C. was situated, mainly because its leadership was different. That leadership in the beginning was Morris L. Eisenstein.

This was a moment with little possibility for an effective radical politics. Organized labor was not the dynamic political and social force it had been in the thirties and forties when it was energized by the spirit of an organized Left. Rather it aimed to consolidate its earlier organizational and political victories, to extend union members' economic security of organized workers and to raise workers' standard of living (Mills 1948). Instead of struggle, organized workers were developing an orientation to consumerism. The Communist Party, the major vehicle of radical politics in the 1930s had begun to implode during the War. Further, as the Cold War mounted, so did the ferocity with which anti-Communist forces rooted out, isolated and repressed the Left in

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Labor, as well as other parts of the Left in other spheres of society. (Starobin 1972; Isserman 1982).

Eisenstein went to work at Glenwood in 1955 and then at Boulevard as a person of the Left unaffiliated to any political organization and without the possibility of any radical politics. He needed a job and wanted work where he could be a radical and develop his ideas. He was intentionally returning to the "grass-roots" of asphalt-covered, working class Brooklyn where, as the director of community center, he could try to create a community-based organization of people who might become willing to support a movement with a radical direction should one re-emerge.

Eisenstein came out of the Left and never relinquished his Marxist perspective. But, he, assisted by the intellect of his wife, Fanny Eisenstein, developed his own, unique conception of community organizing which differed from what was generally associated with Communist Party community organizing. The two most obvious differences were that the C.P. neighborhood-based organizing sought to involve people in struggles related to their immediate and local needs as vehicles through which to connect them to a national political organization; and, the C.P. tried, however, inconsistently, to contrast a political economic analysis of capitalism as the source of local problems with socialism as an alternative form of economy (Naison 1983; Fisher 1984). In the 1950s, there was no national political grouping with a working class-oriented economic program equivalent to the C.P. in the 1930s with which to connect people. Within the Center, in membership and community meetings on economic and social issues, the structure of class society and aspects of how capitalism worked would be discussed. But, until the

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"stagflation" and national economic crisis of the 1970s, there was no effort to involve the members in a systematic analysis of capitalism or socialism.[4]

The more significant difference, however, was Eisenstein's emphasis upon the quality and content of group life, that is, upon values. In his dissertation, Eisenstein (1952) had written,

> Group life is seen as the source of social behavior. [An individual's] reactions to a social situation are essentially determined by his place in the group life of society. Neighborhood organization is projected as a means of creating an environment in which the people, through their experience, shall decide what shall be the direction and content of social change and the means of achieving it. Neighborhood organization is seen as a contributory means of effecting social change, but it is not intended to replace organization in the political and economic spheres of life -- the forms considered to be the primary vehicles in the struggle for social change...
>
> Democratic structure is not enough. There must be democratic goals in programming for democratic participation to take place and those goals must be based upon social change... In a democratic society every organization, whatever its purpose has a responsibility to contribute to furthering the growth of that society. (quoted by Posner, pp. 9-11, in Collected Works, 1982)

It is important to emphasize that Eisenstein's and later U.C.C.'s use of the terms "democratic" and "democracy" do not refer only to inclusive participation in decision-making based on the acceptance of circumscribed conditions. "Democratic" participation also refers to values that express long-term social goals based upon 'social change' in the direction of a freer more equalitarian society. Insofar as they are based upon a concept of social change, these values are oppositional to the 'given' state of things. They are 'democratic' in the sense that collective self-governance requires a

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greater consciousness of the self as shaped by social forces, institutions and social ideas, and an awareness of the need to participate in collective struggles to reshape those forces and institutions and to change ideas. The value system that the Eisensteins posited was a translation of the political terminology of their radical perspective. But, it also borrowed heavily from American democratic philosophy. John Dewey (1915:87), for example had written,

> A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a form of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity.

I discuss these values below in Chapter 5, but here I want to give two examples. One of the values posited was 'the value of manual work and the creative contribution of working people to the life and growth of society.' Another was 'richness of difference' which emphasized interchange across ethnic and racial difference as a source of learning and growth. The former challenges capitalist society's need to dismiss the productive and cultural contribution of the working class. The latter lays a positive value basis for working class unity without dismissing differences of experience and identity. In that sense, they are social change values. These values were used as conceptual tools in regular discussions to involve U.C.C. members in examining their society and their social experience and as guides for making decisions in the organization and in their social lives. The emphasis upon deliberately deployed values as guides for analysis,

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organizational decision-making and choices in social life marks a major difference from earlier Left organizing.

Nevertheless, the leadership's social and political perspective may be construed as Marxian in the following ways. Eisenstein retained, and others developed a political economic analysis of capitalism that recognized its inherent contradictions, periodic crises, and its exploitation of the working class, as well as the gross inequalities of wealth and political power, and class-based political interests and alignments that it produced. They accepted that organizational efforts in the political and economic spheres of life, not neighborhood organization, would create the primary vehicles in the struggle for social change. They saw a self-conscious and organized working class (defined in Marxist terms) as the primary agency for democratic social, economic and political transformation in history. They saw organized labor as the most powerful existing agency for the defense and extension of workers' and democratic rights, despite its current torpor, and hoped that it would re-emerge as a dynamic social movement as it had in the 1930s after the suppression of the 1920s. They believed that as long as capitalism existed the re-emergence of a working class movement remained a possible future. But, in order to build that movement of the future, the ideas that divided and stratified groups within the population of people who did not own or control the productive wealth of the society, had to be changed. Although before the 1970s these Marxist concepts were never shared by more than a small minority of U.C.C.'s leadership and volunteers, they constituted the presuppositions of U.C.C.'s strategies and programs.

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Methodological Values of Community Organizing at U.C.C.: Conflict and Struggle; Teaching and Reason

Even if community organization could not be the pivotal source of power that the role of organized workers in economic and political spheres seemed to promise within a Marxist perspective, Eisenstein and his wife believed that the community was in human and philosophical terms at least as significant as the workplace and the economy as an arena of conflict, need, and meaning. Community organizing made it possible to deal with conflicts related to race, religion, ethnicity and gender in dimensions that earlier Left movements had scanted or treated inconsistently. It also made possible dealing with relationships that earlier movements had ignored such as those of youth and adults, the normal and disabled, and the elderly to the community. Since intertwined conflicts over the content of all these relationships shot through most areas of everyday life in relation to family and social life and community issues such as education, cultural expression, recreation, and housing, the leadership's role was to involve people in examining all these relations and issues in philosophical and theoretical terms. It seemed conceivable conceivable to Eisenstein that a strong alloy of struggle consciousness could be fused among working class community residents who, in the long term, might provide democratic leadership in the community and in a new working class movement.

Although Eisenstein's Marxist perspective invested the organized working class with the potentiality of self-consciously intervening in history, Eisenstein's youth in Brownsville, his experience in the Army, his experience in the East Harlem Urban League and his experience as a teacher, had required him to deal with and recognize the

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actual American working class. Whatever actual working class men and women's resistances, resentments and angers were in relation to bosses or other forms of authority, they acted upon these resentments mainly individualistically and in the sphere of personal life. Increasingly, despite the world shattering experience of depression and World War, and a less encompassing but dynamic labor movement, they experienced their troubles as private, not public issues. Unable to envision alternatives, American working class families were tied to and identified with capitalist ideas and institutional arrangements.

No less than other Americans, their world view was imbued with: individualistic concepts of self, freedom, initiative and creativity; dreams of success and escape through the acquisition of money and the purchase of goods and homes; a political passivity that resisted making politics an on-going part of life; a slew of deeply felt racial and ethnic prejudices and parochial traditions stubbornly resistant to change; a distrust of ideas; narrow notions of women's roles and potential; an acceptance of the negative prestige accorded to manual work and even an inability to recognize what workers contributed to the society; and excessive deference to those in power or vested with official authority. All these values were blended, though not very coherently, with American values of equality, liberty, participation and self-direction.

The concrete footing for all these ideas was the working class' sense of the givenness of social institutions despite their recent contradictory experience of transforming events. Working people had no more than a limited sense of the possibility kicking back, or rattling the cage, because they had no solid sense of alternatives and

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therefore no recognition that there was a cage. Personal life, community life and one's relation to socially distant institutions were givens and could not be changed other than by finding a spot with more accessible rewards for themselves as individuals.

For Eisenstein, all this implied that the principal redoubt of capitalist political economy was this blend of democratic and reactionary values and ideas, internalized by the working class and practiced by them through a wide range of social institutions including the state, the economy, and institutions of everyday life. If this were true, Eisenstein believed, there could be no effective re-creation of working class movement without challenging people's ideas and trying to break people away from their identification with the values that tied them to capitalist arrangements, individualist concepts of freedom, the derogation of the working class, ethnic parochialisms, and racial prejudices. This meant that people needed to be able to examine the ideas, values and pressures that guided their current experience and to experiment with other ideas -- those democratic ideas they inchoately held as well as new ideas -- in order to create new experience from which they could learn. In no other way could they move towards a more fully fledged and deeper understanding and identification with more humanly progressive values. In particular, this meant cracking the lens of permanence through which working class men and women experienced and understood a range of institutions, relationships, themselves and diverse others.

Eisenstein saw two methodological values implied by this analysis. The first was that there could be no change in the consciousness of working class men and women without precipitating conflicts of ideas in relation to the broad range of relationships,

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values and issues that constituted community life. Eisenstein defined *conflict* as the existence, in every sphere of political, social and personal life, of opposing ideas and opposing courses of action . Impressed by the givenness of things, most people were not aware that conflict existed or that there were alternatives. The role of leadership therefore was to deliberately challenge the firmly held ideas and modes of thought of the people it sought to organize by introducing new ideas and new values. Leadership then involved people in examining the implications of alternative ideas for courses of action as well as examining the consequences of those actions. Eisenstein defined *struggle* as the process of examining the consequences of ideas and actions and of choosing a course of action (the resolution of conflict) after which new problems and conflicts would be faced. Eisenstein articulated 'conflict and struggle' as methodological values in community organizing ("Some Thoughts on The Matter of The Nature of Conflict", 1975, presented to U.C.C.).

The second value was that community organizing leadership had to see itself as fundamentally pedagogical. Its primary responsibility was not the development of political strategy, not the mobilization of people, and not the building of a multi-faceted and financially stable organization, even if all that were necessary. Those were instrumentalities. To see leadership as pedagogical meant that leadership's primary responsibility was to teach, that is to raise and to change people's consciousness of themselves and their relationship to others and of their world. Consequently, leadership sought and deliberately created opportunities to make it possible for people to reflect upon the ideas and values that governed their actions and choices, and to develop a

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theoretical understanding of themselves and their world. Eisenstein formulated his approach as raising the experience of people to a conscious level, involving them in an examination of their experience in relation to democratic values, creating new experience based on democratic values and involving them in reflecting upon their new experience. The goal was to move people to see that their experience and their actions were based on often unexamined ideas and theories that were changeable social products. With other ideas and values they could make different choices and commitments.[5]

This was not intended, however, as a series of academic exercises, even if types of academic forum were often used. The assumption was that people learned by reflecting together upon their own experience of everyday life, within the organization's programs and in political struggle. Experience involved not only what happened to them, or how they acted upon what happened, but also the new experiences that they were able to create together. It was understandable, for example, for men and women living in the public housing projects to conclude from their daily observation of the segregated congregations of black and white women on different benches that nothing could be changed about the separations that people practiced along the racial divide. But, the subsequent collective interpretation of an interracial social experience that black and white men and women intentionally created together, suggested otherwise about people's desires and their possibilities of realization. In the process of creating new social experience together, based on ideas that challenged dominant ideas and values, people of diverse backgrounds might learn that they could control and give direction to various aspects of their social lives based on more democratic ideas. They could, with

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consciousness, collectively create a meaningful, and no less actual social reality based on ideas and values that were different from those they currently used to guide their lives. In that process also, people might feel their understandings expand, their conduct of their relationships grow more complex and self-aware, their attitudes become more receptive, and, their ability exercise of self-conscious direction over their lives be enhanced.

This process might involve conflicts between public housing residents and outside agents such as the Housing Authority, the schools, the bosses, or any agency of the state or the economy. Or, it might involve dealing with conflicts among residents and members of the Center, between members, and between leaders and members, and even conflicts that were unrecognized as such until they were precipitated by leadership. It meant that leadership asked and challenged members to change their ideas, values and actions in many different ways. To attempt to do this anywhere, and especially in voluntary organization, always involves the risk of opposition and reaction, especially where people can "vote with their feet" to stay or go. It cannot succeed unless people want it to succeed. It is important to point out, therefore, that Eisenstein's emphases upon conflict, struggle and teaching required and assumed a profound faith in reason and the capacity of ordinary people to use reason -- to reflect upon their experience, to develop critical awareness and to resolve conflicts. In fact, the Eisensteins articulated reason and the capacity of humans to develop knowledge as a value.

Two Problems of Community Organizing: Money and The Long Haul

The fact that a cautious labor movement, including most, but not all, of its more challenging unions, was now seeking a stabilized acceptance of its role in the polity and

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the economy meant that it did not welcome efforts to build a struggle consciousness willing to experiment with new orientations or issue fundamental challenges. As an alembic of organization, the community, however, had its limits. It did not promise the financial stability that could be achieved by a union dues check-off. Non-sectarian community organization was typically financially less stable than church-based organization because it foreswore provision of the meanings afforded by established religions and supported as legitimate by the larger society. Also, while local churches and synagogues all sought to raise their own monies in local events, the mainstream churches had, in addition, access to the financial resources of the larger and wealthier institutions of which they were a part. The principal non-sectarian and community-based organizations in New York City were older, Manhattan-based, often settlement house types, with at least a few wealthy board members and with access to larger sources of New York money. Outside of Manhattan, these sources of funds were rare, and almost non-existent on the outskirts of the City in East New York or East Flatbush. The very name East New York suggested a town (like West New York in New Jersey) apart from the City.[6]

The solution to the problem of raising money in this early period, and institutionalized through 1980, was familiar to all small, non-profit agencies and especially churches with working class congregations. The women (and the men) in the Center applied their energy to organizing a grueling annual round of fund-raising activities that were also social events whose non-stop character was more possible and enjoyable among a generation not habituated to television. The period from 1955 to

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1961 is filled with an annual round of Mah Jong and Card Parties, Theater Parties, Dinner Dances, Luncheon and Fashion Shows, block parties, raffles, baseball pools, and community outings developed, organized and staffed by volunteers, all of which were used to raise money. In addition, they organized Bazaars, Souvenir Journals, and Door to Door soliciting campaigns. Finally, also, after considerable discussion about the ways in which forms of gambling preyed on working people, the Board reluctantly decided to run Carnivals and bingo. Staffed by volunteers, a Carnival's roulette and dice games once or twice a year and bingo every week could raise significant amounts of money. They became experts in secular, working class community fund-raising, and their expertise enabled them to support the organization's programs and staff in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s with almost no assistance from outside sources.

Without money there could not be independent (i.e., non-state, non-party) organization of community residents over the long haul. Without continuity over a long haul, the possibilities of learning and change among members and within the community were limited. Without a set of meanings -- values, goals and understanding -- people would not persist either in political struggles for distant, abstract goals, or in the often tedious work of small-scale money-raising. Eisenstein understood that what people needed to sustain their involvement over the long haul was a group life that actualized in the present the values and ideas implied by their vision of a better society. Political goals and fund-raising possessed vitality because their meanings were to some extent realized in the quality of group life members created together.

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ENDNOTES

1. The families who occupied the new projects were working class and lower middle class. In the Boulevard and Linden census tracts, 20.2% of the men were craftsmen/foreman and operatives compared with 34.4% in NYC and 39% in Brooklyn. 21.6% of the men in the projects were clerical workers compared with 12.5% in NYC, and 12.6% in Brooklyn. Only 6.9% of the men were professional/technical workers compared with 11% in NYC and 9.1% in Brooklyn. Only 2.6% were laborers compared with 5.1% in NYC and 5.9% in Brooklyn. Altogether, 60% of the men in housing were employed as clerical workers, craftsmen and operatives, compared with 46.9% in NYC and 51.6% in Brooklyn. The men were skilled workers, bookkeepers, cooks, salesman, a few shop owners, and even a few teachers .

Of the employed women in the projects, 53.8% held clerical jobs, and 15.8% were operatives, the next largest job category. In NYC, 36.4% of employed women held clerical jobs and 19.1% were operatives; Brooklyn-wide, 38.3% of the women held clerical jobs and 23.4% were operatives. 7.4% of project women held professional/technical jobs, slightly less than the Brooklyn figure of 8.8%. In NYC, 11.3% of employed women were professional/technical workers. The women who held paying jobs were bookkeepers, diverse office workers, factory workers, and nurses.

73% more of the men and 48% more of the women in these Housing Projects were clerical workers than the proportion of men and women employed in these jobs in NYC as a whole. Among the men, the proportion of laborers was half that of NYC and the proportion of operatives was 22% of the proportion in NYC. Among the women in these projects, the proportion of operatives was 82% of the proportion in NYC. Among the men, the proportion of professional/technical workers was only of the NYC proportion, and among the women, the proportion of professional/ technical workers was 65% of the NYC proportion (U.S. Census, 1960, "Labor Force Characteristics of the Population".).

2. Terry Haywoode's (1988) dissertation, which stimulated me to examine this point more deeply, makes the strong point that the political and associational involvement of working class women in collective efforts to protect their communities and their families is a form of "working class feminism."

3. If this is right, and if democratic (participatory) vitality depends upon communities that know themselves and can define their opinions and interests, then the diminution of this community building work as a consequence of the increase in women's labor force participation (as well as TV, VCR's, and other factors) may have negative consequences for democracy, and for working class based, democratic social change movement. It may also be easier to manipulate working class citizens who are less socially connected, unless a functional substitute can be discovered.

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4. There are two obvious reasons why Eisenstein did not systematically initiate discussions about the political economy of capitalism and socialism. First, he was hired as the director of a community center to develop community center programs. Very few of the people with whom he worked, at that historical moment, were interested in political economy. Second, given the powerful anti-communism of the period, had Eisenstein begun his work at the community center by making "socialism" a central issue, he correctly judged that he would not have retained his job for long. The community center and its leadership was often accused of being communists because of its emphasis upon integration but that is a far cry from declaring oneself a socialist. .

In addition, Roslyn Bologh suggests that part of the broad lack of interest in the U.S. in questions of political economy was related to the seemingly unstoppable growth of the American economy. When that growth stops in the 1970s and "stagflation" sets in, questions of political economy become generally more salient. In the 1970s, the U.C.C. newspaper devotes much more space to political economic issues and regularly raises the question of social control and planning in relation to parts of the economy. Also, U.C.C. Leadership Institutes begin to analyze capitalism and discuss socialism. Although the staff, some Board members and some volunteers have a political economic perspective and think of themselves as socialists, the U.C.C. is never a "socialist" or Marxist organization even though its values, strategies, tactics and persistence presuppose a Marxist perspective.

5. Although Eisenstein did not know Gramsci's work, there is a striking similarity in their conceptualization of many ideas related to the problem of working class 'organizing', which I define as moving people to an understanding about themselves and their world with which they initially disagreed, and moving them to act upon their new understandings. Gramsci's notion of the content and function of "common sense" (1971: 323-333, 419) as one of the bulwarks of the moral and cultural hegemony of the ruling class overlaps with the way Eisenstein thought about how the working class internalized a blend of the "dominant ideology" of capitalism, , ethnic traditions and democratic values. Gramsci's notion of every man as a philosopher is identical to Eisenstein's insistence that everyone had a philosophy that assumed, consciously or not, ideas about human nature, about how the individual and society are related, about how society is organized, about the role of government, about the possibility or impossibility of social change, etc. ("Do You Want To Know", 1972, presented at U.C.C. Leadership Institute).

Gramsci posited the role of the working class "organic intellectual" as one of critiquing common sense (1971:330) from the point of view of a coherent ideology, Marxism, that theoretically articulated the interests of the working class and human progress, and challenged the hegemony of the bourgeoisie across a broad spectrum of moral and cultural ideas and values, not only focused on economic and political ideas and arrangements. Further, Gramsci conceptualized the "mode of being" of the working class organic intellectual as consisting of "active participation in practical life, as

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constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader' and not just a simple orator" (1971:10). Eisenstein's similar conception of the "organizer" was someone with a pedagogical orientation who was involved with the lives of his/her constituents, challenging their basic ideas across a broad spectrum of ideas and values, introducing new ideas and a different ideology, and helping to create new experiences and new forms of struggle in order to expand their social, political, economic, moral understanding and sense of possibility ("A Time of Decision", 1975, presented at U.C.C. Leadership Institute).

Finally, Gramsci's understanding of the process of moving the working class to a higher level of understanding of themselves and their world was not restricted to entering into conflict with them over their political ideologies. "Critical understanding of self takes place therefore through a struggle of political 'hegemonies' and of opposing directions, *first in the ethical field* and then in that of politics proper, in order to arrive at the working out at a higher level of one's own conception of reality." (My emphasis. 1971:333) This did not mean that politics had to wait upon the resolution of ethical problems. Gramsci's point here was methodological, not temporal; the problems of politics grounded and informed the 'ethical field' and both had to be engaged. Eisenstein also reacted to a similar recognition of the ways in which the ideas and values that guided everyday life both grounded and derived from the dominant ideology. At U.C.C. Eisenstein emphasized the regular involvement of volunteers and residents in processes of examining and considering alternatives to the ideas and values that governed their everyday social, individual and organizational choices, not only their explicitly political ideologies.

6. David Rubel's study (1997) of the distribution of foundation giving and the unequal distribution of NYC government cutbacks in grants to private agencies in the late 1980's and early 1990s reveals that the foundation sector was not a viable source of funding for neighborhood services in the "outer boroughs". Also, private agency funding by the City was cut back more severely in the outer boroughs than in Manhattan when Giuliani was elected. There were exceptions, to be sure. But, in the 1950s and 1960s, Manhattan-tilt of foundations and of City government was even sharper than it was three decades later.

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CHAPTER II

IN THEIR DREAMS FOR CHILDREN BEGIN PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Emphasis On Programs For Children And Youth

All good organizers know that effective organizing in communities or in workplaces begins at the place where the organizer's theory and philosophy intersects with the felt and conscious needs of the people whom they seek to organize. The people with whom leadership began to work at Glenwood Houses were not political. Very few possessed formulated political goals to which they were committed. They did not see political parties and processes as their primary routes to advancing their individual or collective self-interest. Their most deeply felt and conscious needs and commitments, especially the women's, crystallized as goals for family and especially children. They envisioned achieving these goals primarily through jobs, schools, and making homes. For many of the women in Glenwood and Boulevard Houses, this entailed a ferocious investment of their energies in what they thought their children needed. They wanted "the best" for their children: good schools that would promote their children's academic development; social and cultural opportunities for their children to explore and develop their talents and interests; opportunities to play and to have friends; responsible supervision in environments and programs in which they, as parents, could have confidence.

In the 1950s when Glenwood and Boulevard Houses opened on an undeveloped edge of Brooklyn, the form taken by many women's intense concern for their children was a search for programs that could enrich their growth and well-being. Except for the

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public schools which would soon be overcrowded, programs were scant. This meant that they had to find ways to create them. With some help from NYCHA, some of the women at Glenwood Houses committed themselves to raising the funds for a professional director of the community center facilities in the project who could begin to organize programs for their children. Their first initiatives presupposed both their recognition that they could not provide what they wanted for their children unless other Glenwood parents were involved or at least supportive, and that what they wanted for their children required the involvement of other children.

A strong sense of collective proprietorship resulted from their initiatives. They had set up the community center; they had formed a Board of Directors; they had dared to commit themselves to raise the money for staff salary; and they had hired a professional staff member, and then hired a new one; they had decided upon the children's and adult programs. This was *their* community center program for *their* children. At the same time, the process of planning and implementing the forms and content of programs for children was the initial arena in which the leadership precipitated the contest over new meanings.

Children's Programs, Changing Selves

As the creation of programs for their children was the initial and abiding motivation of these women as well as many of their husbands, a principal emphasis of the Center and its new director was on building children's programs. Between 1954 and the beginning of 1961, the Glenwood and then the Boulevard Community Centers developed an extensive range of programs for young people. These included a daily after

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school program for 100 elementary schoolers, a daily after school program for 40 junior high schoolers, a nightly teen lounge for 50 teenagers, a summer day camp that enrolled 240 children, and a summer sleep-away camp that enrolled 75 children. In addition, the Centers sponsored and organized a Little League for five years with 200 children (boys), as well as Brownie, Cub Scout, Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops. Except for the involvement of administrative staff, the Little League and scouting groups were staffed by volunteers. All of the other programs were staffed by part-time and full-time staff who received salaries. Approximately one-third of the salaries were paid by the NYC Board of Education to staff whom the professional Center staff supervised. Some of the programs charged fees, but none of the fees covered the actual expenses of the programs. The rest of the salaries and expenses were paid by funds raised by the Community's Centers' volunteers in an annual round of fund-raising activities. The provision of a broad range of responsibly supervised, safe and stimulating programs for children unquestionably met a need. What remains remarkable, because not created in any other housing project in NYC in that period, is the short space of time within which this range and size of programs was created with only the facilities (a kitchen, offices, clubrooms and a large, multi-purpose space) and maintenance provided by NYCHA and a small proportion of staff salaries provided by the Board of Education.[1]

Planning children's programs shimmered with significance for these women because their desires for the "best" for their children entailed desires for themselves, their purposes and their identities, however well or poorly these were articulated.[2] The response of the Center's leadership to these powerful and inextricably intertwined desires

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was to recognize, approve and support their realization. Leadership acted to help these women accomplish their formal programmatic aims and made possible the women's extensive participation in the process. This was standard community organizing practice.

If that were all leadership had sought to accomplish, these working class women and their husbands may have been energized simply by the process of participating in constructing these new and needed programs for their children. What differentiated the Center leadership from leaderships that emphasize the participatory process alone was that it entered into conflict with these parents, mainly women, about the content of their formal aims. By challenging their conceptions of what their children needed, of what was "best", leadership challenged the housing project women's conceptions of themselves.

Raising children and planning program for many of these women, to different degrees and at different levels of understanding, became not only a process of reproducing already held norms and values that expressed adult conceptions of the good life. It became the occasion to revise their ideas. This was because, as the embodied expression of parents' hopes, emotions and conceptions of a good life, children's lives also provide an opportunity for parents to relive and revise their own lives and modify their conceptions of a good life. Each revision, each new hope that parents project for their children casts back upon parents' identities requiring revisions in parents' sense of their own purposes and identities. In a similar process, what these women imagined, planned and executed for their children became a standard and orientation for them. As parents accountable to other parents and leadership, they felt obliged to live with some

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consistency the values they projected for, imposed upon and encouraged in their children lives.

Projecting and developing children's programs became a process of deepening and articulating their rudimentary understanding that what was good for their children was good for all children and that all children needed to learn to live in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic society and learn to struggle for a better world. These goods could not be achieved without the involvement of socially different children, and it was eventually understood that this required the involvement of socially different parents to demonstrate that adults meant what they said.

Leadership also used discussions about children's programs to develop a sociological self-awareness among volunteers. The process of acquiring a sociological self-awareness was one of involving volunteers in examining the ideas and social factors that shaped their everyday choices and constituted their self-conceptions in relation to a larger social world. It also involved an emphasis upon the possibility of changing one's self-conception based upon values that connected to democratic social goals. The process worked, in part, because the women were eager to expand their social relationships, excited by ideas, and hungry to expand intellectually and enter thereby into a larger world. In this way, the dreams of parents for their children became sources of norms and responsibilities for parents' lives, and not only in relation to their children.

Integrating Children's Groups and the Beginning of the Civil Rights Movement and Including the Disabled

Several aspects of children's and youth programs illustrate some of the conflicts

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of ideas that were involved. In this section, I have chosen as illustrative, how ideas about freedom and social living, racial difference, disability, and the inclusive community were developed in Center youth programs in ways that challenged adult norms. I give these illustrations to suggest the range of ideas that were introduced to Center members and project residents. What needs to be emphasized is that many aspects of these programs were experienced as challenging, difficult, and very different from what people were accustomed to.

In his first year, the director re-organized the programmatic emphasis of the day camp, and wrote in the GCCN:

> It is our philosophy that children not only come to camp to have fun, but also to have a social experience in a group where they learn how to grow and develop skills in social living. The emphasis will be on helping the child to make his own decision with his group, to help the group learn how to take responsibility for its individual members, and to give the group the responsibility of deciding on the kinds of program it would like to have. This does not mean the counselors will be sitting back and waiting for things to happen. The counselor will be very much involved...working with children to help them decide on things rather than deciding for them.(May, 1955)

This social group work emphasis upon using summer camps as crucibles for the development of democratic attitudes and skill for socially responsible social living was fading among the social workers in non-profit camping circles in 1955, although it was still saluted. Social workers had begun to adopt Freudianism and later other psychologies as the principal basis of their discipline, and individual casework as primary method of working in the 1920s as they professionalized the field (Lubove 1965). By 1955, for many project residents, if schooling was the child's work, then camping was the child's fun, and fun was doing what you want. Suggesting goals for

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camping as more than or other than fun, or defining fun as the turbulence of group life, was frowned upon. Today (1998), the programmatic emphasis of day camps and sleep-away camps is mainly upon a range of activity choices or upon a specific activities such as computers, sports, performing arts, weight loss, sailing, biking, and hiking.[3]

The day camp involved the children in athletics, swimming, horseback riding, arts and crafts, cooking, folk dancing, singing, dramatics and trips, and so forth. But, the programmatic goals of the day camp, and all of the youth programs aimed at helping children develop socially responsible attitudes and skills for social living. This involved learning to make decisions with others for superordinate goals which in turn involved learning to talk and to listen, to take turns and to compromise, to enjoy what others enjoyed and what one previously did not, to plan, to respect others, to be unafraid to disagree, and to adhere to what "we" agreed to after discussion. It also involved children's learning to see their group as their agency for action.

In this perspective, the group assumed responsibility for individuals and contributed to the expansion of the realm of individual activity and growth. This implied a social, not individualist, conception of freedom and the value content of growth. This, too, was a problem for parents whose more individualistic conceptions defined freedom as being free from the limitations imposed by others. In the Center's youth programs, and in the adult programs, freedom was defined as existing in and through the possibilities offered by others within one's group.

Further, the group was defined as including the whole community -- individuals of different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. This was less a problem for the

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white parents of young children than it was for the white parents of teenagers. One editorial in the June, 1955 GCCN pointed out:

> Parents are teaching prejudice at home. We hear in the media that all people are created equal but at home we say, `I don't want you hanging around with that Negro, Jew or Christian.' They don't want to hurt their parents so they meet with their friends away from the supervised Teen Lounge where the people you want them to avoid are supervised. At the Lounge, you will see there is no difference in Christian, Jew, white or colored. They dance together, sing together, and play together. They are learning to live together so that our tomorrows will be better than today.

In this quote, two points need to be underscored. First, is the call upon parents to change their racially and religiously prejudicial behaviors at home. And, second, is the articulated idea that what we, together, plan and do for our children not only express the different and better world we envision for society's future, but also, our actions are part of the process of creating that society. This was, it should be remembered, a period when the idea of white and African American teenage boys and girls dancing and socializing together was anathema for most of the country and not at all welcome even for the project's working class, generally economically and politically liberal residents. At one point, as remembered by several of the people I interviewed, NYCHA refused to print pictures of the interracial teens in its brochures about the community center. "For us", one volunteer remembered, "integration was a very important thing, but the Housing Authority would never allow public pictures of teenage racially mixed groups. Never." Almost two years later, GCCN (June, 1957) reported the partial success that:

> Last year the Lounge program suffered because parents pressured their teenagers not to attend. The interfaith, interracial character of the Lounge was a major factor in causing this pressure. This year some resistance broke down as parents realized their teens were meeting outside

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> the Center under undesirable conditions. Lounge attendance now varies from 25-40 teens each night with 60-75 at special events. This year teen program included a dramatics group, roller and ice-skating parties, a hay ride, a dance, boxing and weight-lifting, a judiciary committee to deal with behavioral problems, a tutoring program and a vocational and school guidance program.

In the month of Brotherhood Week, for several years in a row, the front page in the GCCN was filled with articles about the Center's understanding of the "brotherhood" issue. In February, 1957, as always, the point was made that "brotherhood" was a year-round goal of the Center, and in addition, that issues related to brotherhood were "the content of children's programming". After referring to an eight year old's desire not to live in the projects "because there are too many Jews" and the objection of several other children to the fact that "their group leader isn't kosher and eats pork", one of the stories recounted was about how a day camp incident was handled:

> A seven year old white child objected to swimming with a Negro boy in his group. The Negro boy was so affected he vowed never to return. He was convinced to come talk to the worker but still wouldn't come back until one of the other boys in the group said, 'Come back. We need you. We're learning about Puerto Rico and we want you to help play the drum'.
>
> Then there was a discussion in the group about what happened. The result was a real acceptance of the child and a greater understanding of the business of living together.

The content of the discussion within the group is not described and it is clear from the context that black children represent a small minority compared to what their proportion would be several years later. What is important however, is that the Center posits learning to live together as a goal, and assumes that racial understandings can be dealt with and changed. Further, by putting the article on the front page, the Center represents itself to its adult community as an organization for which learning to living

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across racial and religious difference is a primary goal in its youth and adult programs.

Two years later (May, 1959) , as the civil rights movement picked up steam, 20 pre-teens and teenagers of the Boulevard-Glenwood Community Center rode the bus to Washington, D.C. to join 22,500 others in a March for Integrated Schools. Although several adults and children as individuals and families had participated in civil rights activity before this march, this was the first political action of a Center group in support of civil rights. By the following year, almost all aspects of youth and adult program were responding to the civil rights movement, including the adult dramatic group which performed a play about the new thrust for Negro freedom. In April, 1960, there were four articles on the civil rights struggle in the newspaper. One article described the participation of the teens and pre-teens (and some adults) in a picket line in front of Woolworth's on Flatlands Avenue. They were supporting the lunch counter sit-ins and a national campaign against Woolworth's segregationist policies in the South. Another article described the discussion in their first Youth Forum about the pros and cons of picketing Woolworth's and why teens and pre-teens should care about what was happening in the South. An article by a white teen described his own and his black friend's reactions when his friend was called "nigger" as they were riding their bikes in the neighborhood. The fourth article headlined the fight for Negro civil rights as "Our Fight For Our Future" and called upon adults to "join our buses in a demonstration in NYC for equality everywhere--on the job, in the schools and at lunch-counters."

In these instances, their children may have been their parents' political vanguard, but not by much. Sending the kids to Washington required the permission of parents and

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organizing a picket line required the approval of the Board as well as parent permission for individual kids. Further, the adults were the ones raising the money for these programs. It is not that they were without apprehension when their children formed a picket line in front of Woolworth's. But these were actions that embodied norms and values they had already subscribed to for their children's programs within the Center even before the civil rights movement had begun to roll. It would be far more accurate to describe the Center's participation as an inter-generational involvement. What parents wanted for their children had become norms for their own political action and social lives.

Integrating the Disabled

Inclusiveness did not only refer to race and religion. The Center's leadership sought to include children of varying degrees of disability in their programs with "normal" children. A letter to The LINK (the name of the monthly newspaper after the Boulevard and Glenwood Community Centers combined) from a mother described how this sometimes took place. She was walking down the street near the Center and met the director and a member of the Board:

> "Why isn't your son in the Community Center?"
> "I didn't think he'd be accepted because he's blind."
> "What's that got to do with it. He's a member of the community, isn't he?"

In the main, however, the leadership did not depend upon such chance encounters. In the Summer, 1956, in response to a request from the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Brooklyn, the Center integrated 10 muscular dystrophic children into its day camp program, five each in two boys groups of 10 normal children. The MDA had

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inquired whether the Center had any summer program for dystrophic children not expecting that the children would be integrated into a normal day camp setting. When the MDA request came, it was presented to the Center's day camp committee whose initial reaction was ambivalent. Committee members knew little about the disease and questioned the feasibility of the program. Their questions were about the impact of the dystrophic children upon the other children, (including their own), whether muscular dystrophy was contagious, whether dealing with disability were the function of the Center, whether appropriate personnel could be found, and how the program would physically and psychologically affect the dystrophic children. A sub-committee interviewed doctors, psychologists and social workers and reported back to the day camp committee who unanimously recommended integrating the children with the day camp program. When the recommendation was presented to the Board of directors, the same questions were raised, but the Board passed the recommendation unanimously, notwithstanding the reservations of some members.

Although one or two staff members had some limited experience working with disabled persons, their experience working with dystrophic adults was limited to the adult dystrophic group that had been established in the Center six months before.[4] None had any experience with dystrophic children alone or together with non-dystrophic children. At the day camp orientation meeting for parents, before the summer, the parents were informed that the Center wanted to develop such a program as part of its general effort to develop new ideas and methods of working with people. At the time, no parents objected. Once day camp began however, when some of the normal children

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were disgusted by how the dystrophic children ate and appalled by the exposure of their physical deformity at the beach, many parents began to object to the inclusion of the muscular dystrophic children. They thought it was not right to subject their kids to the problems of the dystrophic children, but their reactions subsided with the ebbing of their children's reactions.

All the dystrophic children were in wheelchairs, and most had limited control of their muscles. After initial unanticipated difficulties, the dystrophic children were included in every aspect of group program including dramatics, arts and crafts and overnight hiking. The reaction of the dystrophic children to this expansion of their experience and to their relationships with the normal children was to want more. Equally important, after their initial dismay, the non-dystrophic children soon saw the disabled children as valued members of their group. (Wohl, "Report On Integration of Muscular Dystrophic Children in Program of Camp Glenwood", 1956) In the memory of one woman,

> Some of the normal kids were so repulsed that they withdrew. A couple of kids couldn't even eat. But, in what was really a very short time, a matter of weeks, the kids recovered from their withdrawal. Morris found rolls of cocoa matting which enabled us to roll the kids into the fields across the street and even up to the water on the beaches. Then the staff would go in the water with the dystrophic kids. Very quickly the normal kids wanted to help role out the mats and roll the wheel chairs of the dystrophic kids and they did..
>
> Then the time came to do horseback riding and most of us thought that was impossible. But, Morris found a way, with straps and clamps to keep the kids on the horses with staff and normal kids riding beside them. Just watching those kids on the horses, you got emotional. Later, the same thing happened when we integrated the juvenile delinquent kids with the regular kids in the teen camp. Parents had the same reactions.

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There are several points to emphasize here. First, the human community the leadership and volunteers imagined is an inclusive one[5]. It includes the severely disabled not as persons parked apart, but as fully integrated into the community as possible. The leadership did not promise that this program would "work". The staff's experience working with dystrophic children was limited. Leadership did not "know" what the consequences of the program would be for either the disabled or normal children. It acted based upon its conceptualization of the human community. The program was intended as an experiment to probe the possibility of realizing a dimension of that community. Second, the idea of an inclusive human community presumed that the possibilities for human individual and social growth resided in the interaction of all members of the community. It was not only the social limitations placed upon the dystrophic children that would be stretched, not only their possibilities that would be enlarged in this process. The abled children could learn to understand and value the effectiveness of their own bodies, to see the range of desires and individuality of the dystrophic children, and to recognize and appreciate the human efforts and stamina of the dystrophic children to struggle persistently with their fates and grow.

Third, the decision to construct such a program was made not by psychologists, social workers and doctors, but by lower middle class and working class residents of NYC housing projects whose own ("normal") children would be affected, and well before the idea of "mainstreaming" the disabled became a national political and educational goal. The volunteer members of the day camp committee and the board

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members were deeply apprehensive at first about whether to execute this program. Sub-committee volunteers discussed their apprehensions with experts and based upon their new knowledge addressed the hesitations of other members of the day camp committee and the board. Volunteers taught one another.

This story of the integration of muscular dystrophic children into a day camp setting is relevant to the process and difficulty of changing people's ideas and why participants found the process so exciting in many other dimensions of the U.C.C.'s activities also. In his essay on "What Is Enlightenment", Kant declares the motto of the Enlightenment to be, "dare to know", have courage to use one's own reason. Yet, as Kant points out, in their first courageous steps to think for themselves, most people experience frightening falls. "Even an uncertain leap over a small ditch is hard because one is not accustomed to such free motion." Kant's notion of working oneself out of tutelage is, of course, strongly individualist. It is not at all descriptive of the mutual dependence of U.C.C. volunteers and their reliance on leadership. But, he does capture their unanchored sense of free motion as they stepped into what for them (and many others) was a realm of social unknowns about what was possible for themselves and their children. While their fears of falling may have been diminished by their sense of social support, they were no less real fears. They started with group apprehension over their children's and their own vulnerability, and a dizzying sense of the unpredictability of the outcome of their decisions. Nevertheless, they shared their group's resolve to enact their chosen ends -- reasoned ends based on their ideas that they would never have dared pursue except together. Over time, individuals understood and experienced their

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subsequent sense of accumulating accomplishment as the accomplishments of *their* group, that is, of the Center. Over time, as their group made one adventurous foray after another into what for them were unknown and unpredictable social experiences, they accumulated a group experience that challenged common sense beliefs about disability, race, religion, the possibility of an inclusive community, and the involvement of ordinary people in creating their own experience based on ideas of what could make the world better. They witnessed changes in themselves and one another that bound them to one another and to their leadership. Some of them, tentatively, at different levels and to differing extents, began to think that the social world was malleable, that its givenness could be otherwise.

My last example of the effect of children's program upon adults is the purchase and operation of a summer resident camp that eventually become a crucial basis for holding the Center together and developing its young adult leadership. One of the regular activities in the day camp was overnight camping. Because the day camp children's and their parents' response to overnight hiking had been so positive, and because Eisenstein had considerable experience in running camping programs, the Center's Board and members decided in 1958 to rent the grounds of a sleepaway camp in Vermont. The following year, in the Spring, 1959, the Board of Directors and members, after considerable discussion, decided to purchase an old, and not well-maintained bungalow colony 90 miles north of NYC in Accord, NY. They borrowed $5,000 and assumed a mortgage of $22,000, that did not include the additional monies they would need to spend on equipment and supplies for Twin Link Camp. Forty years later, some of

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participants in the decision remembered that this was such a considerable sum for them as working class project residents and poorly paid staff that they were astounded by their collective audacity.

As the organization could not afford to pay the professional painters, electricians, carpenters, landscapers, cleaners and plumbers to repair the ravages of decades of use, neglect and the neighboring scavengers, the Center's skilled and unskilled volunteers did the work. During the Spring before the first summer, volunteer men and women and their children spent weekends at the Camp putting it in shape for the camping season. In the Fall, camp committee members and other volunteers put the camp to bed for the winter, draining water lines, wrapping kitchen equipment and supplies, boarding up buildings, and repairing damages inflicted by children. Thereafter, for many years, on weekends in the Spring and Fall camp committee volunteers caravaned to the camp to put it shape for the summer and to bed for the winter. On Memorial Day weekends, 75-150 adults and children would spend their time in camp contributing to the necessary work. Families also used the camp on Labor Days weekends as their resort, sharing the cooking and cleaning chores. One Boulevard Houses volunteer who remembered this early period said:

> My husband and I were Left. We had worked very closely with the American Labor Party. I knew some of the people on the Left that lived in Glenwood. One of them was head of a veteran's organization and had fought in the Spanish Civil War. One of them was brilliant, maybe even smarter than Morris in a lot of ways. But, most of the Left people in Glenwood did not get involved with the community center. They didn't like Morris and they didn't particularly like the non-political direction of the group that was in the leadership at Glenwood.

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It was different at Boulevard. Here there were political people with directions they wanted to go. It wasn't the same. What Morris did was create room for people who were politically thinking people. But he brought something [more] here too. He brought the question of integration to a much higher level. This was a very important issue. It was a higher level philosophically and in practice in social living...

Morris came up with this business of a sleep-away camp. This was new for people like ourselves and he organized it in such a way that he made people feel that *this was theirs, and, they were doing something very important for their children*, even the political people. We all went up to fix up the camp. *It was a very wonderful experience socially because people learned how to live socially. They had to give up a lot of their ideas. They were integrated. They were black and white people, and people who were political and nonpolitical. In order to achieve what they wanted to achieve, they had to learn to accept their differences.* [My emphasis.]

That was a major thing that Morris brought in contrast to a strictly political approach, and out of that developed other things. He did his job as a social worker.

In fact, few social workers were as emphatic about this idea, or as involved in helping people learn how to make it real. And, what the speaker neglects is that these men and women were prepared to initiate changes in themselves and their relationships with other adults in order to assure the integrated social experience and future they wanted for their children.

ENDNOTES

1. It is not that communities of similar economic levels have not occasionally accomplished as much. In East New York today, the African American leadership, committed volunteers, leadership and congregation of St. Paul's Community Baptist Church have accomplished as much and more. The size and range of the services the Church provides are extensive, and the East Brooklyn Congregations, of which it is a member, in the 1980s won Brooklyn Roman Catholic Diocesan financial and political support for the construction of privately-owned one family homes in the community. Then, with their own congregations and the support of the Diocese, they were able to

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pressure the Mayor to grant NYC government financial support for the land and construction of close to 2,000 private homes (Zukin and Zwerman 1985; Freedman 1993). Of course, the racial/ethnic makeup of the two constituencies is different and the set of meanings with which the Church inspires its congregants and volunteers, its culture, is vastly different. What is similar, in addition to the roughly comparable economic levels of the two populations is that both groups infused the particular services and programs they organized to meet their felt needs with vital meanings that extended beyond the shells of those programs. St. Paul's, like all other all churches, roots its appeal in the traditional religious meanings, practices and institutional context in which most of its congregants grow up. But, unless the leadership at St. Paul's were able to connect those traditional meanings to new meanings in relation to currently felt needs, its expansive community achievements would not have been possible. Similarly, unless the leadership of the Centers had been able to connect the traditional meanings, felt needs and cultural orientation of the group of women in housing to a new and invigorating interpretation of those needs, it is unlikely that the leadership and members of the Centers would have been activated as they were.

2. V. Zelizer (1985) describes an analogous relationship in her tracing of the impact upon women of the shift from the 18th and 19th century idea of the child as economically useful to the 20th century idea of the child as sentimentally priceless. In 18th century America the birth of a child was welcomed as the arrival of a future laborer and security for parents in later life. By the middle of the 19th century for the urban middle class, and by the end of the first decades of the 20th century for the urban working class, the construction of the economically worthless and sentimentally exalted child had been mainly completed

Zelizer emphasizes that along with this emerging valuation of the child emerged a narrower conception but a new valuation of women's domestic role. The process of exalting the child also served women's interests because it entailed the process of exalting the domestic role of women. Within a social framework in which women were defined as children's primary care-givers, the struggles of women, as much as men, that aimed at protecting and exalting children were also struggles that protected and exalted women's identity and purposes. In other words, the same process in which women invested hopes, emotions, values and meanings in children lives also embodied their own desires for themselves, expressing and changing their self-conceptions (See also, Degler 1980).

Zelizer says that several processes accounted for this shift including: beginning in the early 19th century, the increasing differentiation between home and the workplace that transformed the basis of family cohesion; the increased emotional value of all family members, including children, as instrumental ties in the family weakened; a deepening of the emotional bonds between parents and children, emotions which parents may have been reluctant to invest in periods of higher birth rates and high infant mortality; and,

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the obsolescence of child labor in the 20th century because the success of industrial capitalism and higher levels of technology required a skilled and educated labor force. "True childhood" and the sense of the immeasurably valuable child emerged for the working class as the "family wage" was created and extended to cover many more male workers.

3. In 1996, when I sought a social group work program for my seven year old son, there were none on Long Island except for children with special problems, and they were rare anywhere in New York City according to the heads of group work programs at the Adelphi School of Social Work, the Hunter School of social work, and the executive director of Godard-Riverside Community Center, one of the most prominent social agencies in New York. Between 1955 and 1995 they had disappeared with the changes in the class structure and the intensification of individualism.

4. The U.C.C. operated a Muscular Dystrophy Social Group from January, 1956 through June, June 1960. The Center's approach and the activities of the group are detailed in five annual reports by Fannie Eisenstein who was the Researcher and main group worker for the group.

5. But, for many years, their imaginations did not stretch to include homosexual teenagers and adults.

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CHAPTER III

THE RICHNESS OF DIFFERENCE AND THE CREATION OF A MISSION

After NYCHA evicted the United Community Centers from the Boulevard and Glenwood Community Centers in February, 1961, the Board and many of the members decided to continue the organization. They set up shop in a storefront in Van Siclen Avenue in East New York, one-half block north of Boulevard and Linden Houses. An editorial in The Link, (March-April, 1961) explained their decision to continue in this way:

> It took us seven years to build an agency which was interracial and non-sectarian not only in goals and philosophy, but in beginnings toward social living. There's always enough talk about brotherhood to drown in but precious little contact between people of different religion or color. People may live next door to one another and even go to the same meeting, but it is alongside and not with. People are pigeon-holed by color, by religion, by their handicaps, by their failures or their children's failures and thus a whole life is fragmented in bits and pieces. And, a person who lives this way feels in bits and pieces too.
>
> Our members have found in our Center a place to struggle for wholeness, together with others, together with their families. We have tried to serve not one sect, but people, and not individuals alone but entire families.
>
> We lay no claim to dazzling success. The amazing thing is that even the struggle consciously to live in this way has been enriching and meaningful for our members. Meaningful enough so that we could decide to struggle further and find ways to maintain our center even without a building, operating out of a storefront and a basement and out of our members' homes.

There are three important themes here that I wish to emphasize. The first is the emphasis upon practice. Goals and philosophy are important as guides for action and understanding, but what counts is the effort to realize of goals in the actual practice of

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social living. The second is that success is defined in terms of the realization of meanings in the quality of social interaction. It is the struggle across difference, albeit conducted by imperfect, narrow and prejudiced, but willing individuals that generates meaning for participants. The third theme emphasizes that the process of moving past narrow and fixed visions of other people (based on race, religion, handicap and failure) to seeing others in the fullness of their humanity is a movement towards wholeness for the feelings and lives of participants.

Leadership's emphasis upon connecting ideas and experience, philosophy and practice began with Eisenstein's arrival. It was startling to all, alarming to some, engaging and challenging to others. There was a shared sense with regard to the pursuit of a practice of integrated social living that it was more than just talk, "we felt we really meant it and acted on it." Two quotes from newspaper articles written by volunteers suggest something about the quality of the process that captivated them. In September, 1956, one volunteer wrote,

> We as neighbors can gain immensely from many *cultural secrets* and experiences that are enjoyable which come from social integration. Such understanding of *emotions*, literature, arts, crafts, philosophies of life and many other assets are valuable and stimulations when people share with one another.[My emphases]

The writer's reference to learning about the "cultural secrets" and "emotions" of different others through "social integration" and the sharing of experience suggests the article was probably written by a relatively new volunteer because neither of these terms was routinely used as part of the organization's jargon. The writer is also probably white because the blacks possessed more knowledge about and were less often surprised by the

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culture and behaviors of the whites. But, the terms the writer uses refer to experiences with which many white and black volunteers were familiar.

Discussions were held regularly about issues of everyday social living: about the ideas, expectations, prejudices and values that formed the bases of people's choices to invite some and not others to one's apartment or Saturday nights at the movies, or accounted for why someone was offended by a term used regularly by others, or why some were reluctant to join a Center club. In these staff-led discussions, women and men of different racial and religious backgrounds talked together sometimes willingly, sometimes pressured by their desire to maintain valued social relationships, and sometimes, after a while, because that is what one did in the organization. They talked with wariness, embarrassment, apprehension, and annoyance and sometimes with bravery and honesty about their angers, resentments, fears and racial prejudices. It was probably in one of these discussions at some charged moment when a person racially different from the writer spoke forthrightly about how he or she felt from a perspective unfamiliar to the writer that the writer experienced her revelation of the "cultural secrets" and "emotions" of others who were different. Suddenly, what had been perceived as the mysterious, illogical, dismissible and perhaps contemptible behavior of different others whose feelings were beyond knowing now became known, understandable and even rational. And, suddenly too, the writer may have felt she had learned and now possessed something large and real about the world, an opening to another's experience and a reflection about herself, that mattered. The idea that the possession of knowledge of another different person's cultural secrets and emotions is an

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"asset", that is, an enrichment of one's self was an articulated value in the organization.

The other example is from a letter to The Link (Nov.-Dec., 1960) by a working class, African-American woman volunteer about "What The Center Means To Me As A Negro":

> It has helped us get rid of some of our prejudices and intolerances against the white race. It has made the word togetherness a part of our daily vocabulary because that is what we have in the Center. There is no fear that we may be looked upon as different because of our race. Neither I nor any of my family now hesitate to enter a restaurant or theater because of the feeling that we may be refused admittance as we once did. . .America is supposed to be a democracy, but only in our Community Center have I seen it really work.

That the Center was successful in making the black (and, the few Spanish-speaking) residents of the area feel welcome is attested to by the Protestant Council report on East New York and Neighboring Communities (1957). In this report the Protestant Council noted that it was only in the housing project community center that non-white and Spanish-speaking groups felt welcome. But, the letter calls our attention to more than just the welcoming atmosphere for minorities at the Center or the sense of being together across racial difference. There is first, the willingness of the writer to admit to an interracial public her prejudices towards whites at an historical moment when such admissions were uncommon and could be risky. We can assume she had already participated in discussions where such admissions were common, encouraged and addressed constructively. Also, the public is not a distant one; it consists of neighbors with whom the writer interacts daily. Yet, there appears to be little apprehension that her reference to her prejudices against whites will endanger her

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relationships, at least not with the whites in the organization. Second, if we take the letter at face value, the writer believes their experience in the interracial organization has strengthened her and her family's ability as Negroes, to challenge and deal with the discrimination they faced in relation to everyday institutions of the larger white world.

Of course this single letter is conclusive evidence of nothing beyond the wish of the organization to present itself as succeeding in this way. On the other hand, to say that the newspaper is limited as a source of information is not to say that it is useless.[1] The newspaper reliably indicates how the organization chose to present its ideas to its members and community and the range of programs it employed to realize those ideas. It also indicates that by 1960, the 50 to 150 people (mainly women) who volunteered time each week agreed with some of these ideas, at various levels of understanding. This was true even as their need for children's programs, their desires for the satisfactions of social relationships, and the opportunities afforded them to develop their skills and intellectual competence continued to be among their primary motivations. The philosophy of the program became for many their way of realizing their personal goals.

Among the population of adults who did not volunteer time but who enrolled their children in various Center programs or who, themselves, joined adult interest clubs, the reasons to participate varied. It is very likely that most adults enrolled their children motivated mainly by the availability of what they regarded as conveniently located, inexpensive children's programs of reasonable quality. Similarly, adults joined the Ceramics Club or the Latin Dance Club to do ceramics, or to learn how to mambo with others in a place that was inexpensive and within walking distance. But, even this latter

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group who used the services of the Center for assurances of responsible child care or to have fun socializing and polishing a skill, did so knowing the content of the Center's activities and that they and their children were participating with others of diverse racial and ethnic groups.

During the period 1954-1960, the organization emphasized two ideas in how it identified itself. It focused on the idea that the community center was a voluntary, grass-roots, working class organization of persons who were taking responsibility for constructing a democratic social life for themselves and their children. It also emphasized "the richness of difference" as a value in its newspaper and for guiding practice in almost every aspect of children's and adult program. The newspaper reports a continuous effort to include as part of the population it serves, children, teenagers and adults of different racial, religious and ethnic backgrounds with various kinds and levels of disability.[2] The newspaper presents the organization as one that seek to unite the different populations in the community to work together for common goals. There are regular articles in the newspaper celebrating brotherhood; admonishing parents not to teach prejudice to their children; and, urging upon readers the enriching benefits to be obtained when people share experience with different others. And, finally there were references to other, larger agencies, outside the community who recognized the Community Center's work: the director was appointed to the National Community Relations Committee of the American Friends Service Committee in recognition for his work in intergroup relations; the B'nai B'rith issued a citation of merit to the Center for its "devoted efforts and achievement to advance democracy, improve human relations

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and further understanding in the community"; even the Jewish War Veterans presented the director with a citation for his work in intergroup relations; and, papers on the work with the dystrophic children and the dystrophic adults were presented to audiences of professional social workers.

The emphasis on inter-cultural and inter-racial themes in all aspects of so broad a range of activity was in part a product of the direction of the leadership. But, it could not be only that. It made sense to these volunteers in relation to how they thought about themselves and their relation to their society and how they projected a future for their children and their society. Their participation, shared elan and consciousness of their goals constituted their sense of mission. Their understanding of their mission defined how they and their way of life were different from others' and other organizations', and why what they were doing was especially meaningful.

U.C.C.'s Multiculturalism: Pluralism Versus Interchange

The social philosophy that directed U.C.C.'s brand form of multi-culturalism was articulated to the community on a regular basis.

> When our Jewish teenagers, your children, can say to us that they would prefer not to have a Purim celebration because it is not American, we must become concerned; concerned with helping our young people to recognize the culture of Jews as an integral part of American life.
>
> Purim has values which are universal. A Jew had the courage to struggle for the freedom of her people. A non-Jew, King Ahasueras had the vision and understanding to reject the persecution and annihilation of a people.
>
> We recognize the right of all groups to celebrate their holidays in their own unique manner. As an intercultural community agency, the Center, however, must reject any demand which would lead to the exclusion of any

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> groups contribution to American life, from the experience of the community. The role of the Center is to function as a bridge linking the entire community together. Our responsibility is to forge a link of understanding among all peoples through their cultural contributions." ("A Restatement of Policy", GCCN, May, 1957)

In the housing projects, the Jewish population was internally a diverse one. Some Jews were orthodox, some were less observant, and some were poised to ignore the characteristics and traditions that distinguished them as Jews from other Americans. For many, however, including the leadership of the Center, the staff, Board of Directors and many volunteers, the memory of Nazism and the death camps was still fresh. So was their own experience with discrimination in the United States (especially in the streets, the labor market and the armed services). At that moment, the middle 1950s, they teetered on the edge of acquiring a sense of acceptance as Jews in America. They were, on the one hand, unwilling to relinquish their specifically Jewish identity. On the other, they wanted acceptance in the American cultural mainstream.

U.C.C.'s leaderships' resolution of this tension was their secularist refusal to permit the values of the Jewish experience and Jewish traditions to be defined uniquely by religious leadership in religious terms. The leadership argued that specific values within the Jewish tradition ought to be recognized as different but incorporated as a part of American life and of value to all people, not submerged or ignored either by non-Jews or by Jews fearful of anti-Semitism. Others might define their identity in traditional and religious terms as was their right. But the leadership's notion of the Center as an inter-cultural and non-sectarian organization entailed a commitment to inclusiveness and secularism in how the organization defined and carried out its mission. The role of the

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Center was to provide leadership in connecting one group to another, and the Jews or any other group to America, based upon both the recognition of the group's particularist traditions and the formulation in terms of universalist values of the meanings that the Jewish or any other experience had for all. Instead of being defined entirely by the past, ethnic or sub-cultural identities ought to incorporate the past but be oriented to the future. Six months later, the same issue was engaged again in under the heading, "Christmas and Channukah For All":

> Some of the ghettos of geography are disappearing in our community...people are beginning to live next to one another, go to school together, join in an interracial, non-sectarian community center. But the walls in the ghettos of the mind remain standing. *The goal in our community center is to deepen our knowledge, one of the other, through shared common experience and understanding of different experience.*
>
> Religious doctrine and practice are the province of the home and the church and synagogue. *With the total community, however, there is a need for the social and cultural interchange which diminishes ignorance and fear, which extracts from the history and struggles of each group the kernel of truth for all mankind.*
>
> The yearning for peace and goodwill towards men which illuminates Christmas and the stern dedication to freedom and principle which invigorates Channukah, are basic to men and women of all faiths. *The struggle to implement these ideas of peace and freedom for all can transcend difference and integrate mankind in the pursuit of happiness.* (My emphases. GCCN December, 1957)

There are several points to emphasize here. The social philosophical goal is to break down the insularity and exclusiveness of majorities and minorities by deepening the knowledge that each group has of the other and as well as their knowledge of their connectedness. The general method for accomplishing that is through shared common

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experience ***and*** an understanding of different experience. It is not simply through their shared experience in a struggle for common goals because too often people can temporarily ignore or pretend to themselves that differences are not important. Similarly, discussions which promote an understanding of different cultural others after which people return to their exclusive groups and struggles are not enough. U.C.C. leadership assumed that both were necessary: the shared experience with different others and the shared understanding of what that difference is and how it has emerged -- with the same people in the same arenas.[3]

In this perspective, the role of the community center was conceived to be both the construction of an arena, and the leadership in an arena, in which processes of common struggle, shared experience and mutual learning can take place. The mission of the community center was defined as the promotion of social and cultural interchange. The intellectual and pedagogical work of the community center was twofold: to articulate the universal human meanings and values embodied in the specificities of the historical experience of diverse groups; and, to show to diverse peoples that the human meanings that different groups (including their own) discover, emphasize and celebrate have relevance for the lives of all groups.

This conceptualization of the relationship among groups within a politically democratic society is very different from the cultural pluralism put forth by Horace Kallen (1915, 1924) or the perspectives that derive from it. In cultural pluralism, different sub-cultural groups within a political democracy ought to be free to pursue their own interests and elaborate their cultures apart from other groups. The existence and

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protection of diversity is a value. The ideal relationship among groups is then defined as tolerance, an ideological lubricant which urges procedural respect for different ways of life as it simultaneously approves the distancing of each group from the other. It is an ideal that emphasizes coexistence, not interaction. In contrast, the vision proposed by the U.C.C. leadership, is that cultures could be mutually transformative in the direction of greater freedom, democracy and enrichment for all.[4]

U.C.C.'s vision implied an historical and dynamic conception of culture very different from perspectives that presuppose a fixed concept of cultural integrity. Cultures and sub-cultures come and go. They change as a consequence of internal dynamics and the deployment by people who embody those cultures of varying political and economic resources in reaction to new problems, including constraints and opportunities generated by larger political, economic and social forces. Further, the cultures of people change through abrasive competitions and conflicts with other groups. At the same time, within this mutually abrasive process, even when some groups wind up dominating others or being dominated, they reciprocally, albeit not always equally, impose their cultures upon others and steal, borrow and adopt relevant and valued aspects and meanings discovered by other cultures thereby changing their own. At every historical moment after simple societies, cultures are syncretically constituted.

What the community center leadership proposed was that the process in which groups moved toward intermixed and common meanings, values and identifications within a politically democratic society be a critical and reflexive one. The process ought to be a critical one because not every aspect of every people's culture is democratic or

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relevant to contemporary problems, constituted as cultures are in both accommodation and resistance to oppression as well as in the experience of oppressing other groups. The process ought to be reflexive because it is inherently conflictual. It requires knowledge of one's own and other cultures and it entails a process of consciously maintaining and choosing among alternatives the cultural elements that constitute a richer, freer, more democratic way of life.

Finally, again, U.C.C. emphasizes practice. It is not enough to know these ideas, or to believe in them. It is the struggle to implement these ideas and values for all people, that enables peoples to move past the differences that separate them and create an enriching way of living with others.

Whatever the validity of the fusion of philosophical and sociological elements that make up this perspective -- the focus on cultural identity and transformation, the sense of certainty about what the direction of transformation should be, and the optimistic sense that appealing universal values of different groups can be formulated so that people will want to share them -- the perspective produced was an alloy of a particular historical and cultural moment. As such, it is a blend that demands examination of both the social, political and historical elements that constitute the perspective and why its audience found it so meaningful.[5]

Jewish Assimilationism Versus Integration For Class Struggle

The leadership returned to the same theme again a year later in an article headlined "The Richness of Difference". Anticipating controversy, the article ended with an invitation to a meeting to discuss the ideas presented. Then, because the

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discussion generated so much interest it was followed up by two more organized discussions attended by white and black, Jewish and Christian volunteers and residents of the projects:

> Happy Channukah and Merry Christmas to all our friends and neighbors. Most, if not all of you will be celebrating one or the other of these holidays... Yet all of us have to deal with questions concerning one or both of the holidays. Some of the questions will be generated by the world around us, some by our own questions and doubts and most will emanate from our children.
>
> Let me say at the very beginning that those who celebrate Christmas and Channukah as religious observances have every right to do so. They have the right to educate toward and urge the acceptance of their ideas. But, there is another tradition in our country which has given Americans a common heritage as Americans...It has been an accepted part of American culture that it represents unity within the diversity of the many different cultures making up our country. We have always accepted the right of people *to enrich their lives by borrowing from one another.* It has been a matter of pride among us that an American is defined as an Irishman, Ukrainian, Frenchman, Negro, White, Jew, Christian, Mohammedan, and lots more. *Any American is not pure stock and exclusive but a mixture* including all peoples who have come to these shores to work and build a nation "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that ALL men are created equal.
>
> Just as Christians and Jews have the right to insist upon their right to worship and celebrate their holidays in their own exclusive manner, others, including Jews and Christians, have the right and responsibility, if they desire, to enrich the lives of themselves and their families by borrowing from, changing or modifying existing practices or ideas...
>
> For some parents, particularly Jewish parents, this is a difficult time, and a time which can cause confusion and much heartache. Living as a minority in a predominantly Christian culture, adults as well as children can and do become confused by the pressures around them. It is easy for Jews, as some have done, to lose sight of the historical roots and meaning of Channukah, to make it into a Jewish Christmas...To do this is to destroy the meaning and the essence of the Jewish people's contribution to American culture. *Borrowing based on acceptance of difference enriches all cultures and meaning; borrowing to camouflage and compete detracts even from*

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one's own identity and significance.

> Channukah and Christmas can be celebrated by all people regardless of religious commitment or origin. For Americans, the value of both holidays are universal, the struggle for freedom, peace, and brotherhood. The lights of Channukah and the lights of Christmas can shine in all homes without in any way impairing the Christianity or Jewishness of a family. (My emphases, The Link, December, 1958)

On the surface this appears to be one among many of the voices of secular Jewish assimilationism. But, we need also to see what makes the perspective of this article and the other articles taken together as oriented to a form of assimilation that is less automatic, more conscious and conflictual, and as pointing in a direction beyond assimilation to a given culture (i.e., 'Anglo-conformity'). One intention of this article certainly appears to be to reassure other secular Jews that it is not wrong to decorate their Christmas trees, or to permit their children to celebrate the non-religious meanings, or share the overwhelming warmth, excitement and colorful display of Christmas. In American society, Jews can borrow and possess universalized and secularized meanings derived from Christianity as they have already done. All groups borrow from one another.

Further, as history , this article appears to share a form of melting pot mythology, glossing over the conflicts, exploitation and exclusions in American history. It appears to ignore the vast differences in the historical and 20th century of European immigrants and Native Americans who were exterminated, Africans who were brought as captive slaves, and Mexicans who were conquered and colonized (Lieberson 1980; Blauner 1972). It appears also to ignore the differences between the contemporary (1950s)

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experience of these groups and the European immigrants, or at least to assume that these differences would soon be overcome.[6]

Thus, the article in the community center newspaper appears trapped in a historical narrative that recounts, and then generalizes for all groups including blacks, the movement of immigrants (Jews in particular) from the status of downtrodden, but ambitious and hard-working outsiders into fully-fledged citizens and contributors to American society. In this story, immigrants' descendants learned American ways across two or three generations, discarding many and retaining a few aspects of their sub-cultural esoterica, and injecting other elements of their cultures into the American mainstream changing it a little. The experiences of African Americans and Jewish Americans are homologized as movements of separate ethnic sub-cultures towards inter-cultural unity. The specificity of the African American racial experience as a form of domination, exclusion, and isolation is elided. The experience and the cultural and economic opportunities open to second and third generation Jewish men are seen either as universally available or about to become available for currently excluded others like racial minorities. In short, its vision of American history appears distorted by the optimism generated by the new opportunities available to the Jewish and other formerly marginalized European groups in a post-World War II, triumphalist and expanding American economy.

On the other hand, it insists upon the value of the multi-stranded Jewish experience, not as a transitional mobilization strip for take-off into American society, but as access to a variegated stream of insights and knowledge of universal human relevance

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that ought not be surrendered or neglected by Jews or anyone else. It projects a vision of the fecundity of ethnic tributaries flowing into one another, each enriching the other. The article rejects the Christmas-ization of Channukah, the camouflaging of Jewish ancestry by name changes, the joining of ethical culture societies (and earlier, Christian Science) to avoid anti-Semitism, or even the shedding of Jewish identity in exchange for identity as a communist or socialist. Logically, and, we shall see, later in actuality, it implies the same rejection of different forms of "passing", or blending in for other groups, in particular for blacks.

U.C.C.'s emphases in the newspaper articles was a response to two problems. First, because their historical relationships and the process of interdependence and intercultural learning are mainly not conscious, groups are able to deceive themselves into believing that their lives are unconnected to one another except occasionally and externally. It was easy, therefore, for group members to believe they need not assume responsibility for members of other groups. Hence, the articles insist that individual Americans, whether Jewish, Negro, Irish or Italians need to see themselves already as a mixture of all the groups in the society. That is, people who identify as Jews, Irish and Italians, for example, need to see themselves as Americans whose identity has, in part, already been internally constituted by one another's experience and culture as well as that of African Americans. The American identity is inconceivable and ought not be conceptualized without a recognition of the diverse people's experience and contributions that constitute it, including the experience of the working class. Even when they are not aware of it, even when they seek to block out others from their minds

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and lives, and even when they choose to ghettoize others and themselves, peoples affect one another and are interdependent in a single society and world.

Second, although less emphasized in these particular articles, U.C.C. recognized that the reality of interdependence did not imply equality of group conditions. Groups oppress, exploit, discriminate against, dominate and exclude one another through class, race and ethnic relations. Given this situation, although each group, religious Jewry, for example, might continue to tell itself its own story, the goal of the Community Center was to create people who understood the stories of others. It was upon this multi-storied understanding that another story could be constituted that would guide people in a richer, multi-stranded and progressive direction that went beyond what any group could singly achieve. The role of U.C.C. was to be the arena in which diverse peoples could learn one another's stories, and how much a part of one another they already were -- the constitutive contributions of each group to the whole society and each other, its parts.

In the process of learning more about one another, the knowledge that individual members of a sub-culture possessed of themselves would be deepened as they recognized and reflected upon the legitimacy, viability and meanings of other sub-cultures. Through experiences wherein individuals recognized how much their learning about others enriched their selves and enlarged their sense of human possibility, U.C.C. anticipated that individuals would become committed to this kind of experience as a value that entailed assuming responsibility for different others.

Therefore, besides seeing these articles as a critical variant of secular Jewish assimilationism, one expression of a group already assimilating to the American cultural

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mainstream, we need also to see these articles as a variant of a Left perspective. The constituency here, the Center members and the housing project residents are a lower middle class and working class constituency. The period was one in which working class politics had ceased to be dynamic and was mainly preservative of early gains. Operation Dixie, the major CIO post-war organizing initiative, was wrecked by anti-communism, the racism in the South, and the inbred hesitations and prejudices over the issue of race within the leadership of CIO unions (Goldfield 1993). It was the period of the Cold War in which the political atmosphere was permeated with a ferocious anti-communism. Raising the issue of socialism or fundamental social transformation would expose the U.C.C. leadership to continuous political attack the consequence of which would be that the possibility of working with a relatively parochial (politically and culturally) grass-roots constituency would be foresworn. As it was, the Center's leadership was attacked by some project residents and other local groups as "communist nigger lovers," when it stood for the construction of Canarsie high school on a site that would facilitate racial integration. It had been the U.S. Communist Party who had stood vociferously for racial integration in the 1930s. But, there was something more. From U.C.C.'s Left perspective, one of the weaknesses of the labor movement had been precisely its vacillations and inconsistency on the issue of race. U.C.C. leadership believed that its focus upon race, ethnicity and difference as a central issue of social life and culture was essential for enabling people to understand how they were and could be related to one another, in the community, in their personal lives, and in larger struggles for social change should such movements emerge.

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ENDNOTES

1. From one letter, we cannot know the experience of other minority individuals who joined and dropped out, or chose never to join. We do not know if the writer is deluding herself, or, even if her claims are true, whether they are also true to the experience of other black families who remained in the organization. But, if a broad range of black volunteers did have a similar experience, then it would call into question an idea that would be consistently argued by nationalists later in the decade. One of the nationalist arguments was that segregated black groups, sequestered from the squelching and intimidating surveillance of white oppressors (which included all whites) were uniquely able to create arenas to facilitate the struggle for freedom from internalized oppression, develop black leadership in the struggle for black liberation, and deepen and strengthen a positive sense of black identity.

This point emphasizes the limited usefulness of the organization's newspaper as a source of information about the organization and especially about the dynamics of the internal program and the relationships of leaders and members and members with one another. In any organization, the newspaper represents the organization and its leadership talking to itself, to its members, and, in this instance, to all the families in the projects where the newspaper was distributed. It presents its best side, its global and virtuous goals, and it mainly neglects its failures, superficialities, and inadequacies and all the internal and external criticisms that it is aware of.

Of course, it cannot present the problems about which the leadership did not know, did not want to know, or, the problems for which leadership either possessed a ready answer that focused blame on individuals, or did not consider a significant problem. There are in any such organizations, for example, always a broad range of both articulated and unarticulated (even unformulated) reactions and resentments of all those people who choose to leave, or choose to stay after they weigh the pros and cons. And, finally, there is always a body of individuals who choose to stay in the organization but may be reluctant to voice their criticisms or disagreements because they do not wish to endanger their social relationships with other members or with the leadership or look "stupid". No organization or its newspaper is free of these sorts of problems which are limitations upon the democracy of the organization. Sometimes organizations open up their letters section where criticisms can be voiced, although rarely with the space provided for those articles that explain and applaud what the organization has accomplished. Sometimes, if the organization is large enough and dissenters have sufficient resources, they are able to publish their own paper representing an alternative point of view. Therefore, in assessing the letter, we can say that it is an individual expression of an organizational goal, and admit the possibility, but no more, that the letter is accurate about the writer's understanding of her experience.

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2. Between 1954-1960, the U.C.C. newspaper is filled with descriptions and announcements of children's and adult activities related to inter-cultural, inter-ethnic, and inter-racial themes. The following examples are illustrative. The children's' programs in day camping, after school programs and programs for teenagers and pre-teens included discussions about the problems of living together such as the impact of racial and ethnic name-calling, or racially-based friendship cliques. The folk dance programs included African, Latin American, and Asian dances as well as those of Europe and the Near East. All the programs served and involved the children in preparing foods of diverse cultures. The children's programs celebrated holidays of diverse religions and cultures, for example Winter and New Year holidays, and a black girl plays Queen Esther at a Purim celebration to the consternation of the orthodox Jews. The children regularly talked with different religious and ethnically oriented groups -- travelling, for example, to Chinatown, NY State Indian reservations and the Amish country side. All the programs involved youth in theatrical programs that presented the stories and experiences of diverse groups. Decisions on the part of the youth to participate in a civil rights rally or picket line were preceded by discussion and followed by evaluations in which young people examined their feelings and ideas about their experience.

The same thematic consistency is found in the adult programs. The Cooking and Catering Club members practice preparing foods of diverse cultures; the Choral Group sings songs of diverse cultures; Christmas-Channukah parties are organized for members and non-members; an interracial Third Seder night is organized; the multi-racial drama group presents plays from Jewish and African-American themes with actors cast not always according to racial type (in addition to a comedy of manners about marriage by Noel Coward and a sardonic one by Dorothy Parker); open community meetings are held on topics related to integration including a discussion with the Commissioner of NYCHA on the role of public housing in creating integrated communities. In addition, the leadership makes strenuous efforts to hire an inter-racial staff.

3. Some experimental studies indicate a reduction of prejudice where students play sports together or tutor one another. (Rogers et al 1984; Cohen 1984). Cook (1984), however, argues that although cooperative contacts may reduce hostility and prejudice in particular settings, this experience does not necessarily change attitudes outside the setting. Cohen's (1984) study argued that the alteration of prejudicial beliefs following contact occurs only when those beliefs are explicitly addressed. U.C.C. believed that the explicit thematization of prejudices and discriminatory actions within the group, and participation in common projects were both essential, *over time*.

4. Horace M. Kallen's (1915, 1924) advocacy of 'cultural pluralism' was a reaction to the nativist, eugenicist, racialist, Anglo-conformist onslaught against immigrant cultures made more aggressive in the U.S. by World War I. Kallen opposed the "melting pot" because for him, as a Jew born in Germany and a philosopher, the melting pot meant 'Anglo-conformity' and the suppression of immigrant cultures. In defense of these cultures, based on the American spirit of democracy, Kallen advocated a public policy

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that would provide conditions for existing ethnic and cultural groups to constitute a "federal republic", a "democracy of nationalities, cooperating voluntarily and autonomously through common institutions in the enterprise of self-realization through the perfection of men according to their kind... The political and economic life of the commonwealth is a single unit and serves as the foundation and background for the realization of the distinctive individuality of each *natio* that composes it and of the pooling of these in a harmony above them all" (121, 124).

Hollinger (1992, 92-95) says that Kallen's position "located him at the proto-separatist extreme of cultural pluralism", and says that "his celebration of group differences appealed to a number of liberal intellectuals who shared his opposition to forced assimilation." John Dewey, however, while sympathizing with Kallen on the issue of forced assimilation warned Kallen against the danger of endorsing "segregation" . Gleason (1992, 17-19, 51-58) provides an excellent review of the different ingredients and perspectives in the intellectual ferment of that period on the issues of the melting pot, pluralism and assimilation.

Here, I want to contrast Kallen's position with that of Randolph Bourne, a literary radical and pacifist during World War I, who was one of the "liberal intellectuals" stirred by Kallen's perspective but whose point of view assumed a slant much more like the one that U.C.C. adopted. Bourne (1916) also reacted to the spirit of belligerent nationalism pervasive during World War I: .

> "We are all foreign-born or the descendants of foreign-born...We have needed the new peoples -- the order of the German and Scandinavian, the turbulence of the Slav and Hun -- to save us from our own stagnation. (109)...We are all to educate and be educated. These peoples in America are in a common enterprise. It is not what we are now that concerns us, but what this plastic next generation may become in the light of a new cosmopolitan ideal (110)...the contribution of American will be an intellectual internationalism which goes far beyond the mere exchange of scientific ideas and discoveries...It will be an intellectual sympathy which is not satisfied until it has got at the heart of the different cultural expressions, and feels as they feel....It will make understanding and not indignation its end. Such a sympathy will unite not divide (119)... Here is an enterprise of integration in which we can all pour ourselves, of a spiritual welding which should make us...infinitely strong (123).

Bourne envisioned a "trans-national America" in which ethnic distinctiveness was not eliminated, in which "dual spiritual citizenship" was possible, in which masses were not "melted down into the indistinguishable dough of Anglo-Saxonism", but where individuals and groups would "learn how to live together", in a liberating process of "cosmopolitan interchange". America could represent a wholeness of spirit that comes

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when all feel they may have a hand in the destiny of an America" "based on democratic and socialized and international goals". Bourne's shining optimism envisioned a "cooperative Americanism --that is of a freely mingling society of peoples of very different racial and cultural antecedents, with a common political allegiance and common social ends but with free and distinctive cultural allegiances [because when they are free they] will fertilize and enhance the common American life" (123-131)

Bourne's emphasis, contrary to Kallen's, was upon interaction across difference, mutual learning, mutual understanding, mutual change, and the creation of a new, integrated, trans-national culture that shed the prejudices of past generations as it developed a modern democratic culture. (Cf. Gleason 1992 and Hollinger 1996, on Bourne). U.C.C. is in the Bournian tradition.

5. Paul Gomberg (1994: 537) argues that "universalism has been grounded in optimism (or in Kant's case, reasonable hope) about universal moral community; this suggests that those who seek to justify universalism must move beyond analytic techniques and argue for optimism." I tend to agree. Despite the repression of the Cold War, the defeat of the Left, and the horrors of the Holocaust, the U.C.C. leadership's Marxism, its successes in the new organization, the expanding economy and the diminution of anti-Semitism produced a reasonable hope for future democratic social change that grounded the belief of U.C.C. members and leaders in the possibility of creating a universal, non-parochial community. Gomberg usefully defines a parochial community, as one where "its norms confine full moral respect to a limited group and countenance diminishment or disregard of or aggression against those outside the group."

6. The story probably derives from the "natural history" of immigrant groups told by sociologists of the period at least some of whom had digested Robert Park's (1951) conceptualization of a race relations cycle. In Park's notion, every new group, however unevenly, would in America and elsewhere go through the same ineluctable process toward amalgamation roughly according to the following stages: contact ---> economic, political and social competition and conflict among the new groups and between newer and more established groups --> accommodation of groups to one another and the larger society --> cultural, social and political assimilation --> and amalgamation. The experience, opportunities and values of urbanization, political democracy, capitalism and perhaps public education also, were seen as the dynamic grounds of a race relations cycle that would foster the automatic incorporation of groups over time. Among the many difficulties with Park's conceptualization are two in particular, which many subsequent sociologists have pointed out (Hirschman 1983). While it seems relatively accurate *as description* for the descendants of the 1880-1913 European immigrants, it had not worked for non-white groups first, because it problematically presupposed an inevitably expanding manufacturing-centered economy and second, because it neglected deeply institutionalized and racist blockages to social, economic and political participation, especially for African Americans.

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CHAPTER IV

KICKED OUT, STAYING LEFT AND RACIAL SUCCESSION IN EAST NEW YORK

NYCHA Evicts The Center

In 1959, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) was philosophically committed to the operation of community centers in each of the projects based on its belief that the needs of tenant families including their children and the aging extended beyond shelter. From its perspective, viable communities required social and recreational programs for children and adults. Because there was no other agency with "central responsibility for recreation in the city", and "despite the lack of ready sponsors and ... constant pressure from the lending agencies not to build without guaranteed sponsors", NYCHA continued to build community centers because it simply could not see building housing projects without them. For several reasons, however, NYCHA was not happy with these programs (Memo to Charles F. Preusse, City Administrator from William Reid, NYCHA Chairman, 6/12/59).[1]

First, its administrators had anticipated being able to find private agencies to sponsor each of the community center programs. It had expected that the role of NYCHA would be "to supplement, assist and coordinate basic services in relation to a solid, ongoing private agency program". But, despite significant efforts, and contrary to the insistence of State and Federal lending agencies that NYCHA had not sufficiently or aggressively reached out to find potential private sponsors, NYCHA could not find them. The Authority had been in constant contact with several city-wide and national umbrella

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social agencies and sectarian federations, as well as local church groups and local neighborhood councils with little result. Private agencies did not have the monies to take on the job, and the philanthropic dollars upon which these agencies depended were declining throughout the country as the costs of operating community centers were increasing. It reached a point in 1959 where the NYCHA chairman had begun to lose patience and was "inclined to asking the lending agencies to "put up or shut up. Our exploration [for private sponsoring agencies]...has almost reached ridiculous proportions where we meet with a men's pinochle club hoping to be able to organize them into a sponsoring agency" (Memo to Ira S. Robbins, NYCHA Vice-Chairman from Jack H. Goldberg, Director of Social and Community Services, 12/3/59).

In the search process NYCHA had exhausted its hope and its previous assumption of the existence of a plethora of different forms of community organization prepared to assume responsibility for such programs. It had come reluctantly to recognize that without money and sturdy, established organization, micro forms of community-based collective self-organization combined with simple volunteerism could not tackle the task. The financial problem meant also that within a large number of private, agency-sponsored centers, "the overwhelming financial support comes from a variety of public agencies including the Housing Authority, Department of Welfare, Board of Education and Youth Board. As a result, we have private agency operations in name only which despite this fact make independent policy decisions affecting program and activities" (Memo to Pruesse from Reid, 6/12/59).

Financing these community centers had become such a large problem that

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NYCHA was beginning to urge the NYC administration to study the possibility of another city-wide approach to meeting the needs of tenant families. But, finding sponsors and financing were only parts of the problem. Just as irksome to NYCHA was the quality of the community center programs. NYCHA was dissatisfied with most of the private agency programs and was thoroughly disenchanted with the 29 Board of Education sponsored programs. When NYCHA evicted U.C.C. from the community center facilities, it promised Boulevard and Glenwood tenants that it would replace U.C.C. with a community center program of equivalent quality sponsored by the Board of Education. But, NYCHA knew better. According to NYCHA Chairman Reid (Memo to Preusse, 6/12/59), "The 29 Board of Education sponsored programs generally give emphasis to children and youth and do not involve adult groups, tenant associations, etc., which are important parts of a community center program. These programs are staffed... by part time session workers which results in very limited and casual contacts with our tenants and management offices. " Jack R. Goldberg, NYCHA's Director of Social and Community Services put it a little more strongly, "...the approach of the Board of Education Community Center programs...does not meet our needs in most instances...The Board of Education is essentially focused on elementary school age children -- it does not move toward family or adult programs and does not assume responsibility for Tenants Associations or other similar community organization devices necessary in all of our developments" (Memo to Ira S. Robbins, NYCHA Vice Chairman, 12/3/59).

NYCHA had tried to develop new boards and agencies in projects but, other than

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"the development of a full-blown agency at Boulevard and Glenwood Houses known as the 'Boulevard and Glenwood Community Center", had not been very successful. There was only one other example of a local board and agency in the city, but its group "was a long way from the Boulevard and Glenwood Group in being able to assume major financial responsibility." (Memo to Charles F.Preusse, City Administrator from NYCHA Chairman William Reid, 6/12/59; and Memo to Ira S. Robbins, NYCHA vice-chairman, from Jack R. Goldberg, Director of Social and Community Services, 12/3/59).

Jack R. Goldberg, NYCHA Director of Social and Community Services, cited the Boulevard and Glenwood Community Center as the "best illustration" of the development of a "full-blown agency" that was, in part, the product of NYCHA's "staff time and direction". Two years later, even after NYCHA had already decided to evict the U.C.C., although it was still pretending to negotiate the issue, Alice M. Brophy, NYCHA's Acting Deputy Director of Social and Community Services, and an experienced administrator of NYCHA's community center programs, argued against installing a Board of Education-type program at Boulevard, Glenwood and Linden:

> In view of the fact that these communities have had a history of an operation which is very close to a "settlement house" program [U.C.C.], it would be unwise to consider a mass recreation type [the Board of Education programs] for this area. Experience has shown that this change might evoke a good deal of hostility from the community. Mass recreation programs are usually successful in areas where the citizen have not yet tasted *the more sophisticated programs such as club activities and a dynamic community-oriented center*. It is therefore recommended that the basic structure of the present community centers be continued (My emphasis. Memo to Gerald J. Carey, NYCHA General Manager from Alice M. Brophy, 6/6/61).

At the end of October, 1960, NYCHA announced to the Boulevard and Glenwood

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Community Centers that they were being evicted and distributed the following letter to all the tenants in Boulevard, Glenwood and Linden Houses:

> We regret to advise you that due to certain questions which have arisen concerning the Fund Raising Program of the Glenwood Community Center, Inc., we are forced to terminate the lease agreements with these organizations.
>
> You will be glad to know that the Board of Education has assured us that they will maintain their present staff at the center. We hope that with their cooperation we can continue to provide services which will meet the major needs of the tenants of the project and our neighbors in the community (Letter from Gerald J. Carey, NYCHA General Manager, 10/27/60).

NYCHA refused to meet with U.C.C. members or staff but it did meet and negotiate for three months with a group of local area City Councilmen and State Assemblymen who acted on behalf of the Centers. On January 31, 1961, NYCHA telegramed the Boulevard and Glenwood Community Centers ordering U.C.C. to vacate by February 1. Then, after a spontaneous two day sit-in on February 2 and 3, at both centers by 25 adult community center members with 15 children, and an order to stay the eviction by the NY State Supreme Court, Kings County for further negotiations, the Court finally decided that NYCHA's expulsion of the centers was valid. The Court ordered the United Community Centers to leave the facilities in housing on February 12, 1961. They did and never returned to NYC housing.

At the time, there were two competing ways to explain the expulsions: one was the official explanation NYCHA offered to the State Supreme court; the second was the speculation generally accepted among Centers members as to the "real" reasons hidden behind legal reasons.[2] NYCHA's story begins early in 1959 when Boulevard and

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Glenwood Community Centers applied to NY State for incorporation as the United Community Centers and requested of NYCHA that their leases for the Glenwood and Boulevard facilities be transferred to the United Community Centers, Inc. As a matter of routine, NYCHA did a number of audits of the financial records of the both community centers and discovered several financial irregularities and illegalities connected to their bingo fund-raising. The auditors discovered 61 checks made out to "Cash" amounting to $7,146. over the course of the year. Almost all the checks were endorsed by officers and members of the board of directors of the two agencies, and most of the checks were cashed in local supermarkets. In NYCHA's brief to the Court, it claimed that none of the Board members, staff or the accountant for the agencies could offer "a satisfactory explanation for the disbursement of these sums".

But, what was satisfactory? It was clear that the two agencies had operated 111 bingo nights at a hall in Manhattan between July, 1959 and September, 1960. It was "obvious" to NYCHA, and later to the Court, that the checks were connected to payments to the people who owned and operated the bingo halls --not the games themselves which were run by Center volunteers. It was a violation of the rules of the State Lottery Control Commission to pay the bingo hall operators in cash. In addition, there were irregular under-deposits amounting to more than $5,000 that were not fully deposited until after several audits had been completed and the State Lottery Commission had suspended the Centers' license to operate bingo. Finally, in addition to maintaining inconsistent and incomplete records of the gross receipts of each bingo game, the Centers had operated an illegal baseball pool on the 1960 World Series.

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In the sanctimonious and exaggerated language required of legal briefs, NYCHA defended its decision to evict the community centers by arguing that the leaders of community centers needed to be held to higher standards of morality because they were leaders of the communities and educators of children. "The utter disqualification of these agencies to act in this sensitive field and to be entrusted with the education of children and others, is evident not alone from their improper and wrongful handling of funds, but in their shameless and shocking refusal to understand and recognize the impropriety of their conduct."

Part of this was true. The Centers' leaders did "shamelessly" refuse to see what they had done as the moral outrage NYCHA purported it to be. Everyone knew that many bingo hall operators, often with illicit connections, required cash payments in exchange for allotting their halls to an agency. And, the reason was obvious: it was easier to avoid paying taxes on cash because it was harder to trace. The Centers paid the operators in cash in exchange for extra nights of bingo fund-raising. The Centers' cash was used to pay for the dinners and baby-sitting expenses of many of the 10-20 volunteer men and women who staffed the games every week, which in itself was not illegal, but U.C.C. had no detailed account of it. Having decided to run bingo after much discussion of the ethics of raising money from the working class and poor through gambling, the Centers' Board and staff had done what, from their point of view, was required to raise the money their organization needed. Having been caught, they publicly feigned innocence by avoiding the moral issue of accounting that NYCHA raised, but, they sincerely regarded their rule-breaking as minor.

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What Center members did not understand or accept as reasonable was the severity of the punishment that NYCHA was applying. As it was clear to all that the relatively small amount of "unaccounted for" money was used to pay expenses linked to bingo, and that no individuals (other than the bingo hall operators) had reaped any financial gain, the severity of the eviction to them seemed incommensurate to the "infractions". Like many other small and oppositional organizations, political or cultural, left or right, that feel the weight of state power, they sought an explanation that confirmed the significance of their work and justified them: NYCHA did not evict them, they repeated, because they broke the bingo rules; that was only the ostensible reason. They were "really" evicted because of their success and importance. They were developing a strong and independent base of tenant power and other, unsuccessful community centers (e.g., Pomononk Houses and Bayview Houses) were requesting their assistance in the development of their programs. Thus, according to the Centers' version, NYCHA could not accept "the growing strength and influence of a community controlled and community directed center... that was becoming more than just a local group...that was vigorous, integrated and dynamic... a place where housewives and carpenters, and clerks and machinists ...decide for ourselves what our need are, what we want to do about them and how to do it." (The Link, March/April, 1961, "To Answer The Lie".)

This explanation does not have a lot of plausibility but it has some. Viewed from the present, NYCHA's decision to evict seems excessive. It regarded the U.C.C. program as unusually excellent among community centers in housing. NYCHA also knew that no Center individuals were profiting. All NYCHA had to do was order U.C.C. to stop

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writing checks out for cash, or to stop playing bingo. Instead, even while NYCHA appeared to be negotiating in a series of meetings with the assemblymen and councilmen who were the Centers' elected political representatives, it was planning for a replacement. Early in the morning of February 2, NYCHA's security forces padlocked the doors of both centers prohibiting entrance. With nothing more than an impromptu plan, Center members sneaked into the facilities through the windows and conducted a two day sit-in, leaving only after the State Supreme Court ordered a stay of the eviction and further negotiations between NYCHA and the United Community Centers. But, the battle was over. NYCHA was adamant and the Court had little choice within the law but to order the U.C.C.'s evacuation on February 12. U.C.C. lost. Within a month NYCHA had installed a much reduced, mass recreation program for young children and pre-teens operated by the Board of Education whose approach NYCHA had previously abhorred, and that limped along for the next 15 years providing skimpy children's programs.

Why did the U.C.C. not mount a resistance stronger than its petition campaigns, its enlistment of local political support, its sit-ins, its slew of letters from collaborating local and city-wide social agencies and its court case? This is a hard question to answer. There was a tenant opposition to the U.C.C. in Glenwood. Perhaps the accusation of the mishandling of funds weakened the U.C.C. base of support or helped to mobilize the opposition. But, there are three other possible explanations which singly or in combination may have contributed to U.C.C.'s defeat. The U.C.C. President at the time remembers the period between 1954 and 1961 as one in which many tenants, according to NYCHA income rules, were moving out of the projects to other places. Thirty years

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later her assessment was that there had not been enough time to develop the consciousness, loyalty and commitment of many relatively new tenants. One of the associate directors of the time remembers the period as one in which a sense of fatigue had set in. Fund-raising had always required an extraordinary amount of volunteer and staff time and energy and staff, whose salaries were regularly deferred, sought support for their livelihood from families and regularly ate their dinners at the home of volunteers. Finally, it also appears that a naivete and optimism colored the mood of the staff and the Board. Given NYCHA's consistently professed high regard for their program, the support they mustered from their elected officials and the testimonials of other social agencies, the intense loyalty of many tenant volunteers and their own sense of achievement, they could not being themselves to believe that they, the "good guys", could lose so catastrophically. But, they did.

The administrative staff remained for the next several months through the summer camp season, but by the Fall, 1961, the executive director had found a job teaching in the School of Social Work at Ohio State and then in 1963 at the Atlanta University School of Social Work. One associate director took a job as executive director at Southside Settlement House in Columbus, Ohio, another went to work for the federal government, and other staff dispersed. Board members and volunteers voted to continue operating the community center, first from the basement of the private home of a member and then from a small storefront on Van Siclen Avenue. Except for the summers when the U.C.C. operated its resident camp, between 1961 and the Fall, 1965, the organization had no paid staff members. A small core of volunteers ran a much

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reduced program from the storefront they occupied, raising money for the rent, telephone and other up-keep, paying off the substantial debts to vendors they had accrued while they were located in housing.

Standing Fast: The Civil Rights Movement Changes The Conditions of Community Organizing

Several factors contributed to the organization's survival between 1961 and the middle of 1965 when they received a grant from the federal government to hire staff. First, the core of 15-25 women (and it was mainly women) and some of their husbands who committed themselves to paying off their organization's bills had an angry Brooklyn sense that they "wuz robbed", that is of gross unfairness. They were stubborn and did not want to admit defeat. Second, they did not want to relinquish what they had achieved and the meanings it held for their sense of their identities and for the lives of their families. They shared a joint commitment to the ideas they had discussed, enacted, used to guide their personal lives and realized socially in the programs of their community center. Third, they were socially related to one another and supported one another's lives and commitments. Also, they were not moving out of the community, partly because they could not yet imagine it, and partly because they could not afford to. Fourth, they were competent, shrewd, knowledgeable, energetic and inventive about how to raise money in the realm of working class community life. In the last year they were in housing, NYCHA had provided the facilities and maintenance rent-fee, the Board of Education had paid for $21,000 worth of staff time, but they had raised $40,000 from the community (including bingo money). They no longer had the "natural" constituency of

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tenants afforded by their location in NYC housing, but they continued to know many people who respected their efforts and would not turn down requests for contributions, at least, not for a while.

Fifth, they continued to operate their resident summer camp for children. The camp represented a special achievement to them-- it was their creation *ex nihilo*. It was a place they believed enriched their children's development and taught their social values to children and others with a special focus on living interracially and interculturally. Although the camp only operated in the summer, it required volunteers for much of the year: on Spring weekends to prepare the camp for the summer, on Fall weekends to bed it down for the winter, and on weekday evenings for much of the Winter and Spring to recruit and interview families and register children for camp. The camp-related work involved men and women volunteers. The volunteers who did the maintenance work and interviewing were mainly working class men who received considerably more recognition for their organizational and manual skills at the U.C.C. than they did elsewhere. These men were the husbands of the housewives in leadership, and their time and camp work and thinking connected them to their wives and the Center. Sixth, the former executive director, as a teacher with summers free, continued to work as the camp director, in part because no one else could have trained the summer staff and directed the camp as they wanted it to be. The U.C.C. also paid for his flights to Brooklyn on several weekends each year for discussion sessions connected to community problems and major decisions. The relationship between the former director and the volunteers was important to both. By maintaining their relationship with him and what

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he represented to them -- all they had learned from him and with him -- the volunteers confirmed for themselves the meanings they had achieved. If he would stick it out, so would they. Similarly, the volunteers' stubborn willingness to continue the Center and the camp confirmed for Eisenstein, the former director, the social reality of meanings he had at first only imagined, of what he and they had accomplished together. If they would stick it out, so would he.

Finally, however, it is not likely that U.C.C. could have been sustained for more than a few years in the absence of the civil rights movement. The social norms, values and the atmosphere generated by the national civil rights movement publicly buoyed and justified the social goals and "struggle-culture" the volunteers aimed for in the Center, its summer camp and the community. By a struggle-culture I refer to the array of ideas to which sufficient numbers of people subscribe to and translate into norms that together constitute a way of life that presupposes social struggle. Among these ideas are included: the idea that the fundamental problems that people face are social in nature and connected to social structures; the idea that social change is possible and necessary; the idea that people struggling together can change the way things are; the idea that people in struggle can work together and rely upon one another; the idea that ideas and knowledge about society matter; the idea that working for justice and the welfare of the large group is not a sacrifice of individual needs and desires but can be a fulfillment for individuals; and, the idea that people are morally obliged to participate in the struggle.[3] To this array of ideas and the norms derived from them that constitute a generic struggle-culture, the civil rights movement added a definition of the problem as the oppression

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and segregation of Negroes and the denial of their civil rights. In addition, the movement prescribed a general form of struggle and a general goal: integrated movement of blacks and white for an integrated society without racial discrimination.

As each smaller struggle in a locality sparked the next one, and as these accumulated throughout the South in the latter half of the fifties, what began as the discrete and thinly connected efforts of local groups picked up momentum, continuity and organization. The beginnings of the movement generated a public atmosphere of possibility and understanding not only through the mass media but also through political, social and organizational networks. The result was a flood of efforts in many different places with different forms depending upon local needs. The movement was experienced as a reality, much larger than any individuals or groups, and it established participation in social struggle as necessary and obligatory (Morris 1982; McAdam 1984; Branch 1988).

Overall, the movement affected U.C.C. volunteers by invigorating their morale, buoying residents' responsiveness to U.C.C.'s work in the community, and moving liberal parents to enroll their children in camp. Indirectly, the movement caused U.C.C. to receive a substantial three year grant from the federal government enabling the Center to rehire its director and acquire a staff. The movement diluted the intensity of the sense of loss shared by U.C.C. volunteers and submerged their sense of having been defeated by NYCHA. Instead of feeling small, irrelevant, doubtful and defensive, the volunteers felt their ideas were being validated, that they were on the right track, useful and part of a large and historically meaningful social struggle. The ideas of the movement were ideas that many of the core of volunteers had claimed as their own even before the civil rights

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movement had burgeoned in the South.

What happened on the community level altered the general conditions of organizing efficacy. The work of organizing (in communities, workplaces and elsewhere) can be defined as moving groups and individuals to an acceptance of understandings, values, norms and actions in relation to themselves, their social world and social change that they had not previously accepted, as well as moving them to act upon their new understanding. Without a movement, organizations and their agents (organizers) are successful in moving their constituencies (when they are successful) by inches and slowly, even when they may be able to conduct an occasional successful campaign. Organizers then must help to define grievances, enemies, possibilities, social and political understandings, and values. They must build trust, relationships and mutual reliance among constituents and between constituents and organizers; and, they must build the organizational structures through which people can work. Organizers have to overcome their constituency's sense that the social world is fixed and nothing can change and the accompanying senses of passivity and intimidation before established authority. People, with little experience in this kind of work and little faith in their own ability to accomplish it, need to learn how to conduct meetings, encourage and support other people's participation, prepare statements, formulate ideas and speak in public, etc., and most of all need moral support and inspiration. In the absence of a movement with which people feel identified, for example, the situation in the 1980s for workers and African Americans, organizing and participating in struggle for social change seems strange and futile. People resist or avoid it, especially if they have no prior experience.

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The existence of a movement embodying causes with which people identify accomplishes a substantial part of the organizing work on local levels. Grievances, enemies, politics and the values of participation are substantially understood. A sense of possibility and obligation to participate are in the air. People want to learn and accomplish what others like them are learning and accomplishing. They seek opportunities to participate and are more responsive to organizers who are agents of those opportunities for struggle. In NYC and in East New York, the civil rights movement generated an atmosphere that made the ideas, values and goals that U.C.C. stood for seem more familiar, reasonable, and meaningful if not entirely acceptable. The sense of urgency that the movement communicated, facilitated the organization of U.C.C. campaigns and social and educational programs.

Racial Succession and Tension in East New York

The development of this understanding took time, and in ENY occurred in the context of rapid racial and economic change in the character of the community and intensifying racial tensions. In the late 1950s a shift of population that had begun slowly as prospering whites moved to Canarsie and Long Island and blacks moved from Brownsville was accelerated explosively by a wave of blockbusting. Blockbusting is the technique of frightening white home owners into selling their homes at a price lower than market value and then reselling to blacks at a higher price. Techniques included harassing phone calls, postcards and other devices designed to lead residents to believe a massive racial change in the neighborhood had become inevitable. The racial change in the central area (1955-60) was rapid and publicly known, and the community responded

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in several ways. The Council For A Better ENY (CBENY) was founded in 1961 when the ENY YM-YWHA called together a number of organizations for the purpose of taking action to deal with the evident changes in the community's racial composition. Although pro-integration and predominantly black organizations were not, at first, invited, by the second meeting, pro-integration organizations like U.C.C. and the New Lots Reform Church had joined and membership was open to all community organizations. Soon tenants associations, school parents associations and other groups had joined. CBENY became an umbrella coalition of local organizations and individuals that addressed a wide range of area problems, among the earliest of which were its efforts to stop the block-busting. CBENY, along with the NAACP and other civic groups pushed for passage of an Anti-Blockbusting Bill, for actions by the NYC Human Rights Commission, and for community efforts to stop the blockbusters and prevent panic flight. The Commission on Human Rights held a hearing investigating the situation in the summer of 1962, but it was too little, too late (Posner, 1977).

Despite the U.C.C.'s absence of staff leadership between 1961 and 1965, residents in the southern end of East New York, especially as more African Americans moved into the area, began to see the Center as a local vehicle for community action on civil rights and integration. The U.C.C. was the principal organization in the southern end of East New York that organized in support of two public school boycotts for integration called by Rev. Milton Galamison, and in 1964 offered space in the Center as a "freedom school" during the boycott. During the 1964 city-wide boycott for integration, one U.C.C. volunteer remembered that as a junior high school student with no relationship to

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U.C.C. she and others interested in supporting the boycott were referred by their teacher to the U.C.C. In addition, an interracial group of men and women calling themselves East New York Action who wished to organize on issues of housing, housing discrimination and welfare affiliated with the Center for support and direction. The Board of Directors voted to work with the Brooklyn committee in support of unseating segregationist Mississippi Congressmen, and the teen group raised funds to bring a number of teenagers from Selma, Alabama to Twin Link Camp for the summer. In short, while the civil rights movement existed through the late sixties, it directly and indirectly supported U.C.C.'s efforts in the community. Moreover, so long as it continued to exist in the memories of many African Americans through the late 1970s, the Center's efforts resonated for many residents who responded despite, and sometimes because of the turn to other forms of black liberation struggle such as black separatism and different forms of black nationalism.

Others responded with violence like the white youth gangs formed specifically for the purpose of protecting their turf against black youth attempting to use community recreational facilities. In the mid-sixties, the Society For The Prevention of Negroes Getting Everything (SPONGE) was one such local group. It was supported tacitly and sometimes actively by adults but functioned as a youth gang in its methods of harassment and intimidation of blacks daring to cross not so imaginary, physically stipulated color boundaries. In the northern, predominantly Italian section of the community in the areas known as Highland Park and City Line, Assemblyman Vito Battisa called for more police to protect the community, formed the United Parents and Taxpayers Party and ran for

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Mayor, and the Conservative Party took root.

Racial tensions simmered and erupted in the summer of 1966 in two racial clashes, one between white and black teenagers and young men, one between black and Puerto Rican youth. Soon after these clashes, white leaders and black and Puerto Rican leaders were funded by the NYC Youth Board -- United Youth Action and the United Negro and Puerto Rican Front -- to provide recreational programs for "their" youth in "their" areas of the community. The Mayor's (Lindsay) "gripe office", part of a program of "Little City Halls", was installed on Riverdale Avenue to cool the situation and more summer jobs and youth programs were hastily funded.

By the mid-sixties, even the physical appearance of the central area had changed. Streets that had teemed with small businesses and shoppers on New Lots, Blake, Sutter, Belmont and Pitkin Avenues had emptied out. The movie theater on New Lots Avenue, for over a decade the Saturday morning haven of children, closed down, and Fortunoff's, the jewelry store chain whose first family store was located in ENY, moved out in the late sixties. In 1966, a crash inspection program of a 40 block area revealed 80 buildings in such bad condition that they would have to be demolished (Herald Tribune, 2/23/66, cited in Posner, 1977). Vacant buildings, deserted streets and empty lots began to take the place of three and four story apartment houses. In addition, four family apartment houses were divided into six and eight family houses, single family houses were converted into multiple dwellings and this was only the beginning of a process that continued for the next 15 years. In 1965, Brownsville and the central area of East New York were declared poverty areas by the newly formed federal anti-poverty program and

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the central area was designated as a Model Cities Target Area in 1967 but none of these funded programs could begin to reverse the slide. Eventually, many of the deteriorating houses were abandoned by landlords who saw no profit in repairing properties from which they derived little or no income. Then, in another five years, abandonment and fires produced such devastation over a broad swath of the central area that in 1976, E.P.Thompson, the British historian of the making of the English working class, could comment during an automobile tour of the community that it reminded him of London after the German blitz bombing in WWII.[4]

U.C.C. had moved into a narrow store-front with basement offices on Van Siclen Avenue when it was evicted from housing in 1961. The office faced George Gershwin Junior High School (George Gershwin was born in ENY) and was one-half block south of Linden Boulevard, a broad thoroughfare for trucks and cars that cut across southeastern Brooklyn from the Queens Line to Flatbush Avenue in central Brooklyn . Van Siclen Avenue and the cross-street Stanley Avenue was a main shopping area for the residents of the two NYC public housing projects, the privately owned, state subsidized Mitchell-Lama development of 1,500 apartments, Fairfield Towers and the small, attached private homes south of Linden. In 1965, the private homes and Fairfield Towers where the rents were higher than in public housing, were predominantly white. The racial composition of this southern end of the community, however, was changing rapidly.

In 1966, commuters who lived in the southern end got off the New Lots train at the Van Siclen Avenue stop and walked past the Center's storefront and the other shops

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on the block to reach home. On their walk south from the train, they passed a block of old single and two family homes, mainly occupied by blacks, that were beginning to deteriorate, and another two blocks of well-kept single and two family homes built since WWII as well as three family homes and two small apartment buildings. These were occupied by black and white families. In this end of the community, the exodus of whites and influx of blacks moved from north to south. At the corner of Linden Boulevard and Van Siclen was Manufacturer's Hanover Bank.

Sharing the block with U.C.C. were a variety store, a beauty salon, a Carvel ice cream store, a dry cleaner, a pizzeria, a shoe repair store, a barber shop, a Jewish Bakery, a driving school, and the Noshery delicatessen that catered to Jewish tastes for lox and smoked whitefish. A candy store anchored the corner of VanSiclen and Stanley and around the block on Stanley were two more blocks of small stores including a Key Food supermarket. In 1966, the process of neighborhood racial succession was manifested by the moving vans parked by project entryways, the occasional bickering that erupted across race on supermarket check-out lines, and the stories that whites in line at the bakery told one another about muggings and trouble in the schools. In the next few years the Jewish bakery was replaced by a Halal butcher, a variety store replaced the Noshery, the Jewish dry cleaner sold his store to a West Indian, the white operator of the Carvel sold his franchise to a black couple, the Italian barber sold his shop to a black barber, the Italian fish monger sold his store to a Korean family, the candy store on the corner was run by five Arab men who slept in the back room, and the pizzeria became a grocery store run by Arab men.

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Around 1970, even before the racial succession was completed in the southern end, long-time residents of ENY never failed to comment on the changes in the community. Whites who moved out expressed resentment about having moved as if they had been forced, blaming muggings and threats their kids experienced in school. Black home owners, largely unable to move, spoke bitterly of those whites, many of them Jews, who "swore they would never leave and then left in the middle of the night." But, most whites left without compunction and with relief. Black and white homeowners in ENY and ex-residents shared the view that people on welfare were to blame. Blacks who remained blamed both their new neighbors and the whites who fled the deteriorating community, and by 1970, whites blamed black leadership whom they said were "only looking out for jobs and didn't care about the community" (Posner, 1977). Both pinpointed the failure of the City to end blockbusting and the concentration policies of the Department of Social Services and NYCHA who placed too many families receiving public assistance in public housing and elsewhere in the area. In short, throughout the 1960s, ENY was a community wracked by population change, racial conflict and social strife.

ENDNOTES

1. By the end of 1959, there were 67 community centers operating in NYC public housing. 29 were operated under the auspices of the Board of Education, 34 under private agency auspices, four were classified as "quasi-direct" operations of NYCHA, and four housing projects had community center facilities for which NYCHA could not find a sponsor.

2. My sources of information about the expulsion are the New York State Supreme Court records, the vague memories of Center staff and members, the Centers' community newspaper, and several articles in various NYC newspapers of the time: The

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World Telegram and Sun, 2/3/61, 2/14/61; New York Post 2/3/61; and Daily News 2/3/61, 2/15/61. I found no reference to any aspect of NYCHA's effort to expel the Centers in the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives of NYCHA.

3. I derive this formulation through abstracting from the basic ideas of the U.S. labor movement and civil rights movement.

4. E.P. Thompson lectured on "Tom Paine and The Rights of Man" as part of a series the Center organized on the responsibilities of government. Thompson jokingly complained that I had "press-ganged" him into service because I had told three U.C.C. graduate students in history who planned to attend a lecture he gave elsewhere to be certain to extract his commitment to come to the Center to talk. I have no memory of his presentation other than his having sung several Painite songs and his having delighted an audience of around 125 community residents. Afterwards he commented that he was surprised to find a community audience in the U.S. with a class perspective.

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CHAPTER V

THEORY AND PRACTICE AND THE NATIONALIST/SEPARATIST TURN

History and Summer Camping

The civil rights movement enabled U.C.C. to expand its summer camp program. Changes in the camper population of the summer camp in the 1960s through the middle 1970s comprise an interesting index of demographic, economic and cultural changes in the community and in the social consciousness of liberal or more Left white and black parents. For most of the 1960s and early 1970s, except for several years in the teen camp, most of the campers were white. There were several reasons for this. In the early 1960s, the camp drew most of its enrollment from the community which was mainly white and the rest from elsewhere in Brooklyn. Fees were charged on a sliding scale and the camp was inexpensive compared to other social agency camps. Except for a few scholarships and deliberate efforts to recruit black children, low income parents could not afford to send their children. In the late sixties, many black families who were moving into the community had not yet reached an economic level which enabled them to afford a resident summer camp experience for their children. In addition, among those black parents who possessed sufficient resources, many had not yet developed the orientation to summer camping for their children that they acquired by the late 1970s and 1980s.

The principal reasons most parents enrolled their children in the U.C.C. camp were identical to the reasons parents in general sent their children to any summer camp at the time. They wanted a safe, responsibly supervised environment out of the hot city

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where their children could be with other children and have fun doing sports, arts and crafts, swimming and hiking. As long as their children enjoyed themselves, it was a rare white parent who objected to the camp's infusion of their childrens' experience with ideas about race, ethnicity and the importance of learning to live across difference and struggle for integration. For a large minority of parents (including historian Staughton Lynd and jazz drummer Max Roach whose kids attended), however, the philosophical and educational directions of the camp served as the principal reason they enrolled their children. This consciously liberal and Left minority expanded during the period of the civil rights movement and diminished when it was over.

The only exception to the substantial white majority of campers was in the teen work camp division of the camp. During the early 1960s, it enrolled mostly (not only) white boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 in a nine week program. The teen work camp drew its enrollment of teens only partially from the community. Most were drawn from elsewhere in the metropolitan areas. Because the teen camp was a nine week program without sliding scale fees, most of the teenagers were either of middle class backgrounds, or from working class families who were year-round members of the Center for whom the experience the camp organized for their children was worth saving and sacrificing for. From 1965-1969, however, when the U.C.C. received grants for leadership training from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Delinquency and the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the teen camp could afford to enroll a large minority of black, Puerto Rican and Native American teenagers from Oklahoma.

Beginning in 1973, with the civil rights movement moribund, the enrollment in

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the teen camp dropped from 40-60 in the 1960s and early 1970s to 30 and less in the following years. Liberal white parents stopped sending their teenage children to the camp and the teenagers stopped wanting to go. If we can safely assume that the values of parents and their goals for their children are indicated by the risks and experiences to which they voluntarily expose their children, the quick drop in the teen camp enrollment was an indicator of their declining commitment to integration. Staff and volunteers were aware of these reasons for the changing population of the camp at the time. By the mid-1970s, teen camp enrollment fell to 15 or less racially mixed teens.

The changes in the population of the camp division that enrolled children between the ages of seven and 13 mostly reflected changes in the community. The "down camp" enrolled younger children for three, six and nine weeks at sliding scale rates. In the 1970s, it was becoming affordable to many African American parents whose economic resources were increasing and who were becoming culturally oriented to summer camping for their children. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, approximately 75% of the children who attended camp were African American, another 15% were Latino and 15% were the white children of white Center members. The Latino, mainly Puerto Rican enrollment remained small because the Puerto Ricans in East New York were poorer than the blacks and much more reluctant to risk their children in someone else's charge, away from home, even for a three week period. By 1980, a little less than half the children were drawn from the East New York area, now mainly black and Puerto Rican. Most of the remainder were drawn from other areas of black Brooklyn and Queens.

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In short, as the civil rights movement flourished, the camp was seen by liberal and Left black and white parents as an opportunity for their children to learn to live across racial difference, even during those summers in the late 1960s, when ghettoes erupted across the country. As the racial character of the community continued to change in the late sixties, the proportion of white children enrolled in the camp began to decrease. At the same time, the integrationist dimension of the black movement diminished in salience. By the early 1970s, except for the white children of Center members, the white population in the camp dropped precipitously and the numbers of African American children increased.

Most parents enroll their children based on the advice of other parents they know. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the U.C.C. camp continued to enroll working class and lower middle class children of the same economic background as the white children in the late 1950s and early 1960s but now the children were mainly black. In fact, for some people who enrolled their children in the early 1980s, the camp was perceived as a good camp for black children.

The last way in which the civil rights movement indirectly bolstered the U.C.C. was with a large grant U.C.C. received from the federal government. Beginning in the early sixties, the Kennedy administration had begun to explore strategies to fasten the loyalty of the urban black vote to the national Democratic party. Based on this interest, a series of federal service programs directed to the ghetto emerged including the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses control Act of 1961 (Piven 1972), an initiative that derived in part from a widespread public concern with juvenile delinquency in the 1950s.

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As the civil rights movement and the range of social challenges it represented and inspired expanded, so did the Kennedy administration's concern with developing anti-poverty initiatives that was picked up and expanded into the Johnson administration's "great society legislation" (Matusow 1984). As part of a broad set of anti-poverty initiatives, the federal government through its funding agency, the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, substantially increased the monies it allocated to community groups for delinquency prevention demonstration projects. Fortuitously, one of the former U.C.C. associate directors was working at the OJDYD in 1964. He encouraged U.C.C. to submit a proposal because the federal agency had some unspent funds at the end of one funding cycle. The U.C.C. was funded for one year for $48,000, and then, its funding was increased to $160,000 for each of the next two years.[1]

When the delinquency prevention project ended in 1968, U.C.C. received no funding for operations, and very little major funding for any specific projects (except its day care center and annual U.S.D.A. reimbursements for a fraction of the food costs in the resident camp) for the next ten years. But those three years, 1965-68, were enough to establish a range of programs and substantially augment the membership and volunteers. In turn, the expansion of programs and increase in membership and volunteers enabled U.C.C. to increase its fund-raising capabilities in the community. By the time the OJD grant was over, U.C.C. could retain the former executive director, an assistant director and, at half their salary, two organizers. That was enough to enable U.C.C. to build its volunteer corps so that during the 1970s, it harnessed the energies of 50-80 volunteers for two to eight hours on a weekly basis for administrative work, fund-

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raising, organizing social, recreational, educational and cultural activities, and community action. Those figures do not include temporary volunteers who worked on one or two activities or campaigns.

The Nationalist/Separatist Turn: U.C.C.' s Opposition And The Relation Of Theory And Practice

Movements are not unitary collective characters. They are always composed of diverse elements and organizations with divergent directions that express the variegated interests of the populations conscripted into struggle. In the 19th and 20th century United States, from well before the Civil War, two powerful and conflicting sub-cultural traditions and political directions among African Americans have competed for their political allegiance. One direction was represented by the struggle for integration: the dissolution of caste and the acceptance by the dominant, mainstream, white society of African Americans on a basis of complete political, economic, and social equality. The other tradition was represented by black nationalism: expressed in a political and/or cultural dimension, as a form of struggle and set of goals which emphasized the fundamental need of African Americans (based on a profound and historically rational distrust of whites and white institutions) to struggle for their survival, identity, self-esteem, community and cultural development as a people in varying degrees of apartness (including migration and secession) from whites. Integrationists have often been assimilationists accepting uncritically (except with respect to race) the values of the dominant culture. Nationalists have emphasized the significance of African American differences, both culturally and with respect to the racist structuring of U.S. Society.

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Both traditions have existed within the African American community, sometimes within the same persons at the same and at different moments (W.E.B.Dubois, at different times an integrationist, a nationalist and a communist is one of many examples.) because both traditions are responses to the same historical processes of exclusion and subordination experienced by lower caste and pariah groups. The tensions and conflicts among socialism, Zionism and assimilation over the route to emancipation among 19th and 20th century European Jews are an apt parallel (Howe and Greenberg 1972; Avineri 1981).

Depending upon the larger political economy, the presence or absence of political opportunities and group resources, and other contingencies of the historical moment, different sub-cultural traditions have become politically dominant. In the 1920s, the dominant movement among African Americans was the nationalist, Garvey movement, the first, self-organized, mass movement among African Americans in the U.S. In the 1930s and 1940s, organized and mobilized by the labor movement, the CPUSA and a transformed NAACP, the dominant political orientation among African Americans was integrationist, and this orientation continued through the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and through most of the 1960s. Both integrationism and nationalism have assumed various forms: integrationism has been advocated by liberal assimilationists, cultural pluralists and proponents of class struggle; nationalism has been advocated from perspectives as diverse as cultural and political pluralism, the back-to-Africa movements of Martin Delaney and Marcus Garvey, an internationalist analysis of colonialism and more recent forms of separatism and Afrocentrism (Draper 1969; Huggins, Kilson, Fox 1971; Marable 1984, 1985; Cone 1991; Fredrickson 1995).

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The Civil Rights Movement succeeded in the 1960s in winning national legislation ensuring political and judicial rights for blacks and an end to legal segregation and terror as a systematically applied caste weapon in the South. According to most explanations, the Black Movement then crumbled upon the rock of Northern resistance. Except in a few, smaller and anomalous urban areas in the North, the struggle for school and housing integration failed. By the middle of the 1960's, 'integration' and the dissolution of caste exclusion as principal thrusts of the struggle for black liberation had begun to ebb and be replaced by another orientation. By the late 1960s, the dominant political and cultural leadership and orientation in the struggle for black liberation was sliding swiftly to black nationalism. Although various civil rights organizations continued to struggle for integration in schools and housing, by the late sixties, the most dynamic elements and leadership of the movement among African Americans professed their goals to be black power and cultural development through the separatist struggles of blacks for control of the public institutions in their own communities (Marable 1984, 1985; Allen 1990).

There is still no completely satisfactory explanation either for this shift in orientation within the black movement or for the withdrawal of liberal support for integration. The Garvey movement is sociologically explained, for example, as a product of the mass migration of African Americans to northern cities beginning in 1910 and through the 1920s. The relatively small population of African Americans in northern cities at this time, combined with their new entry into the industrial economy, limited cultural and political resources -- e.g., a low literacy rate, and low level of political

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organization -- meant that the economic resources and political efficacy of these new city-dwellers was very limited. The turn to black nationalism and away from a struggle for full social, political and economic equality is explained by an intensified sense of exclusion and oppression in northern cities combined with an inability to overcome the overwhelming blocks to political and social integration and a need to generate community out of the isolating experience of the "great migration".

If this were a reasonable sociological explanation of Garveyism, one would expect to find analogous factors as a basis for the turn to black nationalism in the late sixties. In fact, there are several. More than one million African American migrated from the south to the north in each of the three decades following the beginning of WW II. But, despite the considerable increase of the black population in crowded and overflowing ghettos, black political power in relation to the size of the population was weak. Even though the Democratic Party had come to depend upon the black vote in northern cities, blacks were excluded from political and institutional power in those cities except at margins. They were not yet politically incorporated and possessed only weak vehicles to express their political voice in local areas. Further, the Civil Rights Movement itself, although mainly focused upon the racism of the Southern system, raised and intensified the consciousness of blacks throughout the nation of their racial oppression. What was different, however, and considerably so, was the demonstrated success of the Civil Rights Movement, of its goals and forms of struggle. Why then the turn to separatism?

The idea that black power is an understandable and automatic response to the

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"failure of integration" (or even to its realized success in the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the 1964 Civil Rights Act) too often assumes and avoids the question of how many failures a movement must experience before it makes rational political sense to political leaderships to change a strategy and philosophy they had up to then accepted as valid. The black power movement began after many failures but also after major victories of a unified black (and partly white) integrationist movement. The "failure" of the integrationist movement is problematic if judged by the span of the civil rights movement since the 1954 Brown decision of the Supreme Court, not by the history of blacks since the Civil War. In fact, the shift away from integrationism began to take place after only a relatively few, hard and terrifying years of struggle that included multiple victories, even before the national legislative victories of the movement. Black separatism, for example, began to dominate CORE and SNCC, two of the three major activist civil rights organizations even before the Voting Rights Act was passed and the War on Poverty began, both of which were products of the Movement. Further, black power advocates abandoned the struggle for integrated schools and housing despite the persistent desires of most blacks then and subsequently for integration (Meier 1973; Farmer 1985; Carson 1981; Marable 1984). Even if we were able to arrive at an explanation for the shift in orientation among some of the black leadership, we would still need to explain how nationalism came to be the dominant orientation of the black movement as well as the withdrawal of white liberalism's support of integration.

Gary Orfield (1988) argues that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, white liberalism abandoned the struggle for integration, "turned its back on the problem of the

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ghetto despite abundant signs that social and economic conditions in ghettos had deteriorated" and surrendered its structuralist explanation of race and ghetto conditions as a consequence of two factors. First, Orfield says, the cresting of a black separatist orientation in the black movement not only "failed to mobilize blacks, but they [separatists] did help to mobilize white opposition and undermine white liberals" who were still committed to integration. And, second, the liberal explanation for the riots in the sixties, and the continuing deterioration in the ghetto was not as powerful a mobilizing idea as "law and order", a main strut in conservative platforms since 1968. In Orfield's story, the political defeat of liberals on a national level in 1968, and the questions of the liberals about their own structuralist explanations combine with the challenge of black separatism to account for the liberal withdrawal.

But, these answers need to be probed more deeply. First, how, and in what sense did nationalist/separatism "undermine white liberals? Why did white liberalism's support for a racially integrated society and integration in housing and schools crumble when black nationalist leadership rejected the goals and assistance of white liberalism? Second, even if the liberal structural explanation of the sixties riots and ghetto deterioration was not as powerful *a mobilizing explanation* for the majority white population as "law and order", the structural approach to analysis appears to be confirmed, not invalidated by riots. Why was it abandoned? All democratic social change perspectives, organizations and movements are bound to experience considerable defeat over time. Why did the political defeat of integrationism, and the political defeat of the "structural explanation" of African American life on a national level in 1968, after

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such considerable success, mark a turning away by liberals from their integrationist agenda on race? In other words, *why did the practical political defeat of liberalism mark the abandonment of its theory and political commitment?* From the perspective of 1988, according to Orfield, the liberal surrender of its structuralist account of the ghetto may be explicable socially but it does not appear theoretically rational. These questions about the withdrawal of liberalism from its integrationist commitment refer to the general problem of designating the conditions, social and ideological, in which belief, here political belief, is maintained, surrendered or changed.

Similar questions can be raised about most of the radicalism of the period that accepted the orientation of the new nationalist/separatists. Many radicals also withdrew from the struggle for integration, some because they accepted the "internal colony" argument and the idea that blacks were or should be seen as a separate nation. Some withdrew simply because they believed that moral and political support of the black struggle entailed support of the new black separatist leadership. Both these reasons also appear sometimes to be combined with a guilt infused belief that whites had no moral standing in black struggles. In any case, white liberals and radicals also withdrew from the struggles for integrated schools and housing and even from the effort to create an integrated movement for broader, democratic change. Thereafter, and through the current period, the idea of a racially integrated movement for social change recruited few followers.

Despite the withdrawal of white and black liberals and radicals from an integrationist perspective, the United Community Centers sustained its struggles based

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upon a class analysis and integrationist perspective throughout the 1970s and beyond. The organization retained a structuralist understanding of the existence of the ghetto as the product of class exploitation and racial discrimination and, it battled with nationalist/separatist forms and organization in East New York, a majority African American community, so long as these forms existed with any force, that is, into the mid-1970s. In other words, *U.C.C. retained its theory and practice despite the defeat of its integrationist political practice on a community level and despite the defeat of integrationism on a national level.*

I cannot answer here the questions I have raised about the retreat from integrationism of white liberals and radicals and black liberals. But, by investigating the single instance of how and why the U.C.C. maintained this commitment to integration, and with what internal/ organizational and external/community level consequences, it becomes possible to begin reflecting upon the obverse of Orfield's problem. Orfield focused on why the liberals abandoned integration. But, by looking at the U.C.C.'s local experience we can observe what was required in one area to maintain a commitment to integration and with what consequences. Furthermore, by observing this single example in East New York, we can capture a ground level view of how the voice of black nationalism became amplified despite the continued loyalty, as expressed in surveys of the time, of most of the African American population to integrationist goals. Finally, this single instance permits reflection on the more general conditions that promote the maintenance and/or change of oppositional theory and organizational practice.

On U.C.C.'s Concept of Being Left: A Value System Connects Theory and Practice

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Two differences between the liberal and U.C.C. perspectives on the relationship between theory and practice inhere in the content of their theories, in particular, their theories of practice and their social philosophy. The first difference was that for U.C.C., disagreement, conflict and defeat were expected starting points not indications of the incorrectness of its position. The second difference was that for U.C.C., the 'richness of difference was not only a strategic political value, it was a central human and moral value. L. Kolakowski (1968:74-75), writing in Stalinist Poland in the 1960s, provides some insight into these differences in U.C.C.'s theory of practice in an essay on what it meant to be a person of the Left:

> On the one hand, it is characteristic of the Left to try not to realize men's desires against their will, nor to force them to accept benefits they do not desire. On the other hand, the working class of a given country may be greatly influenced by nationalism, yet the Left will not support nationalist demands; elsewhere the working class is deeply rooted in religious tradition, yet the Left is a secular movement. Even real immediate interests of the working class can be in opposition to the demands of the Left, e.g., the English workers benefitted from colonial expansion and exploitation -- yet the Left is the enemy of colonialism...
>
> The Left cannot be defined by saying it will support every demand of the working class or that it is always on the side of the majority. The Left must define itself on the level of ideas though in many instances it will be in the minority. Even though in today's world there is no Leftist attitude independent of the struggle for the rights of the working class, though no Leftist position can be realized outside the class structure, and though only the struggle of the working class can make the Left a material force, nevertheless the Left must be defined in intellectual, not class terms.

On the one hand, the Left, as Kolakowski defined it, has a faith in the capacities and intelligence of ordinary people, and in their ability to develop these capacities beyond what they or their organizers can imagine. Therefore, a proper Left should not

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seek to force its vision upon people. On the other hand, the Left knows how biased, ethnocentric, authoritarian, narrow and uninformed, exclusivist and individualist ordinary people can be. Therefore, the Left, according to Kolakowski, must define itself in terms of ideas, in terms of a theory not in terms of the political success of its practice or the agreement of the people it seeks to organize. It must expect to be in a minority and expect to live with defeat.

All the leaders and members of the United Community Centers did not identify as being a part of a larger "Left", but many shared an understanding -- that ranged from rudimentary to sophisticated -- and commitment -- of different degrees -- to a theoretical analysis of their society and they saw themselves as seeking fundamental and democratic social change. What they believed ought to be the relationship between theory and practice was derived from the *content of their theory of society and social change, and especially their theory of practice.*

For the U.C.C. leadership and for many of the members who shared their political economic analysis, theirs was a class society in which the deepest problems of economic inequality, democracy, war and exploitation, racial inequality, fairness and self-development, could not be effectively addressed without tackling the political economic structure of capitalism. But, capitalism was sustained not only by political and economic power. It was also sustained and legitimated by processes of ideological domination. Within capitalist economy, the collectivity with an objective interest in challenging capitalism and best situated to build an effective challenge was the working class, although it could not achieve success without alliances with sections of other classes. But, even these people whom U.C.C. sought to organize, deeply identified with many of

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the dominant ideas, values and institutions of capitalist society, as well as its racial prejudices and their own ethnic parochialisms. They could not be expected to question or politically challenge capitalism spontaneously, or even as a consequence of a historical crisis, unless their identifications with the core arrangements of capitalism could be broken and they adopted an alternative set of ideas and values. Struggles over ideas and values with members of the working class and sections of other classes were therefore central to the creation of a working class-based and class conscious movement to address them. Such a movement would involve organized labor, community groups and substantial sections of other classes. But, it could not succeed unless it was based upon the sustained participation together of the Negroes, whites, Puerto Ricans and other minorities who composed the working and lower middle classes in an interracial struggle for change.

This movement could not be built -- had in fact, been broken in the past by racism, ethnic and religious prejudice-- unless arenas and learning processes could be created that enabled potential movement participants to move beyond what divided them . Given the historically grounded and continuously re-stimulated distrust, angers, resentments, fears, misunderstanding and prejudices which shaped the actions, perceptions and commitments of the participants, it would not be and could not be a smooth process. Members of divided groups would have to participate in processes of learning one another's histories and needs, as well as their perceptions and understanding. U.C.C. leaders imagined that this could take place while learning to collaborate, plan, work and act together. The participants themselves had to reciprocally change each other in order to create and sustain such an integrated class movement.

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For these processes to occur, leadership and organization were crucial. In particular, the leadership that was crucial was one that was willing to engage in continuous conflicts of ideas with precisely the people it sought most to organize in order to help snap their identification with ideas that separated them from one another and constituted their allegiance to the structures, ideas and values of capitalist and racist society, and parochial ethnicities. In short, the recognition of conflict between the perspectives of the leadership organization and of the people it sought to organize was built into *the content of U.C.C.'s theory of practice and articulated as a value.* The Eisensteins defined conflict as "the existence of the opposition of alternatives. Conflict exists --there is no possibility of avoiding it. People can on only decide to participate in helping to determine the direction of the resolution of conflict or leave it to others to decide." Struggle was the value that recognized the inherent existence of conflict in all situations and involved the commitment to change in self and society. Struggle involved the systematic examination of social, political and personal alternatives and their implications for action. Struggle involved conscious choosing among alternatives and action, after which new conflicts were confronted. In other words, *disagreement, conflict and temporary, or, often, long-term defeat were expected starting points, not indicators of inadequate theory.*

U.C.C.'s perspective also differed from 1960s and 1970s liberalism to the extent that it hearkened back to an earlier tradition of American democratic theory illustrated, for example, by John Dewey, that insisted upon integration-interaction processes as central to democracy. This perspective and practice had an explicitly social philosophical dimension that contrasted sharply with liberalism's emphasis upon

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diversity and cultural pluralism. Human beings were seen as social creatures, their individuality formed as a product of social interaction, their natures created by the interaction of their biologically determined needs and capacities and their social environment. Above all, their immediate environment was the environment of group life. Yet, each group's experience was limited, whatever its social or geographic situation, in workplaces, ethnic communities or territorial groups. Each group tended to define itself in exclusive and parochial terms, limiting its interests, imagination, and goals to the immediate issues encompassed within its limited purview. The goal of democratic organization was to struggle to continuously expand the sphere of a group's interest, imagination and goals. The quality and extent of democracy in the larger community was measured in this perspective by how numerous and varied were the interests that were consciously shared across difference, and by how fully and freely diverse peoples participated in various forms and spheres of societal life. To the extent that each single group's purview was limited, so was the potential for the human self-development of the group and its members. The movement past parochialism was seen as a creative movement toward a fuller, richer, multi-faceted humanity.

From this perspective, it was not the existence of diversity and culturally plural groups whose competing and conflictual relations are lubricated by tolerance that was of primary value, as in liberal pluralism. It was the critical interchange of groups and their members with other groups and their members with other experiences, across differences of class, race, and ethnicity and various forms of ability/disability that was seen as a principal source for cross fertilization and enrichment. The possibility of new human achievement and broader democracy was seen as residing in interchange and

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mutual transformation and which in turn fostered greater willingness to risk changes of self and society.[2]

In the U.C.C. vocabulary, this process was named the 'richness of difference'. It was an articulated value that was used by members and leaders to guide organizational decisions about internal program and social action and their own, personal, everyday lives. On the one hand, the translation of this value into practice was not conceived as a smooth and welcome process, even among U.C.C. members. The process of reaching out to, working with, arguing with, respecting and trying to understand different others could be conflictual, discomfiting and painful. On the other hand, the discovery of the 'cultural secrets and emotions' of members of other groups could be a revelation that expanded one's sense of self and imagination, one's understanding of the world, and one's freedom to be related to more numerous and varied others. In sum, U.C.C.'s social theory, its concept of practice and its social philosophy presumed the existence of conflict and the need for struggle over competing ideas with the people it sought to organize. U.C.C. presumed interaction across as a possible source a source of learning, human growth and reciprocal change.

For U.C.C. and for Eisenstein, a principal goal of community organizing was to introduce alternative values to the values held by their constituency held which might then be a more powerful and fulfilling basis for living in and changing their world. Besides conflict, struggle and the richness of difference, other values in U.C.C.'s articulated value system included:

The interconnection of freedom and responsibility understood as a value that democratically connected the individual and the group based on the recognition that

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human beings provide one another their social possibilities, enlarging or diminishing others by their actions.

Mutuality in relations with the opposite sex was understood to refer to the recognition of the human integrity of the partner as opposed to using him or her as an object for social status or sexual satisfaction. This value also implied the need to struggle for the social, economic and intellectual equality of women.

The *value of work* referred to the ideas that all work necessary for the maintenance and growth of society possessed dignity, and to the need to recognize the contribution of the working class, especially those who did physical work, to the life of society. Work was understood as the creative interconnection of individuals to their society.

Intergenerational trust referred to an emphasis upon the possibility that adults and youth can struggle together toward valued goals in a process in which adults carried primary responsibility for establishing the model.

Rationality and education was the value that rejected supernatural and irrational explanations of phenomena and sought to establish knowledge through reason and experiment.

Subsuming these values was the value of *integrity.* Integrity was defined as the sustained effort (struggle) to close the gap between professed beliefs and actual behavior. Integrity was the willingness to struggle toward goals; at the same time idealist perfectionism was rejected (Eisenstein 1965, Eisenstein and Eisenstein 1968, Eisenstein 1973, Eisenstein 1981).

Altogether this value system was understood by Eisenstein, U.C.C. members and

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leaders as a social change value system and a guide for their organizing practice -- their social and political action campaigns, the development of their internal programs, and their relationships to one another and their interaction with the world. In the second half of the 1960s, this perspective with its emphasis upon the richness of difference and conflict and struggle, in combination with U.C.C.'s political economic analysis and class perspective determined U.C.C.'s opposition to black nationalism when it became the dominant orientation of the black movement. To the extent that separatism in any form blocked the forging of arenas in which processes of mutual learning, collaborative action and reciprocal transformation could occur, it foreclosed both the building of a class-based, integrated struggle for fundamental social change and the process by which human beings of different backgrounds could enlarge one another's human possibilities.

These were not simply matters of 'abstract' theory and 'abstract' philosophy, nor could U.C.C. members have sustained their perspective if they had perceived them only as intellectual matters. Indeed, they saw themselves as individuals and as a group who had lived their theory and philosophy. Although they had been a primarily white organization with mainly Jewish members, after Eisenstein had become the executive director, blacks had begun to join the organization. The limited experience with integration of the whites and blacks who had participated had been thematized and made self-conscious and was effective in generating their commitment.

At the same time, they had not been fighting only for Negro rights although Negro rights had been and were still part of their struggle. They had already been fighting for a fairer, more equal society based on values that promoted freer processes of

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interchange across difference and greater possibilities of learning and self-development. They were not willing to accept that they had no role in that struggle. They believed that they needed to define themselves and their struggle in terms of ideas -- theory and philosophy, and the strategy, vision and practice they derived from them. From their perspective, the agreement or disagreement of nationalist leaders, or the blacks or working class people on whose behalf they believed they struggled, or the loss of a liberal presidency and the more conservative direction of the nation could not invalidate the vision of an integrated society that was *their* vision. Nor could these factors invalidate a political economic analysis that implied an integrated struggle that was *their* cause. These were the intellectual bases of their organization, their relationships to one another and their collective experience of the previous 10 years. Their analysis, their philosophical vision, and the very existence of their group -- their history and social relationships -- determined their integrationist practice.

But if neither the social and political direction of the nation, nor the explicit political opposition of groups from whom they had anticipated support could move them to change their ideas, what could? Was there any experience or knowledge that could be a rational basis for modifying, changing or relinquishing an analysis, vision and set of commitments? It is just as possible that the stubborn refusal of the United Community Centers to change its direction was no more rational than the willingness of white liberals and radicals and black nationalists to change theirs. For example, from a distance, and sometimes even from closer up, it sometimes appeared that U.C.C. leaders' and members' ability to sustain their political direction and social life, at least for a while, rested upon their possession of an irrational and cult-like faith in a particular

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form of radical theory, vision, organizing practice and leadership.

Perhaps equally as effective were the intellectual and social consequences of their location. They lived and acted in an ignored, working class and poor, Brooklyn neighborhood and were protected, to some extent, from the brunt of challenging political and intellectual storms by their relative geographic and political isolation. New ideas and new political directions reached East New York (if and when they drifted into the community) in a weakened, blunter or caricatured form making it easier for U.C.C.'s willed intellectual resistance/ commitment to stand fast. In small overshot places, even small creatures have the social space to win small victories and to imagine their significance.

Leaders and members *were* committed to their ideas, but at the same time, obversely, their form of organization and leadership, their location, and the social relationships and activities they maintained, contributed to their lock-tight hold upon their theory and vision. To understand U.C.C.'s obdurate commitment and its ultimate dissolution as exemplifying one kind of relationship between theory and practice, we need to understand the process over time in which the constitutive elements of this relationship were interwoven and shredded in relation to the larger and changing social and political context.

ENDNOTES

1. The re-funding of the U.C.C. project at a much increased rate was based in part upon the high praise of Leonard Cottrell, executive director of the Russell Sage Foundation, a surviving pioneer of the Chicago school of sociology and sometime mentor to Lloyd Ohlin. Ohlin, a criminal sociologist and the author with Richard Cloward of a much acclaimed book on delinquency, conceptualized the initial OJD approach

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to Lloyd Ohlin. Ohlin, a criminal sociologist and the author with Richard Cloward of a much acclaimed book on delinquency, conceptualized the initial OJD approach (Matusow 1984). Coincidentally, when Cottrell did a site visit to the U.C.C. project, he recognized Fannie Eisenstein as one of the "red radical" students from his time at Cornell in the 1930s.

2. In Democracy and Education Dewey (1915:87) wrote:

> The devotion of democracy to education is a familiar fact. The superficial explanation is that a government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and who obey their governors are educated. Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education. But there is a deeper explanation. A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which kept men form perceiving the full import of their activity. These more numerous and more varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action. They secure a liberation of powers which remain suppressed as long as the incitations to action are partial, as they must be in a group which in its exclusiveness shuts out many interests.

Pace (1983) makes a strong argument for the multiple correspondences between Dewey's thinking and Eisenstein's philosophy of community organization.

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CHAPTER VI

THE U.C.C. FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES: OPPOSING PUBLIC FUNDING FOR PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND DEALING WITH THE 'DISRUPTIVE CHILD'

The Center's delinquency prevention grant from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Delinquency in 1965 allowed the hiring of two youth workers, but it was not until 1966 when the grant was almost quadrupled that the Center could rehire its executive director and additional staff. By that time, the Center's leadership was well aware of the ebbing support for integration in the black movement. The executive director and his family had spent the years 1963-66 in Atlanta, he teaching at the Atlanta University School of social Work. He had witnessed and been excluded from participation in movement planning by the new, SNCC-inspired separatist orientation and atmosphere in Atlanta. In the years between 1965-68, most of the newly hired U.C.C. staff's energy was invested in the delinquency prevention project. But, there was sufficient time left over to begin the task of rebuilding the volunteer corps, expanding other aspects of the Center's program, including its fundraising capacities, and initiating social action campaigns.

The community center model that Center leaders and members had constructed while located in public housing had not disappeared from the minds of the U.C.C. founders, but it was no longer possible to replicate it. There was no space in the storefront or single story building the Center leased in 1968 on New Lots Avenue north of Linden Boulevard -- to be closer to the center of the ghetto area --for anything other than meetings, parties and offices. The organization's program had never been building-centered but now its facilities were even more limited. In addition, the Center no longer

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had a 'natural' constituency of tenants needing services; it was not seen as the 'legitimate' agency for any group or territory; and, other public and private agencies supplied services that met some of the needs the U.C.C. had once tried to meet. These factors, in combination with the range of issues raised by the civil rights movement, the demographic changes in the community, the new population's needs and U.C.C.'s own rebuilding aims, pressured the Center to shift its overall programmatic orientation. In the allocation of its energies while in public housing, the balance between the services/internal programs and social action initiatives in the community had always tipped more heavily towards the provision of services. Now, the Center's emphasis shifted toward a range of community social action initiatives in order to recruit and organize community youth and adults. Besides the social action efforts related to youth and the anti-delinquency project (discussed below), U.C.C. helped build block associations, conducted baby carriage demonstrations for the installation of street lights, opposed the local direction of the poverty program, and beginning in 1967, organized against the war in Vietnam.[1]

In the main, however, the Center invested its organizing energies in issues of public education. This was so, in part because the people with whom the Center worked prompted it, and in part because educational issues connected to the Centers' educational work with youth in non-school settings. Organizing on educational issues afforded a continuous array of opportunities to raise for examination matters of class, race, human nature and learning, the nature of democracy and a vision of better society. Also, the public schools were at a natural intersection of women with children and youth of all ages, the two populations who comprised a majority of the participants in U.C.C. efforts.

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Mothers who were members and non-member mothers who were community residents sought help from the Center for varied problems their children faced in school. Mostly, these were problems of an individual nature (e.g., a child had difficulty with reading or math and needed tutoring), but sometimes these individual problems pointed to a need for a social solution that could only be accomplished on school-wide, district-wide, or city-wide basis. Occasionally an incident occurred, e.g., if a teacher called a child "a nigger", or a science program was cancelled, which afforded an opportunity, if parents were willing, to reach out to other parents with staff assistance, to begin organizing. From individual problems, organizers and mothers sometimes built campaigns to change a parents association leadership or to fight for an expanded public school budget.

Another reason for the Center's orientation to educational issues was that the U.C.C. worked with interracial groups of boys and girls in a resident camp setting and in the community. As in other Center programs, one of U.C.C.'s goals as it worked with young people was to involve them learning how to use ideas to examine and resolve socially and democratically the problems and conflicts that arose when people of different backgrounds --class, race, religion, gender -- lived together. Similarly, teenagers and later college students with whom the U.C.C. worked sometimes talked with Center staff seeking direction about what courses to take, how to write a paper, or how to deal with problems they faced in school (e.g., lousy food in the cafeteria, racial tension in a high school). Sometimes these problems pointed to a need for organizing other students on issues that converged with U.C.C.'s goals.

This process seemed to stimulate youth to want to learn more about themselves and others and the larger world around them. The Center's work with youth seemed to

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indicate that a byproduct of the process was that youth were more motivated in school. Youth and their parents frequently provided anecdotes describing how what youth had learned in Center programs had strengthened their ability to deal with social problems in and outside of school. These stories and U.C.C.'s experience persuaded U.C.C. leaders that they possessed insights about how to handle racial conflict in urban education that were inaccessible to experts and school officials whose imaginations were confined to what had been achieved in restrictive school environments.

Like everywhere else, in ENY, in the first several Septembers of their children's school years, mothers sent their children off to school with intensely felt hopes and dreams for their children's futures. So long as their hopes and emotional investment in their children's school careers were alive -- and, for most, these school-attached hopes did not stay alive as long as they did in white, middle class communities -- many mothers were receptive to the issues the Center raised, especially if their child had some experience in a Center program. That mothers thought about their children's education was seen and used by Center organizers as a hinge to move them to envisioning the kind of society and education they wanted for their children, and to think about what could be accomplished through their own social efforts to achieve the education they believed their children needed. Mothers (and sometimes fathers) and teenagers were introduced to the problems of social change through their participation in social struggles on educational issues --organizing other parents, testifying at community school board and board of education hearings, meeting with appointed and elected officials, demonstrating. Mothers and teenagers who participated became more aware of political power structures, of what a class society and its consequences meant, and of the complex

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political significance of race and ethnicity. They were required, if they were not overwhelmed and were able to stay involved, to think about how the society worked, what possibilities for change existed and how they might emerge, what they had to do to sustain themselves, their organization and others in relevant struggles.

Whatever the good initial reasons may be for the issue constellation or social arena an organization chooses or fortuitously adopts to work on, another reason comes into play. Organizational momentum and the annual rhythms of community struggles also have an effect. Leaders, members, volunteers, community participants become oriented to the issues and institutions to which they are devoting their time and energy. They read about the issues in newspapers, discuss them, think about them, and act upon them. They become more knowledgeable about particular institutions and their politics, more fluent in how they examine and talk about the problems, and clearer in how they deal with opposing ideas. They become more adept in organizing people, making public statements, writing and distributing flyers, setting up petition drives, demonstrations and campaigns. They develop skills and a sense of competence that they feel good about, internalize the annual calendar of public agencies, and acquire a readiness for relatively prompt action on an issue. Simultaneously, what emerges is a tendency to identify a set of issues as ours, to think of that set or sets of issues as *the* crucially important ones, and to neglect the possibility of moving with people on other issues. Repetition is a useful way of ordering the year -- "we conduct a budget campaign every year" -- but it also hardens the parameters of activity. U.C.C. worked on a broad range of issues throughout its existence, but its primary social action focus was upon educational issues for both sensible and unexamined reasons.

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On Ideology and Non-Winnable Issues

In the theory of community organizing that was dominant in the late sixties and early seventies (and, to a lesser extent, currently) i.e., neo-Alinskyan theory, there was an emphasis upon "pragmatic" and non-ideological organizing, and upon the selection of local and winnable issues to act upon in order to build morale and organization (See Boyte 1977, 1980. See Ackerman 1977 and Fisher and Kling 1987 for critique). This emphasis, to the extent that it often precludes the involvement of members and community residents in thinking about and addressing other issues, is contrary to the way U.C.C. functioned. Organizations want to win; and if their members experienced only loss upon loss, they would probably not stick around for long. But, the primary criteria which governed U.C.C.'s choice of issues was the extent to which action on an issue provided opportunity to enlarge the social understanding of the participants and build relationships in the community. At the beginning of this time of rebuilding (1966-68) two Center efforts stand out as illustrative of how U.C.C.'s perspective was applied to particular issues confronting the community in the area of education and of its recognition of the limitations of community organization. One of these was the Center's opposition to the repeal of the Blaine Amendment of the NY State constitution in 1967. The other was the Center's involvement on the issue of "the disruptive child" in the schools.

Against Public Money For Private and Parochial Schools

The Blaine Amendment, in language much more explicit than the anti-establishment phrasing in the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawed the use

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of public funds for religious schools. At the time, the Catholic Church, among other groups was in the leadership of a campaign to convene a NY State Constitutional Convention in order to repeal Blaine. As the anti-Blaine campaign accumulated momentum throughout the state, its leaders succeeded in winning the placement of a proposition for a Constitutional Convention on the 1967 state-wide ballot. Those who favored Blaine's retention were scattered and unorganized. There was no one in the community who came to the Center to urge that it take on this campaign. U.C.C. efforts were initiated by the staff based on its social perspective and reading of the implications of the issue.

Center leadership saw the effort to repeal Blaine, as part of a mounting attack on public schools, and by extension, as a danger to the possibility of school integration. U.C.C. was particularly alert to the consequences of public funding of parochial schools. White academies being set up in the South to evade the 1954 Brown decision were a vivid example of how white families used religious and private schools to evade integration, and at the time in NYC, the parochial schools tended to be segregated by race as well as by religion. If the Constitutional Convention took place and Blaine were repealed, parochial or private schools would be able to get public monies to sustain themselves and expand. U.C.C. argued that the expenditure of public money on parochial schools would mean the accelerated exodus of white pupils from the public schools and the possibility of integrated schools in NYC would be foreclosed. The eventual result might be a dual school system that was economically and racially divided: one for the middle class, mainly white with some upwardly mobile Negro and Puerto Rican children, and one for the working class and poor, mainly racial minorities. In

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addition, from the Center's perspective, the content of education in religious schools was sectarian, and parochial and promoted a non-democratic orientation.

U.C.C. recognized that the public schools were not much more integrated than the religious schools, and the content of education there was far from democratic. But, it argued that in the public school systems, there was at least the possibility of possibility of mounting a public struggle to hold school systems accountable for planning for desegregation and for moving curricula in a more democratic and integrated direction. (U.C.C. "Statement on Article II Section 3 New York State Constitution" , 6/9/67)

The Center's efforts were two-pronged: developing community support for its position and working to build city-wide coalition because this campaign could be not be won a local community level. U.C.C. sought out organizational allies --large organizations with the resources to organize a state-wide effort. Among the NYC civic groups it met with were the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress. These two major, mainstream organizations of Jews had an historical interest in preventing the use of public monies for sectarian education (Ivers 1995).[2] Subsequent to U.C.C.'s initiative, the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee assumed the leadership in establishing the Public Education and Religious Liberty (PEARL) coalition. They were joined in the PEARL by the United Parents Association (the city-wide arm of NYC PTA's), the United Federation of Teachers, the NAACP and other major NYC civic organizations concerned with protecting public school funding and public education. The resolution for a Constitutional Convention was defeated that November to a large extent because of the state-wide coordinated efforts of PEARL and its member organizations. From 1969 through most of the 1970s,

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PEARL was a centralizing force in church-state litigation on a national level. Of the nine cases the Supreme court decided between 1973 and 1980 involving financial aid to elementary and secondary religious schools, Leo Pfeffer, PEARL's chief attorney, served as lead counsel in six and authored PEARL's amicus brief in another. In the main, PEARL's and Pfeffer's legal efforts were successful in overturning legislation designed to channel money to religious schools for textbooks, remedial teachers, spaces, and sundry other forms (Ivers 1995).

U.C.C. remained an active member of PEARL through the late 1970s, the only community group in the coalition for most of that period. As an active member of PEARL, U.C.C.'s representatives tried regularly to persuade PEARL members to use their resources to mount broader educational and organizing campaigns in opposition to what it perceived (as did PEARL leadership) were continuous efforts on the part of parochial school and political interests to win public monies for their schools. U.C.C. believed that a new loyal and mass constituency had to be created among a new NYC citizenry who had not participated in earlier ideological battles, who distrusted the public schools their children attended, and who did not understand why a public system of education and its funding were essential to them. U.C.C.'s class-oriented goal was fully funded, integrated public schools. PEARL's goal, motivated by the ethno-religious concerns of the American Jewish Congress and American Jewish Committee, was primarily upon erecting and maintaining the wall that strictly separated public funds and parochial schools. U.C.C. argued that without broad public support for the public schools, legal efforts to keep public funds in the public arena might not be effective in the long run. Not surprisingly, the Center, a puny organization compared to other

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coalition members was always unsuccessful in moving PEARL beyond its exclusive focus upon litigation, especially as its litigation was, in the 1970s, so often successful.

Most of U.C.C.'s organizing efforts during the 1970s on this issue were expended in the community including public discussions with invited speakers, articles in its newspaper, and meetings with elected representatives on voucher plans, public funding for special parochial school programs, or whatever specific form in which the issue was raised. U.C.C. tried to educate community residents and muster their support for this issue but with little success. The only brief occasion on which another ENY organization, the United Negro and Puerto Rican Front (UNPRF), issued a joint statement with U.C.C. on this issue was during the period of the campaign to protect Blaine when there was considerable discussion of the issue in the newspapers. It is worth sketching out what it took to build this temporary alliance because it illustrates the hard hoeing required to build community coalition on this issue -- one without any promise of immediate returns -- with another ENY group in the absence of a broader movement affecting the community.

UNPRF and United Youth Action (the Italian-American led group) had been funded by the NYC Youth Board after the 1966 summer racial clashes in ENY. Near the end of that summer camping season as the campers were readying their minds for their return to the City, U.C.C. had invited youth and adult representatives of the NYC Youth Board funded agencies to participate in the Teen Camp's final evaluation. The teen camp's evaluation was a two day affair, a conference that reviewed the problems and achievements of the summer, and explored what the teens might continue to do with the Center when they returned to the City. Approximately 20 of the 60 teen campers were

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working class and poor, Black and Puerto Rican boys and girls with a history of serious delinquency in the ENY area. Many of the other teens also lived in or near ENY. Since the teenagers were returning to the areas of ENY where they lived and where the riots had occurred, the U.C.C. leadership thought it would be useful for them to see the differences in the approach of the Youth Board funded agencies and the Center's. The invitation to the two community groups was also extended with the hope that U.C.C. might establish a working relationship with them.

In fact, two months later, U.C.C. was able to plan and conduct a Trick or Treat For UNICEF Halloween evening with the United Negro and Puerto Rican Front. Together, UNPRF and U.C.C. sent interracial groups totaling 200 children led by the teenagers and with adult supervision, into the apartment buildings near the UNPRF storefront in the ghetto area. The resident response was very positive. A few months later, after several additional meetings, UNPRF agreed to issue a joint statement with U.C.C. in opposition to the repeal of Blaine. ("Public Money For The Public Schools, Not One Penny For Parochial Schools", a Joint Statement of the United Negro and Puerto Front and the United community Centers") Had there been no invitation to the summer camp and no trick or treat evening, there would have been no joint statement. Shortly thereafter, this temporary alliance fell apart for reasons peculiar to the necessities of urban anti-poverty funds seekers. No locally-based poverty agency in ENY could sustain a campaign on any issue that did not promise divisible and relatively rapid returns.

No political movement ever developed in NYC or in ENY on this issue. But, remaining a part of PEARL was an expression by U.C.C. of its recognition that, on this issue, whatever it accomplished in the community could only be limited. It could not

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win the battles that required the power of people organized on city-wide and state-wide basis because it was on those levels that power played and decisions were made.

The "Disruptive Child"

The second educational issue U.C.C. developed a position on in this period was the problem of "the disruptive child". In the Fall, 1967, the public school teacher's union, the United Federation of Teachers, went out on a brief strike during its contract negotiations with the Board of Education. The origins of this 1967 strike lay in a standard money dispute with the Board of Education, but its immediate cause was to force Mayor John V. Lindsay to bargain with the union. According to Martin Mayer,

> The Mayor had used the teacher negotiations to try out a new technique for labor - management relations in public service -- a fact-finding board which would bring in a recommendation that the Mayor would publicly announce and then impose equally upon the department of government involved and the union representing it s employees. This approach, whatever its virtues, was defective in that it left the union no function. If all goodies were to come by award from the Mayor's panels, and the decisions of these panels were to be beyond negotiation, then why should public employees pay dues to a union, which couldn't do anything for them anyway. The award the fact-finders had brought to Gracie Mansion was extremely generous, and the union could not seriously have fought for more money without looking greedy. To bring Mayor Lindsay to the bargaining table, then the union proclaimed a strike mostly for smaller class sizes, additional MES [More Effective Schools], etc. " (Mayer 1968:30).

Besides the usual collective bargaining issues at stake, the teachers' union was calling for the inclusion as contract item a set of administrative procedures that would facilitate the removal of "disruptive children" from the classroom. It was an issue that contributed to the stage setting for the racial divisions and system of alliances in the bitter and extended strike in the Fall, 1968. The 1968 strike would divide the City because it divided predominantly white teachers and majority black and Hispanic parents

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and smashed the possibility of effective struggles on public education for the next 10 years or more. U.C.C. supported the 1967 strike as it did most strikes although generally no formal decisions were made about them by the Board of Directors or membership. They did not see a role for the organization in such workplace issues. But, it thoroughly disagreed with the U.F.T.'s position on the "disruptive child" and it became involved on a local level with this issue for several reasons.

In the course of its work on the delinquency prevention project, U.C.C. had developed an interracial and economically diverse group of approximately 65 high school boys and girls. Several months after the beginning of 1966-67 school year, two of the 'delinquent youth', a black boy and a black girl who had spent the summer in leadership training at Twin Link Camp reported to Center staff a range of racial conflicts in their high school, Franklin K. Lane. Lane was a public high school located in the northeastern corner of ENY on the Queens border in an area called Cityline. Lane drew all its students from Brooklyn -- from Cityline which was predominantly white and from deeper into East New York, Ocean-Hill Brownsville and parts of Bushwick. Since 1960 when the school had been predominantly working class and white, the school had become 80% black and 20% white. The school's administrators and teachers were unprepared to handle the consequences of this abrupt change. The atmosphere in the school was laden with racial tensions expressed in every area of school academic and social life including the segregated use of entrances, segregated tables in the cafeteria, and segregated teams and clubs. At the beginning of that school year, a group of white students had attacked Negro students attending a nearby junior high school and a serious

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fight between Negro and white Lane students had erupted on a bus.

What was happening at Lane was happening in interracial schools throughout New York City and in cities throughout the north at the time. The social and racial turmoil in the society was enacted in different forms in the schools with more or less violence. But, it was also a period when the schools, and in this instance, Lane had not yet developed the devices the schools would eventually use -- leadership classes, human relations clubs, ethnic clubs -- to try to control school conflicts. Teachers and administrators had few resources or ideas for beginning to address the range of problems they faced -- neither the new kinds of problems that many angry, challenging, black and poor students, distrustful of whites, brought with them, nor the intense conflict that developed between the black students and the Italian - American working class youth who continued to attend the school. To the teachers, lower middle class and almost entirely white, the job no longer seemed to be the one they had bargained for. Lane was no longer 'their' school. Yet, they were being required to involve themselves in every class on a daily basis in dealing with expressions of the society's most difficult problems of race and class in the new forms and attitudes that were emerging at the time. Without a handle on how to address these problems, they blamed students for creating the problems, lowering standards, being ignorant, violent and unwilling to learn. They felt unfairly imposed upon and treated with disrespect by students and administrators and resentful toward a society that seemed to have little understanding or appreciation of what it was asking public school teachers to do or face.

They reacted. They reacted without much self- or social understanding based on

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the kit of traditional racial prejudices and middle class attitudes against the working class and poor that most of the white, lower middle class carried. The classroom itself became a daily scene of intense culture conflict between teachers and students stopping just short of racial slurs from both sides, and sometimes not stopping. In the teacher's cafeteria, in department offices and on the phones, teachers recounted these scenes to one another stirring up one another's sense of anger and sharing their sense of helplessness. For a very brief moment, some of them were more ready to search for solutions outside established channels.

The two students who had reported the problems in Lane were unable to organize other students. They did, however, provide the occasion for a series of discussions between Center staff and Lane teachers, administrators and union representatives based on a proposal the Center had written for re-structuring the school ("A Laboratory For Change" , U.C.C. Proposal, January, 1967). The moment was brief and the principal ended the discussions when the Human Relations Unit of the Board of Education began to work in the school with methods that limited the violence but not the racial tension. It was clear to Lane teachers that the Board of Education solution could not work and would not address their immediate problems. In fact, the school suffered the same problems with violent eruptions for several years afterwards until the neighborhoods from which it drew its students were drastically re-zoned. Without a larger and believable vision of what was possible, the union and its members turned instead to a palpable, immediate and narrow solution: get rid of the troublemakers.

Later that school year, the UFT and its Lane chapter arrived at an agreement with

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the local district superintendent on procedures for the automatic removal from the classroom of "disruptive children". It was an agreement that U.C.C. publicly opposed but which, a few months later became the basis of a contract issue in the 1967 teachers' strike because teachers throughout the city were facing the same problems and reacting with similar traditional shortsightedness.

At the time of the teachers' strike in the 1967-68 school year, U.C.C. staff was trying to develop high school groups that could initiate social action for change in their schools. The teenagers wanted to support their teachers in their strike. Many liked their teachers and many of their families had union backgrounds, but they did not agree with what the union was advocating. Some of them had themselves been "disruptive children" and a few were on their way to dropping out of school. In their summer camp experience and within their group in the City, most of these teenagers had seen how disruptive, angry and challenging some of their friends, as well as they, themselves, could be in relation to adults and other teens. But, they also had participated in a group experience over time in which these disruptive youth had begun successfully to exercise more systematic and reasoned control over their behaviors. Some had learned to express their problems and issue their disagreements and challenges in more careful and socially responsible ways. The U.C.C. Teen Group believed, at least tentatively and with the direction of the U.C.C. staff, that the "disruptive child" signified the poor, minority child whom they knew could change. They had seen and been a part of this changing. Some of them had also learned that they, previously and without awareness, had contributed to the angers of others by their own rejecting race and class prejudices. In the absence of

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U.C.C.'s work with these teenagers, including the black students from Lane who prompted U.C.C.'s initial involvement, it is unlikely the organization would have become involved in this issue.

There was something more. School problems and issues often had an immediate impact on the community atmosphere to a large extent because children and their parents had so much of their lives invested in them. Problems and tensions of race and class in the community spilled into the schools where they were re-created, aggravated and extruded into the community. Because the issue of the "disruptive child" resounded in the community among white and black parents who listened and reacted differently, and because U.C.C. was involved in this educational issue, it formulated a public position.

From the U.C.C.'s point of view, the disruptive child was too often a kid who was beset by the racial and class prejudices and hostility of the larger society and who then angrily recreated this rejection in his or her life and in the school. The classroom became an arena of conflict between the culture of the middle class teachers and the cultures of children who were working class and poor and whose aggressive speech and behavior was too easily labeled disruptive. The result was that although teachers were sometimes victimized, some who could not, or were unwilling to handle their prejudices, sometimes provoked attacks. U.C.C. acknowledged that there were difficult children who needed special help and services outside the regular classroom. But, and this was years before the proliferation of federally and state funded special education programs, U.C.C. urged that the accent should be placed, not on suspending children, but on a struggle to create the services these children needed. The real problem was the need to create schools

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where suspensions were unusual. That was one of the responsibilities of a teachers' union, a role it could perform in alliance with, not in opposition to minority parents and children. But instead of struggling to create schools where children feel welcome and teachers and administrators learn how to cope with the stresses of race and class, the teachers' union was putting the accent on suspension and exclusion.

Approximately 25 teachers from Thomas Jefferson High School left their picket line at three o'clock in September, 1967 to attend a meeting at U.C.C. to which Jefferson High School students had invited. It was a good discussion, although no one's opinions appeared to change. The students made clear they supported the strike but disagreed with the union on this issue and the teachers stood by their union. But, the process had two consequences. It established a relationship between the Jefferson High School teachers and the U.C.C., as well as a new relationship between the teachers and their students who learned how thoroughly and responsibly they could voice their disagreements with their teachers. Further, the U.C.C.'s position on the disruptive child established U.C.C.'s local leadership on the issue and became the basis for a community organizing campaign a few years later to prevent the introduction of "street academies" into the district. The campaign failed to keep out the street academies but it won the support of many people some of whom joined the U.C.C.

The contrast between U.C.C.'s work on protecting public funding for public schools and its work on opposing the emphasis on eliminating the "disruptive child" are not sharp but are indicative of how community organizing works. In both, issues of race, class, the atmosphere in schools and what children learn were salient. The

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campaign on the Blaine amendment was initiated by U.C.C. leadership. Based on its newspaper reading about a campaign for repeal in a context of its theoretical understanding of what repealing Blaine would mean for U.C.C.'s goals and program it acted and sought support for its position. The campaign on the disruptive child was prompted by two delinquent teenagers who had participated in a U.C.C. program and who were particularly sensitive to the racial tensions in their school. It continued based on the initial interest of school representatives who quickly pulled away. It then continued as a consequence of the U.C.C.'s work and relationships with local high school students. In short, some campaigns were initiated by the organization's leadership based on its theory and analysis of an issue. Others were prompted, and even the content of their positions developed, based on what youth or adult residents saw or wanted and upon the organization's relationship to people with whom it was working. The campaign to protect Blaine took place on a community level and with a city-wide coalition. The involvement with the disruptive child issue occurred only at community level although the issue had city-wide consequences which U.C.C. could do little to affect. In one campaign U.C.C. worked mainly with community adults and representatives of other organizations; in the other it worked mainly with youth and teachers. In both, however, U.C.C.'s position was developed and elaborated in a way that was consistent with its general theoretical perspective: its concern with the life conditions of the working class and poor; its concern with organizing adult and youth residents to assume responsibility in social struggles; and, its focus upon the connection between issues of public education issues, class and race issues, and the possibility of struggle for a more integrated and

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equal society. Neither was a locally winnable issue.

ENDNOTES

1. United Community Centers was the principal, and perhaps the only ENY-based organizations that consistently organized in opposition to the war in Viet Nam. After the Board and membership took a position in opposition to the war in 1967, U.C.C. consistently sent one and frequently two bus loads of members and residents to demonstrations against the war in southeast Asia in New York City and Washington, D.C. until the war was over. Several times each year, U.C.C. members and other volunteers staffed tables at four or five shopping areas in the community collecting signatures on petitions, collecting money for telegrams, and signing people up to join the U.C.C. Peace Committee or join the U.C.C. delegation at an impending demonstration against the war. At each demonstration, members would search for other delegations that were interracial like them. Except for some unions, notably Local 1199, interracial delegations other than the U.C.C. were rare. In addition, The Link, the U.C.C. monthly community newspaper regularly printed news, editorial and historical articles on the southeast Asian war.

2. See also the discussion by Naomi Cohen (1992) of separation of church and state in the U.S. as a non-orthodox Jewish tradition, and Hollinger's (1996, Chapter 2) placement of this "tradition" in the the broader context of "Jewish Intellectuals and the De-Christianization of American Public Culture in the Twentieth Century".

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CHAPTER VII

THE LAST STRUGGLE FOR SCHOOL INTEGRATION IN NYC

PART 1: DECENTRALIZATION AND THE TEACHERS' STRIKE

Decentralization and Community Control: Nationalists, Pluralists and Elitists

In 1966-67 the proposals for the decentralization and community control of the NYC public school system came from diverse social and political quarters. Although they were justified from many perspectives and within each there were intricate variations, almost all were oriented to three basic positions: the black nationalist, the pluralist, and the elitist. The black nationalist and pluralist positions each comprised many permutations and the rhetorics of the nationalist and pluralist positions overlapped with one another. The following is a summary of what I think are the crucial points in each position.

The black nationalist position assumed that the black domestic "colony" in the United States constituted a nation that differed from other nations in two significant ways (Blauner 1972; Hall 1977; Marable 1984; Allen 1990). It consisted of forcibly transplanted colonial subjects who had acquired a cohesive identity across centuries of struggle against enslavement, cultural alienation, and white racism. It also differed because its members were dispersed across the U.S. and integrated into a monopoly capitalist economy as workers or members of a reserve army of labor. Nationalists believed that despite the incorporation of blacks into the U.S. capitalist economy, the common and very specific history of American blacks had generated a national culture with a particular set of ideas, values, norms and psychology.[1]

Further, they argued that it was important to see racism, and especially American racism as an essential element of contemporary imperialism. Imperialism was a

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universal system of oppression not only of subjugated minorities "at home" but also of the entire Third World that had been underdeveloped by global capitalist exploitation. The non-white world, including the black colony within the U.S., was the chief object of imperialist rapacity. Racial discrimination was its essential mode of exploitation. Consequently, the fight against racism was a revolutionary fight against imperialist exploitation on a world-wide basis (Munford, 1977) . The only way to resolve the conflict between the American imperialist-racist system and the black nation was to overthrow capitalism and give black people the opportunity to exercise the right of self-determination.

That much was generally agreed upon by black nationalists, but there was considerable disagreement after that. Leftist black nationalists believed that the only sure way to erase institutionalized racism was to end capitalism and establish a socialist society under the dictatorship of a multinational proletariat. The struggle for socialism in the U.S. would be led by black masses exercising the right of self-determination although how one followed the other was never clear. More common than the Leftist position, especially by the late 1960s, however, were the positions of pan-Africanist and other kinds of black nationalists who believed that the black community should aim to gain total control over its ghetto institutions and neighborhoods. In their ghettos, blacks could then build non-capitalist economic institutions and a social life animated by the communalistic values that were rooted in African and African American life.[2]

In the area of education, for many black nationalists, the decentralization of the NYC public school system and community control over local district schools would mean the beginning of black political control over black community institutions that could be used as a base for extending black control over local institutions. In addition, it

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meant that black children could finally have the black teachers and administrators as role models that they needed to develop the self-esteem that seemed to them to be so essential to academic learning. Given the radical difference between the black and white experience in the U.S., it was only black teachers who could understand black culture and the black experience and teach the communalistic values appropriate for black children along with their other subjects. Too often, the NYC Board of Education had imposed white appointees upon ghetto children. Not only were these white teachers unhappy about teaching in poor, black districts, they were racially and culturally unable to represent role models for the children; they were ignorant and prejudiced about the kids and their cultures; and, they were resistant to learning how to teach them. According to S.Carmichael and C. Hamilton (1967:167) , "community control meant that "black parents should seek as their goal the actual control of the public schools in their community: hiring and firing of teachers, selection of materials, determination of standards, etc. The principals and as many of the teachers as possible should be black. the children should be able to see their kind in positions of leadership and authority."

Beginning with very different premises, the pluralist position (Polsby 1963; Rose 1967; Dahl 1967) depicted American society as "fractured into congeries of hundreds of small interest groups" Elites might have authority in the economy, state and other institutions but their authority was seen as dependent upon and restrained by the counter-pressures of interest groups competing for a share in the "goods" available in the society. Compromises for wage increases, street lights, policy and political appointments emerged out of the conflicts among groups. According to the pluralists, the role of government was to serve as a rule-guided arena for the conflicts among opposing interests, for the resolution of social conflicts and to administer the decisions that were

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made. Where an interest was not organized, the role of government was to encourage and support the organized articulation of that interest so that it was capable of exercising power in the bargaining process. It was this process that fostered a stable society and a democratic politics in the U.S.[3] From a liberal pluralist perspective in the late sixties, blacks were seen as insufficiently represented in the pluralist competition for power. The pluralist solution was for government to facilitate the organization of blacks as an interest group capable of competing with other interest groups for access to societal resources.

Pluralists interpreted decentralization and community control of the schools as a genuinely pluralist program that would democratize the urban system by providing blacks with power. Marilyn Gittell (1970: 115) a prominent writer in support of decentralization argued that , "control of public policy results from control of vital resources such as jobs, funds, social status and expertise. Competition among groups for the resources of power generally makes for a dynamic pluralist system. Current movements for school reform through expanded community control attempt to achieve a new balance of power by reintroducing competition". Like many others, Gittell's political model was the process by which white immigrant groups through their ethnically based political clubhouses had been able to advance their interests and improve their conditions of life in the first decades of the century. Gittell (1971:134) described the school board in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, the Brooklyn demonstration district for community control, with the variety of issues it was required to address and the numbers of paraprofessional jobs it dispersed as "a replica of the old local political clubhouse; it filled a vacuum in the community that the clubhouse had occupied in serving immigrant groups."

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There were few who challenged the dogma of the moment that "ethnic politics" was the principal basis on which the white ethnic minorities had been able to win political incorporation and improve their economic condition. Since the white ethnics, and especially the Jews, had raised themselves by "getting themselves together" as ethnic groups, the pluralists argued that it was now time and right for blacks to do the same. Richard Cloward and Francis F. Piven wrote (1972:187), "The ideal [of integration] glosses over the importance of the ethnic community as a staging area for groups to build the communal solidarity and power necessary to compel eventual access to the mainstream of urban life." But, the same authors pointed out that the immigrant political machine, "...was characterized by the use --or misuse -- of public power by political leaders to provide private rewards, which in turn served to elicit the votes by which public power was gained and retained. Since these votes were traded for private rewards and not for the substance of public policy, the impact of "river wards" on policy was small" (1967: 83).[4] That ethnic groups used their areas of settlement as staging areas, for building local institutions and social networks from which they could launch their efforts to into the mainstream of American urban life was true. But, that fact implied little about which other factors and vehicles had been effective in producing the group and structural mobility of the large majority of white working class ethnics.

In the struggles over community control, the possibility that the labor movement's economic and political victories were a factor in producing group mobility was rarely considered. The possibility that the social legislation won by political coalitions led by *an organized, multi-ethnic working class* had produced more improvement in the lives of the white ethnics than separatist, ethnic politics was rarely considered. The possibility that the structural economic, and ideological transformations wrought by World War II,

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including the post-war economic and military predominance of the U.S., the expansion of the U.S. economy, technical changes and the need to fill positions at the top and in the middle of a changing occupational structure, was rarely considered. Nor were the expansion of educational and economic opportunities produced by the G.I. Bill or the economic impact of the federally financed construction of post-World War II suburban homes and commuter and interstate highway systems (Jackson 1985; Sacks 1994). The widespread assumption of the black and white supporters of black nationalism and black pluralism was that mobility was achieved almost exclusively through the efforts of solidaristic ethnic groups.

In the area of education, many liberals assumed the ability of the schools to educate working class racial minorities and the poor up to normative levels of reading and math and cited the academic failures of the children as evidence of the schools', and especially the teachers' failures. They concluded that the Board of Education had no genuine commitment to the education of poor and minority children. Since the Board refused to plan for integration, liberals and pluralists alike (and most often they were the same people) agreed that at least the Board should make educational equality possible for black children through the structural reform of the system (Rogers 1968). Community control -- the allocation of planning, staffing, curricula and budgetary powers to local levels -- would satisfy both political and educational needs. Pluralists projected that it would provide the jobs and power bases upon which blacks could acquire professional jobs and mobilize local community interests in the competition for an improved place in the urban political system.

It is fairly easy to see how it was that, in their common support of community control as a way the black community could gain power over a neighborhood institution,

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the nationalist and pluralist positions overlapped programmatically. The positions were fused on other points as well, especially in their specific arguments about education and the need for racially separatist organization. Pluralists and nationalists both argued that community control would free local black districts to be flexible and imaginative in addressing local problems -- the problems of working class and poor minorities-- that they understood better than a central board. Moving the site of educational power and decision-making from a 'distant, alien, bureaucratically bloated', central board to a local district, they argued, would motivate local parents to be far more involved in the educational process. With real decision-making at the local level, black parents and local residents could see and feel their efficacy and they would want to participate. Parental participation at the local level would mean that educational initiatives would be better informed and more closely directed to the needs of students. Additionally, parent involvement would motivate black children and support their ability to do well in school because children would see how important their parents thought their education was and make their parents' aspirations their own.

Pluralist and nationalist arguments also converged on the need for racially separatist organizations and political strategies. They both argued that the experience of race, particularly the experience of African Americans, was so fundamentally different from the experience of all other groups that white people could never comprehend it even when they wanted to. Whites, even the most well-intentioned whites benefitted from their status as whites (i.e., "white skin privilege") in ways that most of them barely grasped. Their status and opportunities, their freedom to leave the struggle, rendered whites incapable of understanding or feeling what it was like to face the daily, unyielding and inescapable problems that blacks faced. The result was that in interracial

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organizations, whites would always define problems and propose strategies, actions and programs in ways that confused their interests with black interests. All things considered, whites could not be trusted to do what was best for blacks and could not be counted upon in common struggle except in very limited circumstances.

Further, as a consequence of the historical experience of race, whites were often better educated than blacks, and more fluent in dealing with ideas in public. As a result, blacks too often acceded to the whites who because of their superior education and verbal fluency tended to dominate the leadership in interracial organizations. This perpetuated the dependency of blacks and stymied the development of black leadership. What was needed were racially separate organizational forms where blacks could be free from the interference of well-intentioned, but uncomprehending, mis-guided and dominating whites. In racially separate organizations, blacks could explore who they really were and how they really felt. Away from the intimidating, critical, but blind, eyes of whites, blacks could be free to define their problems, develop their culture and cultural identity, and develop the strategies and campaigns most appropriate to their needs as they defined them. Separate, blacks could test themselves, learn to exercise control, and develop a black leadership that would not mislead or exploit the black community.

Given the convergence of the nationalist and pluralist positions on many points, one result on a community level was that it was hard to tell the players and positions apart. Besides the overlap in the arguments, many quotidian, common sense pluralists on the community level frequently used nationalist arguments to bolster their own, and community-level nationalists often used mainstream pluralist rhetoric when they wanted to appear more moderate, or just because the pluralist arguments were in the air.

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Sometimes, even the players themselves had difficulty discerning the direction of their own positions because the rhetoric of the two positions so easily slid into one another.

The elitist position in support of decentralization as exemplified by the role of McGeorge Bundy seemed less ideological and more "reasonable". From his positions as head of the Ford Foundation and chairman of the Mayor's Advisory Panel on Decentralization of the New York City Schools, Bundy and his group put together the decentralization proposal (1967) that would be the basis for the NY State law decentralizing the NYC school districts (hereafter the Bundy Report). According to Bundy, integration was not the major concern of the blacks who testified before the Mayor's Advisory Commission. What they cared about was quality education. What was needed therefore was structural reform that would decentralize decision-making, and free the positive energies of individuals, especially parents, and local groups to improve the quality of local schools. Educators could then be more responsive to the needs of the children and the community. Estelle Hertzberg, a Ford Foundation staff member at the time, described the perspective behind the Mayor's and Bundy's position somewhat more directly in this way. "In the past ten years, education issues have brought more and more Negro and white parents face to face, in battle dress. Decentralization will, in a manner of speaking, disperse the troops and send them back into their own districts to fight among themselves. This may somewhat reduce the level of Negro-white tension in the City" ("Decentralization: Education Reform or Social Reformation", April , 1968, pp. 11-12, quoted in Posner 1977, 197.)

In other words, racial tensions in New York City had continuously increased over black support for school integration and white resistance. Further, there were continual attacks upon both the central Board which was directly blamed for the educational

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failures of the children, and upon the white power structure that was behind the Board of Education. From the cockpit of NYC political power, it seemed that the urban boat was rocking precariously. Decentralization was a means to circumvent the issue of school integration, to deflect the intense and unending political and racial conflicts in the City over this issue by confining the tumult to local levels less hazardous to those in power.

U.C.C.'s Position On Decentralization

U.C.C. opposed all the decentralization plans including the one that was eventually adopted for several reasons consistent with its general perspective. It believed that decentralization would construct even higher barriers against city-wide school integration if not entirely foreclose its possibility. Communities would see their interests as opposed instead of joining together in the city-wide organization needed to fight both for city-wide educational objectives and for the City and State funds without which educational improvement for working class and poor students was chimerical. Indeed, U.C.C. predicted that community level control of the schools would turn district against district in a competition for advantage, and make self-serving politics the basis of every educational decision. From U.C.C.'s point of view, decentralization was wrong educationally and politically, but it was more than that. What U.C.C. was tracking and contesting was more than just a decentralization plan. U.C.C. perceived the dissolution of both the struggle for racial integration and of an earlier class-based and oriented politics, a "people's coalition", that had emerged with the New Deal and exercised significant power in NYC and urban politics over the last three decades.

By the end of 1968, U.C.C. had formulated a general picture of the trends it saw expressed in attacks on health, education, welfare:

> The attacks are national in scope. Reactionaries who would turn the clock back on every social advance in the last 30 years have a global and

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coordinated strategy. The tragedy is that people who have a common stake in public health, education and welfare have abandoned national campaigns and universal demands. Instead all these energies have been shunted into local fights for this "piece of the action", this "piece of the pie". Consequently friends and allies remain alone, the welfare poor separated from the working poor, instead of struggling together for a guaranteed minimum income. Jews and Negroes, common allies in the past in the struggle against discrimination and bigotry have been broken apart by separatism.

The struggle against the war in Viet Nam and the struggle against poverty and injustice within the nation are seen as separate struggles by separate groups. The splintered fights wound more allies than enemies. Last year when the decentralization pitch commanded the main attention, $154 million was cut out of the educational budget on a city-wide scale without a major struggle. $95 million was cut out of Medicaid without a major struggle. Localism ditched the central struggle for educational construction, funds and policies.

The tragedy of the crisis in our city is that natural allies have been misled into ambush against each other. It is time to end the fragmentation and separation. The fight for peace, jobs, education, welfare and health is an interrelated fight. It is not a local fight; it is a national fight. It is an interracial fight. NYC's welfare problem is swollen because welfare standards in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi force people who have been made jobless by the technological changes in agriculture to move north. Then the swollen slums of the big cities present their critical problems of education, health, and housing without help. ("What's the Price of Breaking Up the People's Coalition", The Link, Nov., 1968)

There is in this description and political analysis a mixture of prescience and nostalgia. It accurately describes the incipient political impulse to dismantle welfare state social legislation. This impulse was a reaction to the turmoil and collective demands produced by the anti-war movement and the black movement. It would be coordinated and developed over the next decade as a pro-market, anti-social legislation, anti-poor and anti-black strategy that would reach its political flowering in the Reagan elections (Edsall, 1984; Edsall and Edsall, 1992).

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On the other hand, the U.C.C. perspective that produced its political perception was based on an image of an interracial and working class-oriented movement that hearkened back to the popular front movement of the thirties and its still effective remnants in the forties and early fifties. The structural bases of this movement, however, were already being dissolved by the multi-faceted shift to a post-industrial political and social economy. Mass production manufacturing industries in northern and mid-western cities relocated or expanded in non-union areas of the U.S. or in low wage areas of the world. The service sector of the American economy was growing in significance, the local and national class structure was changing, and despite the expansion of public service unions, memberships in U.S. labor unions was shrinking as was their political power. The new international division of labor and a global restructuring of the economy that would accelerate in the 1970s had already begun. And, the social economy of the NYC metropolitan area had already been transformed by the white, middle class and upper working class exodus to the suburbs that produced a political split between central cities and suburban areas. In sum, these structural bases of the old, working class based "people's coalition" were dissolving, indeed may already by 1969 have dissolved. Even for most people who once knew the "people's coalition", the memory had faded. For the most recent migrants to NYC who were occupying the neighborhoods that whites fled, African Americans from the rural and urban South, or migrants from Puerto Rico, a knowledge of and identification with the old labor struggles and the "people's coalition" never existed. Contrary to what U.C.C. leaders and members hoped, the 'people's coalition' could not be willed into existence. The question is whether it was possible at the time to see the impossibility of re-creating a movement

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based upon an organized, industrial working class.

Many people had already given up on it. The consumerist orientation of the white working class and the accomodationism of the major industrial unions established in the post-war concord between capital and labor were obvious. Obvious also was the resistance of the urban and suburban white, working class and lower middle class to the integration of schools and housing and other black demands, and their turn to supporting "law and order" candidates who were especially conservative on threatening racial issues. But, these could be seen, as U.C.C. saw them, as potentially temporary ideological and political resistances if the fundamental economic and spatial structures of the earlier movements were still in place. Without an analysis of how the earlier structures were changing and dissolving which few people had, and the U.C.C. most certainly did not (and, in the next decade, when these problems became clearer, would resist acquiring), it was possible to imagine that movements of the earlier type could be willed, persuaded, and organized back into existence.

U.C.C. recognized its relative isolation on the issue of school integration. "Recently", The Link wrote in February, 1968, "there has been an abandonment of the objective of integrated education by community groups, boards of education and planners" in NYC and other cities. A month later The Link recognized, "Integration is no longer in, " and asked, "If integration is out what's in? Separate but equal is old and now in, not because it's a better answer to injustice and discrimination, but because it seems easier. Separate but equal is the status quo -- only a little more so when old enemies of segregation buy it. "

What had happened to the old enemies of segregation? U.C.C. witnessed, felt,

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opposed and tried to turn around on its local level in the area of education, the beginning of the collapse of urban insurgency and the loss of the willingness or ability of black leaders to build and lead popular constituencies outside the mainstream political parties :

> The militant leaders in various localities have been quieted down with a piece of the action--the right to control a few jobs. The anger and pressure for basic change throughout the City has been defused. Energy has been diverted from the fight for integrated, excellent education (educational parks, comprehensive high schools, new construction, top-flight educational personnel and specialists, curriculum enrichment and the best of modern equipment) to local ward politics and in-fighting.
>
> Instead of fighting the City, the State and the federal government to force action on the crisis of public education, the people who suffer most from the short-changing of their children have been turned around to fight each other, the poor against the poor, Negro against Puerto Rican, the parents against teachers.
>
> Local groups push for the penny prize bags falsely labeled "power". Inside these bags is just enough money for a few middle class jobs. The real sources of power -- city-wide organization, alliances, coordination and struggle -- are neglected. A recent open hearing on the city-wide educational budget closed early. Local groups had not even appeared to fight for their children.
>
> The crisis in education looks like a local crisis because we see it in the lives of our children. But, the crisis is city-wide. It reflects a national crisis. It is a crisis of rich and poor. It is an urban crisis because more and more the nation dumps its rural poor into the urban centers.
>
> The schools are being shaped to fit the segregation of our society by race and class. Slum schools and suburban schools are the answer of those who accept segregation as "what is". It is the shape of the present that becomes the future through hardening. ("What's the Alternative to Decentralization", The Link, 3/68)

Integration was out, even for many liberals and radicals who were supporting the pluralist and nationalist arguments about community control, albeit the nationalist rhetoric often made them uncomfortable. But, U.C.C.'s own theoretical and

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philosophical commitments aside, there also seemed to be too much support and knowledge around on non-local levels, as well as insights from surprising places that agreed with U.C.C.'s position, for it to question seriously its theoretical analysis or its commitments. The Link frequently cited successful local instances of successful integration in U.C.C.'s own programs and elsewhere. In February, 1968, the newspaper cited the 1967 report of the U.S. Commission On Civil Rights, Racial Isolation In The Schools, that marshalled evidence to argue that Negro children suffer serious harm when their education takes place in public schools which are racially segregated whatever the source of segregation may be." The Report further argued that white children are damaged by racial isolation in more subtle ways and that where racial integration has been tried "the results have been of benefit to all children, white and Negro." Evidence and arguments would mount in the following years that would challenge the excessive generality of these conclusions and would point to the conditions necessary for integration to succeed, but in the meantime, The Link concluded, "We must educate our children today for the conflicts and changes of today and tomorrow. How can we train them for a world of controversy and difference if we hole our children up each in his own cage."

Two months later in April, 1968, ("Separate and Unequal or Integrated for Interchange and Enrichment") The Link summarized the conclusions of the report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968), the federal commission appointed to study the causes and consequences of the earlier urban riots/insurgency. "This is our basic conclusion. Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal...The deepening racial division is not inevitable. Choice is still possible." The Commission pointed to three choices: continue as we are; improve

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the ghetto and abandon integration as a goal; or, combine the enrichment of the ghetto with the pursuit of integration. Otherwise, it predicted, the Negro population in central cities will be 21 million by 1985 and the white exodus to suburbs will create predominantly Negro cities. At that point, the Commission predicted, the creation of a racially integrated society would be impossible.

To the Commission's conclusions The Link added,

> We have no illusion that the Commission's finding will quickly become a platform for change. On a local scale in East New York, the United Community Centers has been attacked on all sides for outlining exactly these choices and for insisting on the twin goals of enrichment and integration ...Mayor Lindsay, vice chairman of the Commission, in the seamy 'practical politics' of running NYC has underwritten the separatism of the ghetto and the abandonment of integration. He bought black separatism in education. Black separatism is an accommodation to white racism...Decentralization ... is a nice word for separate districts for Negroes...Without interracial alliances to fight for a decent society... [the Commission's report} will gather explosive dust (April, 1968).

But, where would the interracial alliances come from? They would come, U.C.C. hoped, from persuading, organizing and involving the same populations and organizations that constituted an earlier "people's coalition", the structural bases of which, unknown to the U.C.C., were being dissolved and replaced by new economic, political and socio-spatial structures.

Mayor Lindsay was not the only politician whose position on one level of politics appeared to contradict his position on another level of politics. A year after the recommendations of the Bundy Report were enacted as the basis of the New York State law on school decentralization, The Link printed the following article based on an interview with Bundy in the NY Times (10/29/68) in the middle of a long teachers' strike:

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Last Year's Link: 'If the Bundy Report is adopted, a final blow will undercut the school system. District will be pitted against district in a deadly competition for money, administrative personnel and teachers.'

This Year's Bundy: 'The basic problem is fiscal. It is tragic that the opposing parties in the decentralization battle failed to become allies in going after the public treasury...Decentralization is no substitute...for the massive infusion of funds which the school system now needs for new buildings, for better teaching and for a higher level of performance.'

Last Year's Link: 'The Bundy Report reinforces a divided educational system. Its intense localism guarantees the end of any serious consideration of integration. Divisions along racial lines will be institutionalized.'

This Year's Bundy: 'We now know that the feelings and local conflicts were even deeper than our inquiries in 1967 suggested to me... While we believe in decentralization, we are opposed to fragmentation...The Central Board and the State Commissioner of Education must have powers which can prevent racism in any district under any name.'

Last Year's Link: 'We see the answer in two areas: 1) A strong central Board committed to integration in the metropolitan area, giving leadership in terms of philosophy, policies and planning, and administratively freeing educators in local areas to pursue experiments; 2) Citizen organization to fight for an educational program to build alliances, and to fight politically for goals and funds to do the job that has to be done. Only organized citizens can guarantee that injustice and discrimination are wiped out.'

This Year's Bundy: ' Perhaps we failed in not making the point more strongly that you need a strong central agency with public confidence as well as decentralization. Protection of teachers' rights and community participation remain essential and compatible unless the whole thing is drowned in a sea of hatred' ("Last Year's Link and This Year's Bundy", November 68).

It is hard to conceive that McGeorge Bundy, President the Ford Foundation, one of the "best and the brightest" in the Kennedy/LBJ cabinets, and the group around him at the Foundation who put together the Bundy Report, were as blissfully ignorant of NYC politics and social groups as Bundy claimed. It is far more likely that their proposals

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were the product of elite self-interest as described above by Hertzberg. Bundy and the elitists had proposed decentralization to remove school integration and the turmoil surrounding it from the political agenda. Now that they had succeeded in sending the troops back to their districts to fight among themselves, they were politically free to issue an apologia that publicly retracted arguments they had previously made in tones of Olympian reasonableness.

For the U.C.C. it meant that now, out of the mouth of one of the chefs who concocted the decentralization recipe, had come further evidence of the correctness of its own position. Bundy was admitting that a strong central board was essential, that decentralization had stimulated local racism and urban hatreds, that it divided education allies from one another, and that it undermined city-wide citizen struggle for the funds the educational system needed. Bundy was not concerned with school integration, but on the other issues, based on his revelatory experience of the ethnic and racial strife generated by the teachers strike, his new position confirmed what U.C.C. already believed.

In the meantime, U.C.C. offered another answer to the problem of segregated, inferior education:

> It is a political struggle and an educational program. If segregation in education is wrong, it is wrong even if it exists and is entrenched. Then the answer is to fight it, not live with it and adjust to it. Part of that fight is to change poor schools right now, but to change them in a certain direction through planning and pushing, so as to move toward integration and excellence as twin objectives.
>
> We've been asked: if you are against decentralization, what are you for? Instead of breaking up into local districts based on narrow race and class lines, we see moving toward a metropolitan educational system which includes city and suburbs. We are fighting for a metropolitan system with a

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double mandate: integration and excellence in education.

> A warning is necessary. All structures within an institution can be bought off. Witness the poverty program in which so-called indigenous leaders became the new establishment.
>
> Guarantees for education are tied to community participation but to community participation of a certain kind, to independent participation, to a citizen fight for goals, for ideas, for a program. We see the answer in two areas: 1) a strong central educational board committed to integration in the metropolitan area, giving leadership in terms of philosophy, policies and planning and administratively freeing educators to pursue creative methods and experiments. 2) Citizen organization to fight for an educational program to build alliances to fight politically for goals and for funds to do the job that has to be done. Only organized citizens can guarantee that injustice and discrimination in education can be wiped out.
>
> Emphasis on the goal of education does not mean neglecting the existing serious situation in the ghetto areas. Mobilizing the metropolitan area to solve the education deficit of the ghetto is a central responsibility of the whole city. The resources for the solution are in the greater community not in the local districts. ("What's The Alternative To Decentralization", The Link, 3/68.)

This made sense to U.C.C. at the time but it was only an abstract sense. There was no central board committed to integration (and never would be). There was no push in NYC on the part of any group to incorporate southern Westchester and eastern Nassau counties with NYC into a metropolitan school district (and never would be). Not even the NAACP which initiated suits for metropolitan integration elsewhere would tackle NYC.[5] There was no city-wide citizen group organizing for full funding for public education (and none would develop in the 30 years since then). Whatever sense U.C.C.'s abstract position held resided exclusively in existing law and *professed* public policy, in the realm of geographical and statistical possibility, and in the fact that metropolitan school integration was being pursued elsewhere in the country. Its only other appeal was

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nurtured by the same social climate of possibility for social change that produced the dense growth of ideologies, organizations and movements of the time. If so much had changed in the last decade, so much more could, it seemed.

After all, the law committed the Board of Education to move towards the desegregation of schools, and school integration was its professed policy. It seemed possible with citizen organization to hold the Board accountable by pushing its actions into line with its professed policies. There were still enough white students in the NYC public schools, southern Westchester and eastern Nassau (as a state-funded study would demonstrate a few years later in the Dodson Report to the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1972) to racially integrate every district in NYC so that every district contained the racial proportions of students roughly equal to their proportions in the City as a whole. It was geographically possible to do this with bus rides no longer than 20 minutes for not many more students than were already being bussed to school. Finally, it was still a moment when large numbers of people in NYC and in the nation were mobilized and appeared mobilizable on social change issues. City-wide citizen organization did not seem chimerical because, in fact, so many NYC residents were already organized, even if their struggles were self-defeatingly local, limited, or in opposition to one another. What was necessary was leadership and a collective recognition of common goals across racial divisions. But, if this possibility had not been foreclosed by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. earlier in the year, it was surely ended by the teachers' strike in NYC in the Fall of 1968.

The 1968 Teachers' Strike

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From a sociological perspective, it would be an overstatement to claim that a single socially traumatic event like the teacher's strike that lasted only a few months could *eliminate* the *possibility* of city-wide interracial, and class-based organizing in NYC. The economic, spatial and social structures of class-based organizing had been crumbling and were being replaced by the service industries, a reshaped occupational structure, more distant race and class spatial separations, and labor market racial/ethnic segmentation since the end of World War II -- all of which magnified the problems of cross-racial organizing. In addition, the actual people who did citizen organizing, especially community-based organizing, were women volunteers and they were increasingly unavailable. In the 1960s, women began to move into the labor force at an accelerated pace. Black women had always participated in the labor force at rates higher than white women, but now, even as the proportion of white women in the labor force increased rapidly and surpassed that of black women, black women's participation rate also increased. These women, black and white, were no longer available to assume the role women had performed earlier in their roles as wives, mothers and organizers in building and defending their communities. Acting as community organizers became even more difficult for women with children without husbands, especially for the black women in ENY who were single parent heads of households at a rate far exceeding that of white women. In short, the spatial and economic separations of race and class were already solidly in place by 1968 and increasing; the transformation from a manufacturing to a more complexly stratified service economy was well under way; and, the pool of people, i.e., women, from which community builders and defenders had historically been drawn was diminishing. [6]

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Nevertheless, it seems difficult to exaggerate the immediate and longer term consequences of the Teachers' Strike for political organizing. The strike lasted two months and directly affected millions of parents, children and public school employees. On a daily basis the strike and reactions to it were reported upon and analyzed in all the media, in community groups, at work over lunch, in households and in various other forums in ways which pointed to the racial and ethnic bases of the different sides in the strike. Further, there were elements on both sides -- union members and supporters, or black community groups and supporters -- whose racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric and activities were reported in sensationalized and exaggerated ways. The bombardment of publicity over a two month period. created its own dynamic as always -- provoking new race/ethnicity - related emotions and hostilities, and unleashing, magnifying and providing new evidence in hyperbolic language to justify the generally submerged anger and fear with which everyone ordinarily lived along both sides of the racial axis. These hostilities flowed freely past the confines of the relationships within New York City's educational arenas, affecting political life, everyday life on the streets, including the talk and avoidance of neighbors and co-workers. Few people felt free of the obligation either to take sides or at least arrive at an opinion of which side was the right side. The crude characterization of the sides that developed was of white, Jewish, unionist, and racist teachers who cared only about their jobs and prerogatives, not about black children, against black, anti-Semitic, and anti-white parents and community groups who were anti-union and sought to destroy it (Mayer 1969; Berube and Gittell 1969; Carter 1971).

Even before the strike began, the civic atmosphere was already laden with overt racial angers and defensiveness evoked by the experiences of the recent past. These

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experiences included the challenges of the civil rights movement, the resistance to school and housing integration of political authorities and community groups, the "riots" and demonstrations, the felt disconnection of blacks from the mainstreams of political power, the resistance to black political incorporation by whites who held power, the sometimes reasoned and often wildly exaggerated theatrics of black nationalist rhetoric, and the not more often reasoned and sometimes viciously defensive reactions of whites. Now, the social forces and the rhetoric swirling around the strike supersaturated the atmosphere with cross-racial hostilities. The result was that the tumult of social response to the strike vividly and painfully crystallized popular conceptions of the social divisions that already existed and reinforced them socially and politically. It was a social and political trauma whose rippling and polarizing after-effects continued for years. The subsequent political organizing consequences were several.

First, the strike and the distrust and hardened animosities issuing from it directly precluded the possibility of teacher-parent alliance for common public educational goals for at least the next decade. Ten years later, the events continued to echo in the memories of unionists and parents. There were few meetings about education in New York City black communities in which Al Shanker, head of the U.F.T., and the white, (often specified as Jewish) teachers were not demonized. Within black communities, the UFT was seen as the enemy, and the teachers were to blame for children not learning. The ambivalent and sometimes antagonistic sentiment towards unions in black communities had roots that extended much further back than the teachers' strike and had been continuously nurtured by racial exclusions in the construction and in industrial unions (Jacobson 1968; Hill 1968). But now this anti-union sentiment flourished,

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covering and then spreading beyond the teachers' union to unions in general, cresting only as it became clearer over time how extensive black union membership was and how dependent upon their unions blacks were. For its part, the teachers' union was now imbued with a thoroughgoing distrust, if not disdain of black parents and other black community groups. The U.F.T. made no significant effort in the next decade to move beyond its distrust of and antagonism toward black parents. Anticipating the criticisms of black parents, and condemning their opinions beforehand as anti-union, the union refused even to listen with attentiveness to the voices of black parents expressing the achingly legitimate educational problems of their children in the schools. In the mid-1970s and later, faced with the catastrophic consequences of the NYC fiscal crisis for the public schools and its own membership, the union defensively, and with what appeared as arrogance to community groups in ENY, refrained from reaching out to parent and community groups in black communities for support and alliances even during the "save our schools" campaigns, it occasionally initiated (Maier 1987).[7]

Second, the impact of the strike extended beyond the teachers-parents political relationship. The idea that blacks and whites could work together for common goals had been a strategic guidepost for the civil rights movement. But, it was a concept fundamentally inimical to the assumptions of the black separatist form of organizing discussed above. It is not that the responses to the strike proved the trans-historical, trans-institutional validity of these assumptions. No single event could do that. But the swirl around the strike amplified the credibility of these assumptions for blacks and for sympathetic whites whether or not they had taken the union's side during the strike. People on opposing sides had seemed unable and unwilling to hear one another. Of

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course, for unsympathetic whites, these assumptions did not require extra demonstration. In communities like East New York, the idea of integrated struggle for school or housing integration or any other goals was already increasingly dubious for many. The atmosphere produced by the strike in black communities licensed the accusations that whites who stood for integration were self-interested, manipulative racists, and blacks who stood for integration were white-indoctrinated, "handkerchief head" traitors to the black cause. From a comparative perspective, the specific chemistry of this atmosphere did not require a teachers' strike. It emerged in many places other than New York City in those years. But, after the strike in New York City, it was a given, a part of the air of organizing, especially in educational arenas, even after separatism subsided as a political force in the early 1970s.

Would it have been more possible, without the strike, to construct a stronger, interracial opposition, eight years later, to the austerity response to the New York City fiscal crisis? If so, would it have made any difference to the austerity level of budgeting and class-disciplinary measures the banks insisted upon and the political leadership enacted? These questions are speculative and impossible to answer but they are not outlandish. The racial distrust provoked and solidified by the strike and reaction to it lasted for years and reinforcing and legitimizing the trepidations and questions already felt about organizing across racial difference.

U.C.C.'s Position On The Strike

U.C.C.'s position on the strike was in support of the teachers, despite its location in a community from whose expanding black population it derived most of its support, and despite its dissatisfactions and disagreements with the "pork chops" bias and specific

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positions of the U.F.T. It had arrived at this position after considerable discussion among its leadership, board and members. Its initial internal disagreements notwithstanding. U.C.C.'s support of integration and opposition to decentralization, its perspective on the connection between the union rights of workers and its ideas about working class struggle went too deep for the organization to take any other position.

But, although it made clear to the community what its position was, U.C.C. did not conduct a campaign or seek to organize anyone to support the teachers. It could not reasonably achieve any effect upon the strike. Outside the organization, by the second and third week of the strike, few people's minds were being changed and the sides were divided by race. Nevertheless, after a few weeks, at the request of some the high school students and parents with whom U.C.C. was working, and with the cooperation of Thomas Jefferson High School U.F.T. teachers on strike, U.C.C. organized an "interim school". There were other "interim schools" in the City during the strike but not many in the middle of ghetto areas attended by 130 racially mixed students daily attending classes in six subjects. The only disruption of the school occurred one day when the school was picketed by several staff members of local anti-poverty agencies (including two former coalition partners of U.C.C. from the United Negro and Puerto Rican Front) who opposed the interim school and the union. They believed, quite correctly, that U.F.T. participation in the interim school softened or deflected the antagonism of local black parents toward the union and undermined support for the community control of schools they sought. At one point the anti-poverty picketers burst into the building where all the classes were held in one large room separated by temporary space dividers. Seeking to discourage student and teacher attendance, they began shouting about white

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teachers being the enemy of the black community. Other than that, the school proceeded smoothly with full attendance for several weeks until the strikes ended. (Technically there were three strikes, one right after the other, and there were a few people who changed positions --in support of the teachers or the Ocean Hill- Brownsville district -- as some of the bases for the strikes changed.)

On October 25, in the seventh week of the strike, U.C.C. organized a community meeting on the strike that was attended by a racially mixed audience group of approximately 150 people. The meeting appeared to include the full range of those with an interest in the strike -- representatives of local anti-poverty agencies, community control advocates, U.F.T. teachers and representatives, black parents concerned about the schools' failure to educate their children, and many other black and white community residents. It was the kind of community meeting regularly interrupted by shouting matches during that period because of the combustible mixture of opposing positions and people who could not contain their effusions of anti-black, anti-Semitic or anti-white rhetoric. As the appointed chairperson of that meeting, I nervously expected a difficult, explosive and short meeting. Instead, the meeting lasted more than two hours with only a modicum of the shouting and with none of the usual threats and invective about race and religion which everyone anticipated. Contrary to the embattled expectations of the attendees, and despite the fact that few expected anyone's minds to change, most of the speakers on both sides appeared to listen to one another and address one another's wide-ranging points in an orderly and careful way. They seemed to care that the other side should at least recognize the problems they faced and the intellectual coherence and integrity of their positions and themselves.

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As people departed at the end of the meeting, some groups were still arguing in the mutually confirming and pleasurable tone some arguments take. The meeting had been a strange moment of surprise and mystery for many participants, and, as such, it showed the position of the U.C.C. in the community. During the course of the meeting, U.C.C. had emphasized the need to recognize the shared educational goals of the speakers on both sides. Whatever people's disagreements were about the strike, it would soon be over. Then, what was necessary, U.C.C. argued, was the formation of alliances to battle for what the public schools needed. But, none of U.C.C.'s arguments would have been believable or effective in setting the atmosphere and limits of the meeting if U.C.C. were not already respected by and believable to both sides. Both sides recognized U.C.C. as a potentially useful vehicle that might subsequently provide opportunity for people to come together. The evidence of the meeting's effectiveness was the willingness of 15 teachers, parents and other community residents to sign up to work on the U.C.C. Education Committee to work on other problems in the district. Like many expressions of willingness produced by moment of excitement, however, their involvement never materialized.

At one point in the meeting, a white man, long-time Linden Houses resident unaffiliated with U.C.C., whose children attended the public schools, troubled over being unable to talk to his black neighbors wished something could be done about that. In fact, when the strike was over, white and black neighbors would talk to one another again across racial lines, but not for long. U.C.C. was fighting in opposition to the black separatist line espoused by local and national leaders. But, locally, it was also arguing with whites to remain in East New York to no effect. Aside from the U.C.C. whites who

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remained in ENY, by 1975, there were few other white neighbors left to talk to.

The white exodus from the southern area of East New York to Queens and Canarsie, Long Island and Staten Island, now continued at a pace limited only by the difficulty of finding affordable housing. The racial hostility aggravated and produced by the school crisis accelerated the rate of the exodus or made black and white feelings and awareness of the exodus more acute. Among the whites, aggrieved references to the "low elements" and subsidized "welfare cases" coming into the middle income projects were part of every conversation as was talk of who had just moved and who would soon do so. White efforts, with invented addresses or tales of real, but often exaggerated problems their children faced, to pull their children out of mainly black and Hispanic Jefferson High School in order to gain entry to out of district schools took on a desperate quality. The Link could argue that there were no answers to the excesses of race and class in "the narcotic of separate ghettoes of slums and suburbs." It could report upon the racial crises in one suburban town after another; it could declaim that "the need is not for exit visas but for social experiments to find answers to poverty, discrimination and injustice". And, it could plead that there were no easy answers to the problems , "but the hardest part of all is to create the desire to find answers not just for those who feel they have "made it", but for those who have not made it" ("No Exit In Suburbia", The Link, 10/68).

If these arguments had any resonance for the working class and lower middle class whites remaining in East New York it was not detectable. Those who were left, did not feel so secure in having "made it". They wondered and worried through lenses of racial prejudice and across social distance, about what their children faced. As they

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perceived it, U.C.C.'s arguments were high-faluting and irrelevant in the absence of any ability or even willingness on U.C.C.'s part to act with urgency upon their fears and concerns. In the next few years, most of the whites in the southern end would be gone, but before that happened, U.C.C. conducted one more major campaign on the issue of school integration in East New York. The major action initiated by U.C.C. during the strike was its projection of a plan for the construction of the East New York Educational Complex.

U.C.C. 's projection of an Educational Complex in October, 1968, ("An Educational Complex For East New York", The Link) represented its philosophy, its concern with the quickening of racial tensions produced by the strike, and its opposition to district school construction plans that had been agreed upon by the local school district and board, by black leaders in the ghetto area, and white leaders in the southern area.

ENDNOTES

1. For the striking similarities between this position and the conception of blacks as a nation developed in the U.S. Communist Party, see the debates in Political Affairs, the U.S. Communist Party theoretical journal, 1945-47.

2. This summary is based on essays in Black Separatism and Social Reality: Rhetoric and Reason, edited by Raymond L. Hall, NY: Pergamon Press, 1977. The authors of the essays include Imamu Ameer Baraka, Robert S. Browne (whose writings were the ideological model for the Republic of New Africa), Stokely Carmichael, James Geschwender, Milton R. Henry who founded the Republic of New Africa, Lewis M. Killian, Bayard Rustin, Ronald Walters and Charles V. Willie.

3. It was, according to Robert Dahl (1963:151), "a relatively efficient system for reinforcing agreement, encouraging moderation and maintaining social peace in a restless and immoderate people operating a gigantic, diversified, power and incredibly complex society."

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4. I am indebted to Posner (1977) for the quotes from Gittell and Cloward and Piven and for reminding me how much the defense of community control presupposed pluralist theory.

5. In the early 1970s, U.C.C. met with NAACP attorney James Meyerson who made clear that segregated education in New York was too large and too politically intricate to tackle.

6. This says nothing about the expanded, intensified and privatizing impact of television upon after-work and nighttime life. The kinds of people who had once gone to meetings, movies, and bowling, for entertainment, self-expression and social connection, now watched TV (Putnam 1995).

7. Maier's assessment of the consequences of the strike for organizing is consonant with my own. Maier (1987 127-128) writes that "an equally critical legacy of Ocean-Hill Brownsville [the 1968 teachers' strike] was long-lasting hostilities between various participants, ranging from the absurd...to serious ongoing racial polarization in Brooklyn." He adds that, "a second consequence of the demise of these opposition groups [within the union that was produced by the strike] was that there remained no counterbalance to increasing union antagonism toward community groups." Maier's analysis is much more informed about the internal dynamics of the union than I was aware of when I represented the U.C.C. in the Save Our Schools coalitions that the UFT periodically organized and then dispersed. U.C.C. would urge the involvement of the local UFT chapters in helping to organize, or at least to support parent organizing efforts against budget cuts in East New York and in other working class minority communities. Our urgings were always acknowledged and never acted upon. Sandra Feldman, currently head of the AFT, who headed the UFT when Al Shanker left that post, was a frequent representative of the UFT at the meetings of the S.O.S. coalitions.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST STRUGGLE FOR SCHOOL INTEGRATION IN NEW YORK CITY, PART 2: THE EAST NEW YORK EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX AND U.C.C.'S DEFEAT[1]

How U.C.C. Arrived at Its Proposal For an Educational Complex

The struggle for an area wide plan for integrated schools in East Brooklyn began in 1963. At the time, East New York was a racially mixed community, and there was a large white population in east Brooklyn as a whole. Integrationist groups in Brooklyn formed a coalition called Parents For an Educational Park (that included local groups and such city-wide and national organizations as the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the NAACP, Catholic Interracial Council, New York Civil Liberties Union, Protestant Council of New York, the Urban League and others.) and proposed an educational park to serve four communities in east Brooklyn (white Canarsie, Negro and Puerto Rican Brownsville, racially mixed East Flatbush and racially mixed ENY. The site was on a large vacant area called the Flatlands Park south of Brownsville between Canarsie and ENY within easy access of the four communities. It was a site that originally had been slated for an industrial park but had waited for a decade without a buyer.

In 1965, the Board disclaimed any interest in the site and proposed instead a school construction plan including 4 elementary schools for Brownsville, an intermediate school for Canarsie, one for Midwood-Flatlands, and one for the southeast section of ENY. The plan would have left large numbers of Black and Puerto Rican students in segregated schools and placed the burden of travel for integration on them. The Parents

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For An Educational Park submitted a petition to the State Commissioner of Education. James E. Allen who issued a Stay Order for the seven schools in June , 1966 and in September ordered the NYC Board of Education to produce an integration plan for East Brooklyn that would meet the approval of the petitioners.

The Board's response was to delay, to propose plans that were unacceptable to the petitioners, or to propose plans impossible to work out and to delay some more. In effect, the Board of Education waited out the petitioners, tantalizing them with promises of immediate school construction to relieve ghetto school overcrowding if they dropped the suit, and admonishing them with the stick of judicial delays in construction if they went ahead (Posner 1977: 112). Confronted by the Board's resistance and delays, the groups involved in the petition dwindled, the parents dispersed and the pressure for integration diminished. At the same time, the anti-poverty programs's focus upon the specific areas they served slid smoothly toward the support of community control. From the point of view of the City administration's strategists and mountain-top observers of urban commotions like those at the Ford Foundation , the decentralization strategy began to be seen as a way of reducing city -wide tensions over the schools, of deflecting the attacks on the central Board and confining the battles to local areas, and perhaps even, of winning some political support for the rewards, jobs, and preferments served up through the schools. Planning for integration in the Board of Education and the City Planning Commission ceased to be a reference point in their designs.

In April, 1967, the U.C.C. (joined by one of the parents who had participated in the fight for the Educational Park) had attempted to organize a district-wide coalition -- the Ad Hoc Committee For better Education in East New York -- to push for rezoning

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the elementary and intermediate schools in the district and to reopen the issue of building an educational park that would serve the whole community. However, the impact of Model Cities and the Community Corporation, both of which could pay for people's involvement, was very powerful. As federally funded poverty programs, their mandated target area was the poor, ghetto section of East New York. In addition, like any other organization, they sought to maintain and build their organizations. Given the ethnic and territorial basis of political representation and power in New York City (and elsewhere in the U.S.), they interpreted their funding mandate to mean a focus upon the ghetto territory unrelated to the social and geographic context that surrounded it. They projected plans exclusively for the ghetto area. These plans included separating the ghetto section of the school district into its own community-controlled district with clusters of neighborhood elementary schools, day care and recreational facilities which they might control or influence. Any plan, including a school plan, which placed the ghetto in a larger and more racially integrated context and which opened up the competition for influence and power was politically threatening. They opposed planning for integration that included territories and representation beyond the ghetto area. Confronted with competition for its own members from these funded agencies, the Ad Hoc Committee for Better Education did not survive.

By the end of 1967, only the U.C.C. spoke for integration at the City Planning Commission hearing. Terrible overcrowding , arguments from the ENY Community Corporation and Model Cities and despair over the possibility of ever getting the Board of Education to integrate the schools combined to encourage a general community view that it was better to get schools now, never mind planning for integration. By 1968, the

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District 19 School Superintendent, the President's Council (of PTA's), the Local School Board (not yet an elected Community School Board) and the ENY Community Corporation were agreed upon a proposal for a school construction plan that the District submitted to the NYC Board of Education. It included a high school, an intermediate school and two elementary schools for the black central area, and in the southern end, still majority white, a Spring Creek Education al Park that included one high school and three intermediate schools and an elementary school for the projected Twin Pines Development (later Starrett City) ("Brief from Mrs. Elizabeth C. O'Daly, District 19 Community Superintendent to NYC Board of Education. 9/19/68). This plan would relieve the overcrowding of the schools in the central area, the principal concern of the District 19 Office, but, from U.C.C.'s point of view, would also seal the segregated pattern of the district's schools. The Educational Park in Spring Creek would draw its students from Howard Beach and Linden wood to the east, Canarsie from the west and the southern end of ENY including Starrett City.

Only U.C.C. opposed this plan. At a hearing of the Board of Education on school construction, the educational coordinator of the ENYCC attacked U.C.C. as a divisive force attempting to undermine the unity of the "community". Insofar as U.C.C. stood apart in opposition to the only other community leadership involved in education, they were right.

At that point, the United Community Centers had no support from any of the organizational or political party leadership in the community and no immediate prospects for funding. Its funding from the U.S. O.J. D. ended in June, 1968, and it lost all its staff except the director, assistant director and two staff members who agreed to stay for a year

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at half salary. A cost-benefit analysis at the time might have suggested that it was time to close up shop. The community's black leadership was mainly, although not entirely, the federally funded leadership of community-based, anti-poverty programs. Like earlier white-run, political machine groupings, they sought principally to maintain their funding and develop their bases of political power and organization through the services they provided. Now was their time. In the next few years, some of this leadership would run for elected office or be appointed to higher positions in related political structures, just as white leaders had been appointed or elected before. At the moment, leaders and individuals who had once participated in social action for community change were now engaged by the availability of funding, jobs and power. For them it was clear that school integration was impossible because the white political structure would not permit it. Whether or not race was the only significant social cleavage, it seemed in fact to be the only basis upon which they could successfully mobilize to meet their demands. They were simply doing what ethnically- and racially-oriented whites had done all along. Other, more ideologically oriented black leadership had adopted a black nationalist/ separatist line that saw race as the only significant social cleavage and labeled both integration and a class structural analysis as mis-directed ideas that blocked black unity and concealed a grab for white power. It seemed to U.C.C. as though the rhetoric of integration would be far less persuasive in a predominantly black and partly Puerto Rican community in which most of the organized leadership supported forms of nationalism, separatism and pluralist/ community control.

Further, whites were rapidly moving out of the racially mixed, still majority white southern end of the community where the Center was located but it was not yet clear

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how thorough their departure would be. The diminished numbers of community whites, even when they opposed the Center, meant the diminished (but not eliminated) possibility of a local experience of integrated struggle and therefore, a loss in the persuasive potential of the Center's rhetoric. At the time, the majority of U.C.C. members and leaders, including the President and executive director were white. Advocating integrated struggle from the perspective of a class analysis could easily be attacked, and eventually was, as the manipulative and self-serving line of a white dominated organization seeking to make space for itself and justify its role in a black and Puerto Rican community. The persuasiveness of U.C.C.'s position seemed to require the existence of a white community and some white community support even if most whites were in opposition.

But, the white support was shrinking as even sympathetic whites moved elsewhere, unable or unwilling to reshape their social and community lives to the challenges presented by new kinds of neighbors whose numbers were increasing. Two white families who were Glenwood Houses residents and had remained Center members moved into ENY. In the early 1970s, so did several other white families and individuals who had become Center members through their work in camp or participation with U.C.C. student groups. By the mid-1970s, five years after the Complex had been buried, it seemed as if the only whites who were moving into the southern end of the community or were committed to remaining were whites connected to the Center, committed to its ideas and sustained by their social relationships with others in the organization. In the late 1960s, among the non-Center-affiliated and socially defensive whites who remained, the most vocal perceived the Center as one of the hostile forces that undermined their

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capacity to draw political lines around their end of the community so that they could maintain the value of their homes and protect themselves from the problems of the ghetto. In 1968, as a self-conceived social change organization, the leaders and members of the U.C.C. had to wonder where their support would come from.

All small groups in ideological opposition to their society or to their immediate surroundings must ask and answer questions about whether or not what they are doing makes sense and is worth fighting for. Unsatisfactory answers yield a loss of morale, the essential and sustaining fuel of small, oppositional groups, and the momentum of attrition begins. If the group thinks of itself as the possessor of rational theories of social change and organizing with a socially determined constituency, not simply as the possessor of revealed truth, then the members require some non-miraculous evidence that what they are doing is meaningful. The apparent theoretical and philosophical rationality and political pertinence of their set of ideas is one piece of evidence. So is the very existence of their group, of people affirming one another's and their group's direction by daily repeating to one another that what they are doing is important, sensible, and enriching. But, if the group conceives of itself as political, it needs evidence of the rationality of its theory and the effectiveness of its organizing from sources beyond the confines of its own group. What is the point of a politics that changes no one and nothing other than oneself and the members of one's group? Without that evidence, and it need not be overwhelming, the group is reduced to relying upon its patience and stalwart commitments, and reminding itself, hopefully, that when social conditions change, its leadership and ideas will be recognized and welcomed by a newly receptive constituency. Of course, there is an organizational price for reliance upon the patient and the stalwart

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because not everyone has the same amount of patience or commitment. But, at that point in U.C.C.'s history, there seemed to be more than enough evidence for U.C.C. members to have to rely merely on their patience and hopes.

U.C.C.'s delinquency prevention project had been very successful and regarded highly by the funding agency. The federal agency had recommended U.C.C.'s approach as a model in two other places in the nation. U.C.C. had begun working with social workers in South-East Oklahoma State College who were applying the U.C.C. approach in several boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for Native-American youth. The National Association of Social Workers and the Boston University School of Social Work had expressed interest in the U.C.C. approach with teenagers as a basis for a new social work curriculum. U.C.C.'s Teen Group was a racially and economically mixed group of around 75 boys and girls whose organizing efforts were registering an impact upon their schools. The Teen Group had even led a state-wide organizing campaign that won passage of legislation to amend the NY State Welfare Law to permit local departments of welfare to pay for sending the children of public assistance recipients to summer camp. The number of regular adult volunteers may have diminished to a small group of 25 regular volunteers during the period 1961-65, partly through prosperity and relocation to Long Island, partly because the demands of new stages of life require people to cease their organizational involvements, and partly because of the absence of the continuous leadership and programs that only a paid staff can provide. But, in the three years of federal funding, 1965-68, a few more adults had become members, and many others had begun to participate in newly added and expanded Center programs.

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The Real Possibility of A Racially Integrated Complex

Further, in the course of its organizing efforts, U.C.C. had seemed to find community residents to whom U.C.C.'s ideas and programs made sense. The spirit, ideas, commitments and sense of possibility inspired by the civil rights movement was still strong among Center members and community residents. Overall, U.C.C.'s political successes were limited, but they were real enough to support the morale of the leadership and members. It required some, but not much grandiosity and collective self-inflation of their own significance for them to continue to believe that what they stood for was meaningful and that there might be a constituency in the community for their ideas. Integrated schools and integrated struggles seemed possible within East New York. A constituency might be out there. At this point (Fall, 1968), U.C.C. made a deliberate effort to by-pass the local organizational leadership in order to develop or rekindle, especially within the black population, existing support for integrated schools that had been dampened by the calls for community control and separatism.

In the middle of the Teacher's Strike in October, 1968, in an increasingly racially polarized city, U.C.C. proposed its plan for an Educational Complex before a meeting of the NYC Board of Education:

> We want to suggest an alternative to the proposed plan [of the District Superintendent and Local School Board, the ENY Community Corporation, the PTA President's Council and groups in the southern end]. This alternative would integrate the schools in East New York and enrich and integrate the cultural life of the entire community. Two high schools and three intermediate schools can be built in a way which would include Jefferson High School in a large educational and cultural complex. Joint athletic and science facilities and facilities for music, art and drama would permit the creation of a community cultural center. Instead of segregated high schools at either end of the community, these high schools would draw student of different backgrounds into an integrated setting. The new intermediate schools combined with new zoning patterns and transportation

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schedules could be integrated and would relieve the over-crowdedness in East New York's present elementary schools. As a community cultural center, the ethnic and racial diversity of East New York could flourish, bringing together Negroes, Italians, Jews, Puerto Ricans, Poles and West Indians in a mutual discovering of each other's histories and cultures.

Simultaneously, new low and middle income housing could be built in Spring Creek to replace the homes of people displaced by the Educational Complex built in the north. The people who moved would remain part of the community, the ghetto would be opened up and the southern end of the community would be racially and economically integrated.

The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders warned that white racism is pushing us toward separate and unequal societies. the proposed school building program would accelerate that push. The alternative we have suggested is to reverse that push with integrated schools. We must not become separate societies, angry and frightened of each other nor build schools in that image. In how we build schools, we make a model of the means and ends of education. [Statement of U.C.C. Education committee at School Construction budget Hearing, NYC board of Education, October 7, 1968.]

The October issue of The Link expanded on the proposal as did major articles in the newspaper in the several months through June, 1969. In the meantime, U.C.C. organized approximately 20 home meetings of small groups of five to fifteen individuals and with block associations throughout the southern end and central area to discuss the Complex. Staff and volunteer organizers met with the parent leadership of several PTA's, and made statements about the Complex at most of the community meetings it attended. As its effort gathered support, U.C.C. organized the Ad Hoc Committee For an Educational Complex, a coalition of local organizations and individuals that was joined by several parents associations and block associations. By the end of the winter, 1968-69, the ENY Community Corporation and the East New York Alliance had joined the new coalition to support the idea of a centrally located educational complex, even though

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they had begun working to create an educational district attached to Brownsville and separated from the south of East New York.

By February, 1969, The Link reported that PTA's, civic groups and ghetto groups who were hostile to the plan for the Complex or had withdrawn from educational struggles had begun to unite on the U.C.C. plan. Led by U.C.C., several community organizations and PTA's had met with a Board of Education member to develop three resolutions that would be passed on by the Board of Education. These were : 1) a proposal for a feasibility study for an educational complex in the area bordered by Linden Blvd. Atlantic Avenue, Crescent and Ashford Streets; 2) that all secondary education structures in ENY were to be placed in the area of the Complex; and that 3) the Spring Creek area would be held for educational purposes such as a teacher's college, community college, or facilities for the complex. Consistent with its vision to use the planning process and struggle for the Complex as an arena to educate and organize the residents on educational issues and to support the Complex, U.C.C. had insisted that the feasibility study be conducted in consultation with the community and the Board acceded (See also, "Proposal For A Plan For An Educational Complex in East New York" 4/16/69).

On March 25, , 1969, a letter on U.C.C. letterhead from the Ad Hoc Committee for the Complex was sent to almost all of the organizations in East New York calling upon them to join the Ad Hoc Committee. The letter was signed by U.C.C. , ENY Community Corporation, East New York Alliance, United Negro and Puerto Rican Front, All Blocks Association, Essex Street Block Association, Neighborhood Civic League, Fountain Avenue Multi-Service Center, Christians United for Social Action. A staff

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member of the City Planning Commission summarized the situation regarding the Educational Complex in a brief to City Planning Commissioner Orton, and urged approval of the site change (from Spring Creek to the center of East New York):

> Finally, it is important to note that this is the first time that diverse groups within the East New York community have come together and agreed on a plan for their area. There has been a real convergence of interests that has resulted in this proposal. United Community Centers has long been known for its work for integration; Model Cities sees this as an opportunity for large scale redevelopment of a quickly deteriorating area, and all of them see it as the only real possibility of making East New York a desirable and viable community in which to live. (Anita Altman to Commissioner Orton, memorandum, April 7, 1969, quoted in Posner, p.171)

Several things had happened in the year and one-half since the end of 1967 when U.C.C. had stood alone in the school construction plans it advocated. While pursuing its organizing strategy to by-pass the organized leadership and reach unorganized residents about its plan for an integrated school and community Complex, U.C.C. had managed to engage the imaginations of many residents and revivify the emotional attachment and ideological commitment to school integration shared by many black residents. The fact that money had already been designated for schools in ENY made it seem as if the Complex were not merely an outdated fantasy. The Community Corporation and Model Cities acceded to the plan because it appeared to be a way to renovate the ghetto area. In May, 1969, the Board of Education reversed its construction plan and accepted the Center's plan for reorganizing school construction in ENY. It passed a resolution for a feasibility study of the area U.C.C. had designated for "an Educational Complex to serve the intermediate school and high school requirements of the East New York community" and, in accord with U.C.C.'s insistence, agreed to conduct the feasibility study in conjunction with the community. Then, again in August, a Board with a new

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membership passed another resolution for a feasibility study on the Complex, but this time, they attached to their resolution a plan for a "Charette". The Charette was a form of community planning conference that the U.S. Office of Education was touting that year and that would be supported by $20,000 grant from the U.S.O.E. and a few of its representatives.

In voting to support the resolution, Seymour Lachman, the Brooklyn representative on the NYC Board of Education said,

> I have studied this problem very carefully...and I strongly believe the time to act is now. Very frequently we mouth the concept of integration, the word of a bygone age. The frustrations are with us today. The reality has not met the commitment...
>
> Built into this resolution for a charette is a reaffirmation of the old Board which this new board this evening reaffirms: that the Charette will concern itself with an Educational Complex in the center of ENY, not in northern ENY beyond Atlantic Avenue, not in southern ENY below Linden Boulevard, not a combined Educational Complex for the communities of Brownsville and ENY... This evening we are concerned with one Complex and that is a Complex bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the north, Crescent Street to the East, Linden Boulevard to the South and Ashford Street to the West.
>
> *There are few opportunities we have left in NYC for meaningful, democratic integration. This is probably the most important opportunity we have.* I cannot commit my fellow board members. I can just commit myself. I will do everything feasible and everything possible to make certain this charette is a democratic Charette; that it occurs within as short a period of time as possible; *that it involves the total community and educates the community toward democratic, integrated education* and makes the community realize the necessity and need for having the Educational Complex in the central area which the previous board affirmed and which we this evening reaffirm.
>
> I also have my reservations ladies [referring to three U.C.C. representatives who opposed the introduction of the Charette] about the Charette...but I feel we should move forward and together to strive to bring the dream of yesterday into the reality of tomorrow as soon as possible. (My emphases. "Seymour Lachman",The Link, 9/69)

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The Board's resolution and Lachman's words, especially those I have italicized, seemed to be further evidence of the validity of U.C.C.'s organizing strategy -- both its commitment to school integration in ENY as a potential reality, and its commitment to integrated struggle. The opposition to school integration within the Complex had not dissolved, but it had been subdued at that moment of the battle. It was hard for either Model Cities or the ENY Community Corporation or its delegate agencies to go on public record in opposition to a plan that would place all of ENY's secondary educational facilities in the ghetto area even if the plan required white students to attend the schools there. Many of the community control advocates had disclaimed opposition to integration: they had argued that as integration was not possible, they supported community control as the only way to improve the quality of education in ghetto areas. But, now, as even the Board of Education seemed to admit, in the words of the Board's Brooklyn representative, *school integration was possible in ENY.*

Not even the white groups publicly argued against integration or the Complex. White groups in the southern and northern ends of the community began to believe that their resistance to the Complex would be ineffective. A few believed that a Complex might, indeed, reverse the community's deterioration. Others in the southern end, unwilling to be publicly labeled as white segregationists, had been prepared to finesse the issue of integration by accommodating to the push for community control of the ghetto schools. They hoped they might eventually be connected to the predominantly white, historically contiguous Canarsie district. The much more sharply segregationist sentiment in the predominantly white northern end was not as invested in this battle partly because so many of its children attended parochial schools and partly because the

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hilly geography of the Highland Park area, bordered by highly trafficked thoroughfares, had tended historically to separate it from the rest of ENY. Its relative inaccessibility had contributed to the insularity of the area. As support among non-affiliated, mainly black community residents mounted for the U.C.C. plan in the rest of ENY, the initial opposition of black and white leadership either retreated or accommodated to it and waited for another opportunity.

The U.S. Office of Education Comes to ENY With a Charette

The other opportunity came quickly in the form of the charette. The U.S. Office of Education entered ENY in 1969 with an elegant brochure announcing their philosophy of leadership and the success of the charette in other cities. Its approach to the formation of a steering committee of citizens was that community leadership would "surface" in the process of participation "based on a commitment to and a belief in the Charette process itself" (U.S.O.E. flyer). Even then it was not possible to disentangle the threads of naivete, self- and deliberate deception, or allocate the weight of each in the process of carrying out this preposterous idea. The charette's concept of surfacing, "independent" leadership presupposed the existence of a community without positions or relationships of power, that is, without an established power structure, something that did not exist in any big city in the U.S. Also, the goal of the Charette was to reduce or eliminate the political conflicts a community formulated plan might subsequently provoke. The final plan needed to have the appearance of being the expression of a unified community. But, such unity was only possible if the conflicts within the Charette could be resolved within the planning process through the compromised allocation of divisible rewards. The Charette required and could only recognize and address conflicts over compromisable

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issues. That much was clear from the beginning. U.C.C. opposed the Charette at the moment of the Board of Education's resolution. [2] It argued:

> Where agreement on common goals exists, a Charette may be useful in arriving at quick agreement on a working plan. Where there are sharp differences, however, a Charette might delay or kill the whole idea. Who will be picked to participate, Whom will the participants represent?...Unless a Charette is organized with a commitment to implement the concept and plan of an integrated educational complex it can be used to destroy the complex...
>
> Does the Board imagine that the basic conflict between integration and segregation is going to be resolved in two weeks of talk. Does the Board imagine that after two weeks of talking a Mississippi integrationist and a Mississippi segregationist will arrive an harmonious way to integrate the public schools of Mississippi? They won't... We demand that the Charette be converted to a community planning conference which starts from the premise that the complex will be constructed in the center of ENY, bordered by the streets named in the resolution, that there will be one school district for ENY, and that the Complex will be integrated (U.C.C. Statement at Board of Education Meeting, 8/7/69).

But, despite the Board's resolution and Lachman's accompanying statement, the introduction of the Charette, in fact, was intended to make possible the renegotiation of all the "givens" of the resolution. As the Director of the Board of Education's Bureau of Planning and Research , A. Blumenfeld, the person who called in the United States Office of Education, reported five years later:

> When we met with individuals in local communities, they said they wanted the school in their local areas, they didn't want their children moving 'over there'. There were groups which were heavily pro-integration and groups which were heavily anti-integration and the thing flapped back and forth for a long time...that's why we put up the Charette. (Interview with Blumenfeld, quoted in Posner (1977: 174)

In other words, by creating a community conference the Board would be absolved of responsibility for the outcome and free from subsequent political conflict. The plan would be what the community wanted, but that was not possible unless the "givens"

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could be renegotiated.

The attendance sheet at the first meeting on Nov. 25, 1969 appears, only at first glance to be an impressively diverse list. In fact, read properly, the list promises the inevitable outcome. Of the 293 names, 169 were organizationally affiliated. They included: 47 employees of the ENY Community Corporation and delegate agencies (ENY's poverty program), 3 employees of the Mayor's Task Force, 8 members of the Local School board or employees of the District Office; 26 Parents Association members of whom at least 15 were paraprofessionals, 5 principals, 8 teachers, 12 representatives from parochial and religious organizations, 4 high school student government representatives, 5 Conservative Party members from Highland Park, 4 from the East New York Alliance (all related to Model Cities or the Community Corporation), 13 from the U.C.C., State Senator Meyerson, and Democratic Party aspirants Ed Griffith and Ed Townes, and Assemblyman Battista's secretary. After the first several sessions, the actual number that attended most steering committee meetings was around 35. The Board of Education granted released time for teachers, counselors and para-professional for daytime meetings although few showed up, and the Community Corporation director mandated that its education unit be there. Of 80 organizations listed, many did not exist, some were subgroups of others, others were invented for purposes of Charette and many left long before planning was complete. (Posner 1977: 59-61) At this time, also, many of the most active parents in the parents associations were becoming increasingly tied to their principals and the community school board as they sought and were appointed to positions as para-professionals in the schools.

Of 13 members of the 15 member Charette executive committee whose

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affiliations Posner (1977) could determine. 5 were employees of the Community Corporation and one was a community delegate to ENYCC. two were employed by the Local School board and District Office. one was a priest at a local church. the chairperson was a member of the Local School Board and a paraprofessional in the district. The U.C.C. member of the executive committee resigned early in the process. protesting the committee's refusal to abide by decisions made by the larger body. The most consistently represented organizations in the Charette were the ENY Community Corporation and its delegate agencies. the regular school establishment (principals. paras. local school board members and staff). the U.C.C. . the East New York Alliance and Model Cities. Most members of Model Cities were also members of the Community Corporation or the ENY Alliance (Posner 1977: 60-64]. As the Community Corporation and the Alliance were the two principal. locally-based characters opposed to the U.C.C. in the Charette planning conference for the Complex. it is worth briefly reviewing their history.

The Poverty Program And The Black Militants

The ENY Community Corporation came into existence in 1967. s community committee. to directly elected community corporations. In 1965. when parts of ENY and Brownsville were declared a poverty area the Brownsville Community Council and the Council For A Better East New York (hereafter CBENY) were given funds to carry out a study of their communities' needs. Elections were held to form a joint community committee that set up a Community Progress Center on the border between Brownsville and ENY. As the administrator of anti-poverty funds. the Council For A Better East New York. an umbrella coalition of various community based-group. began to function less

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and less as a community council and more as a funding agency--and its member agencies adapted to the new conditions. The ENY York Civil Rights Association, a CBENY member, for example, was funded for a reading program and became a service agency instead of the social action organization it had been. Now also, additional organizations applied for membership in the Council hoping for funding.

U.C.C. had opposed the change-over of the Community Progress Center which had been a voluntary coalition, into the ENY Community Corporation in 1967 believing that the new accent on services to individuals instead of organization for community action reduced the role of the anti-poverty program "to the ancient pork-barrel -- the purchase, with status and jobs, of individuals in the target areas who were fortunate enough to be articulate, connected organizationally, or related to the rollers of the pork barrel...The so-called 'spokesmen of the poor' have once more been skimmed off and the vast lake of the city poor remain as they were." U.C.C. saw the change as marking the abandonment of "the objective of rallying the community in a struggle against poverty" (U.C.C. Press Release, 12/1/66).

In fact, the focus of the work of the ENYCC shifted both geographically and programmatically along with the shift in the national orientation of poverty programs from community action programs to service provision. CBENY had included organizations from all over ENY and focused on the community as a whole. Funded to address the consequences of poverty in ENY's central area, the ENYCC defined ENY as three separate communities: the ghetto in the central area, and the areas north of Atlantic Avenue and south of Linden Blvd. (Posner 1977: 50) The nature of its funding combined with its concern for building its base of support dictated the parameters of its

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planning. The "core area" was planned for in isolation from the rest of the area. CBENY had been funded for the purpose of enabling organizations and individuals to work for the improvement of the community, but now the Community Corporation's program consisted in performing services for community residents which public agencies should have been carrying out but were not. CBENY, once an independent community council umbrella organization for the entire community, itself became a health information and referral service.

As the anti-poverty funds shaped the direction of ENYCC away from the broader focus of CBENY, its racial direction was also reflected in the focus of its newspaper in 1967 and 1968. CBENY's constitution had stated that one objective was "to extend a hand of friendship and a forum for representation to all groups and organizations interested in the enhancement of ENY". Conflicts, racial and otherwise within the community would be reflected in the council but none would be excluded from it. The anti-poverty programs were directed primarily toward blacks and secondarily toward Puerto Ricans and its publication reflected the shift. One regular column began with "Black is beautiful and it is beautiful to be black.". The goal was now to unite Blacks and Puerto Ricans to overcome all the barrier before us. Or, "The time has come for all black men, regardless of birthplace or language to identify with his own" (Quoted in Posner 1977). References to educational matters became limited to announcements of hearings and meetings.

It was consistent with its new orientation, therefore, that at the end of 1967, the ENYCC should support the school construction plan of the Local School Board and District office. It was a projection which to U.C.C. seemed to perpetuate the

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increasingly segregated pattern of District 19 schools but that hardly mattered to the ENYCC which confined the possible solutions to the problems of the ghetto to actions taken within the ghetto -- rehabilitating the core area and relieving its overcrowding -- not to cracking its walls.

In February , 1968, the ENY Community Corporation, now separated from the Brownsville Community Corporation, received its funds and began to operate with eight delegate agencies, seven predominantly black and one predominantly Puerto Rican. One of its early educational campaigns was to propose at hearings on decentralization the redrawing of the District 19 borders. ENYCC projected cutting off the district at Linden Boulevard leaving only the core area and the predominantly Catholic, parochial school northern section as District 19. The justification for this on the part of the director was "We felt that it would be a more homogeneous group...It was a position that we sought for the purpose of carving a district out which would be more or less under the control of the people here who were very much active and concerned. Linden Boulevard would have been a natural boundary...That area would have flowed naturally with Canarsie. Across Linden Boulevard, they were more geographically and culturally related to Canarsie" [Quoted in Posner (1977: 83), Interview with John Williams, executive director of ENYCC]. ENYCC also worked with the District Office on Title I programs, worked with the Black Parents Emergency Committee Steering Committee for the Emergency Crisis at Lane when 600 black students were suspended from Franklin K. Lane in the Fall, 1969, and had its employees work to keep the schools open during the 1968 Teachers' Strike. Directly and indirectly, the ENYCC controlled a large number of jobs. Six agencies alone accounted for 100 jobs. [Posner (1977: 86), arrives at this

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estimate based on a 1970 Guide to Community Resources in which the number of staff employed by some of the agencies is listed.] The picketers of U.C.C.'s Interim School during the 1968 teachers' strike consisted of five employees of these agencies.

The education coordinator for the ENY Community Corporation, Lloyd Mapp, later a two term member of the Community School Board and the owner of several small apartment buildings in the area, had a long history in the community. His point of view was typical of those who had shifted away from integration based on his beliefs about what was politically possible,. In the late 1950s and early 1960s Mapp, a black man, had been active in the efforts to integrate the schools of east Brooklyn. He had also been active in Democratic Party Politics, and headed the New Lots Civic Association and the East New York Civic Association both of which functioned as political clubs at different times. Mapp was a member of the ENY Model Cities Committee and later chaired the Model Cities Policy Committee for Central Brooklyn. After leaving the Community Corporation in 1971, he was employed by the District 19 office Mobilization Against Narcotics Program. Mapp said " I was originally an integrationist myself. When I say "originally", I don't mean I am against integration now. But the point is, I happen to know what I think the structure is going to let happen and what it won't let happen and I don't think its going to let integration happen; so I'm not putting my efforts in that avenue" He was, he said, never a separatist. He was a "pragmatist". "I believe the Corporation's view as expressed by myself was "let's look at the history of integration. I'm not against integration, but the people who can bring it about haven't done it. What are you going to do...keep on screaming and hollering for integration" I'm not a separatist, but I'm not a fool. I took the position, 'let the people determine their own

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destiny. If they want to put themselves in the mud, let them'. If anyone wants to interpret that as separatist, let them " [(Posner 1977: 84). Interview with L. Mapp).

The East New York Alliance For Better Education was the other organization consistently in attendance in the Charette and in opposition to the U.C.C. It came into existence during the teacher's strike trying to keep the schools open and seeing the strike as a life and death struggle for the schools of the Afro-American and Puerto Rican communities. They led the protest against the expulsion of the 600 black students from Lane and supported the establishment of local Street Academies until there was a barrage of community criticism against the Academies as "dumping grounds" for students, because they were seen as efforts to rid the regular schools of trouble-some students without making the effort to educate them. At one point, the Alliance took over a meeting of the Community School Board in an effort to establish a local version of the People's Board that had been tried a few years earlier at the NYC central Board. The Alliance was ideologically and militantly committed to community control of the institutions in black and Puerto Rican communities as the only way to alter their "colonial satellite" status, as L. Lillard, one of its leaders wrote, and to improve the conditions of ghetto life. In education, that meant control of the schools by the black and Puerto Rican communities was the only way to rescue minority children. The ENY Alliance had eventually come to support the U.C.C.'s plan for an Educational Complex in the core area of ENY but mainly because it fit with their program of community control.

It is hard to determine the size of the organization's loosely affiliated membership. The organization did not last much longer than 1968-72, the heyday of black separatism

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in ENY. After the charette and Model Cities stopped functioning, its leadership dispersed and its voice in ENY was undetectable. While it functioned, however, it provided the militancy and rhetoric that provided space for less ideologically oriented and more politically self-serving individuals and organizations to work towards their goals. The organization's three most articulate leaders were: Olivia Taylor, Leo Lillard and Don Haymes. Ms. Taylor was a militantly nationalist black woman, a parent and long-time resident active in community affairs who lived in NYC public housing south of Linden Boulevard. She worked briefly for the ENYCC and after the charette taught in parochial school elsewhere in Brooklyn. Leo Lillard had arrived in ENY in 1966, and was employed by Model Cities as the chairman of its Housing and Urban Planning Committee, a committee that originally had been part of CBENY and now was part of Model Cities. Lillard was a black man working towards a master's degree in urban planning at the tim e of the charette. When it was over, he became administrative director of a local day care center briefly and then returned to live in North Carolina. Don Haymes, a white man who identified with Taylor's separatist leadership, cultivated black slang and was regularly clad in dashikis. He was a representative of a Christian missionary service church called the Inner City Faith Corps and had arrived in from the south in 1966. Three years later, he would describe ENY at the time of the Charette as "...really three communities. The south side is mainly White Citizen council types, as opposed to the garden variety bigot, Ku Klux Klan type on the north side. These three areas are sort of forced into unholy matrimony and this is the difficulty in putting together an educational policy that would work throughout the district". Given his clothing of ENY's areas in the ill-fitting costumes of southern characters, he viewed

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integration. SNCC-like. as "old -fashioned" and those who advocated it as "old-time commies". For him the only purpose of the complex was to further community control (Posner 1977: 87-94)

The End Of The Charette

U.C.C. representatives attended Charette meetings from the first meeting in November, 1969 through the end of April. 1970 and then resigned. In the first few months, while the enlarged steering committee meetings (including anyone who wanted to attend) were still being attended by community residents unaffiliated with the poverty programs or other parts of the local power structure. U.C.C. won the votes on where the Complex would be built. on what facilities would be included and on its integrated educational goals. The Center's executive director was invited to lead one meeting in which he elaborated a philosophy of integrated education ("Discussion On Philosophy of Education" by Morris L. Eisenstein. 3/11/70). At most of the steering committee meetings. U.C.C. distributed leaflets that presented its position on issues discussed in the steering committee because it was almost impossible to present a coherent argument from the floor. Meetings were often disorderly. Parliamentary procedures were ignored and occasionally portrayed as a white people's fetish. Minutes were inaccurately maintained and rarely presented to the members. The absence of minutes alone discouraged continuity by blocking the development of planning from one meeting to the next based on the motions passed by the previous steering committee meetings. The executive committee was thereby freed to regard the decisions of the steering committee as non-binding. It meant that the "givens" of the Charette as passed in the Board of Education's resolution and reaffirmed by the votes of the steering committee remained indefinitely

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open, or until the opposition, that is the U.C.C. and its supporters could be eliminated.

Eliminating the U.C.C. and other opposition took several months, but the techniques were simple. Meetings were packed by poverty program employees when crucial votes were planned "to defend the black community against Mrs. Millman [the U.C.C. president] and them" (Quoted in Posner 1977) . The atmosphere at most of the meetings was tense and often filled with racial invective: epithets like "honky" and "whitey" were often used, and "nigger" and "Uncle Tom" were regularly shouted at blacks who supported integration or who appeared to side with the U.C.C. on some position. Over time, whites from the southern and northern ends dropped out seeing the charette as a black operation. Puerto Rican representation was almost non-existent. Unnerved by the intensity of the conflicts, black residents unaffiliated with the principal organizations stopped coming. Instead of an atmosphere in which "independent" leadership would "surface", the atmosphere drove out independent community residents. The only persons who remained were the paid employees of the Board, employees of the Community Corporation and Model cities, the ideologically, black separatist militants of the ENY Alliance and the U.C.C. Despite U.C.C. efforts to push the executive committee to use its resources to involve community residents who were not initially attending, no significant efforts were ever made. A small steering committee was easier to control if few unaffiliated, and therefore, unpredictable, community residents attended who might sympathize with U.C.C.'s arguments.

Although representatives from the Board of Education and U.S.O.E. attended all the meetings, and they worked closely with members of the executive committee outside the meetings, they made no effort to control the atmosphere within the meetings or insist

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that the executive committee abide by the decisions of the steering committee. In fact, U.S.O.E. representatives had decided early on to insure that charette leadership and its direction would be in the hands of the community "influentials". Generally, on a local level, the community leaders are people who have influence with local political representatives, or who control jobs allocated at the local level, or who represent agencies under whose auspices funds are dispensed to other individuals and agencies. In the ENY Charette as in the others it sponsored, the U.S.O.E. was committed to working with the established, politically connected, patronage dispensing community leadership and ruling out, as much as it could, any direction that might subsequently embroil the community leadership in political conflict (Posner 1977).

But, it was more than that. The principal U.S.O.E. representative, a white man and a Jew, was a self-professed "radical" committed to community control and to defining the community, in this instance as the organized leadership of the black community. That meant supporting the community control and separatist direction of the executive committee and the anti-poverty program. He saw the conflict within the charette as consisting on one side of an outdated integrationist position supported by the U.C.C. whom he considered "a bunch of communists" and he warned residents against associating with them. The other side was the "radical" and separatist position advocated by the black militants represented by the East New York Alliance and supported by the poverty program representatives (Posner 1977: 178).

At the end of April, the U.C.C. publicly resigned the Charette when the executive committee scheduled an important meeting on the first night of Passover despite earlier agreement not to hold the meeting on that night. Typically, its resignation was greeted

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with a barrage of anti-semitic comments.

In the several months of community meetings the Charette comprised, the conflict between community control and integration was resolved by a process in which the combined forces of the poverty program, the U.S.O.E., the Board of Education and the local school and political structure overpowered and drove out U.C.C. and other supporters of integrated schools. The remaining anti-poverty program employees and their volunteer affiliates worked for the next several weeks in intensive workshops with school officials and separatist city-wide leaders to develop an educational complex for the central area that included a high school, middle schools and the incorporation of an already existing elementary school. ("Major Recommendation of the Community Charette" April, 1971) but it ignored the proposed construction for the southern and norther ends. Over-all, it meant that the school construction plan for the whole of the district was similar to the plan initially agreed upon by the local organized leadership: a school in the north, some schools in the south and a small "complex" of schools in the ghetto area. When the planning sessions were over, everyone went home.

The Political Consequences Of Defeat

Except for the small number of Charette participants, community residents had not been educated. No one was ever mobilized to support the plan produced except the small number of participants -- mainly anti-poverty employees and two or three clergy. The process of planning and the benefits that some people derived from the planning process, including the contacts and reputations they made for cooperativeness with the City agencies were enough for them. The plan was never fought for and never implemented because the only organization with a vision of using the Complex to

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educate and organize community residents to fight for the resources needed to actualize the Complex was the U.C.C. The Center sent protest letters to the Board of Education and U.S.O.E. when it resigned, and for two years used its newspaper to criticize the Charette and its final plan, testified at public hearings about what happened and sought support from agencies in favor of integration outside the community, such as the NAACP, but the battle was over. U.C.C. had been overpowered and beaten.

But, the opposition had won a pyrrhic approval for their plan. In the next few years, the Board of Education offered jobs to a few charette leaders undermining any resolve they might have had to challenge the Board's continual postponements of construction. Within a year, Priscilla Wooten, who chaired the Charette, for example, was employed as a "community advisor" in the Board's public relations office, then became an assistant to the Brooklyn representative on the Board for a few years, then parlayed her position into being elected to the NY City Council for several terms. Over the same period, also, as the federal government curtailed its generosity to the poverty programs, the weakened, exclusively service-oriented poverty programs lost whatever small capacity and willingness they may once have possessed to organize community residents. Soured by the poverty programs' unkept promises, and the narrow scramble for jobs they stimulated from which only a few could benefit, many community residents became skeptical about any form of community action. Then, finally, even the memory of the U.C.C.'s Complex or its Charette version was crushed on the hard rock of the austerity resolution to the City's fiscal crisis in 1975, when almost all school construction ceased for five years.

Typically, in community organizing literature, the reports of community

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campaigns are of those that are successful. If all the goals or even the major goals of a campaign are not achieved, the analysts often find other ways to define success: people were educated about issues; people learned the skills of struggle; people who had been inactive in political struggle became mobilized and began to see their participation in social action as part of their lives; more people joined the organization; people tasted democracy and learned to like it. Defeats are described as an educational process that deepens people's understanding, broadens their perspective, toughens and empowers them, and ultimately readies them to conduct the next struggle more effectively. It is a self-bolstering and probably necessary form of evaluation grounded in the hope or optimistic analysis that the subaltern of the earth will eventually learn, arise and rattle their chains. It hearkens back at least as far as the middle of the 19th century and the development of the theoretical analysis of the historically determined emergence of the resistance and transformative power of the working class movement (Engels 1845; Marx and Engels 1849; Fisher 1984; Boyte 1986).

As a general perspective for evaluation, it is not entirely wrong even if it does ignore or presume as demoralizingly obvious the unhappy and unredeemable consequences of defeat. People often do learn all the things underscored by such assessments and sometimes what they learn makes them more effective in future struggles. Some of that happened in the battle around the Complex. The understanding of a few people about educational issues, about how to use ideas and about community politics was deepened. A few people on the Center's side became more able to articulate ideas in tense public forums, tougher and less intimidatable. A few people became more ready to incorporate into their lives participation in community struggles. The Center's

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reputation in the community for persistent struggle based on ideas, independent of the local political deal-makers was enhanced by its efforts. A few more black women who identified with the Center's position, way of organizing and way of treating people became part of U.C.C. But, given the fact that the struggle on the Complex consumed much of the U.C.C. community organizing energy for almost two years, the defeat on the Complex was a terrible one, for the community and for the U.C.C.

It was the last believable struggle for school integration in ENY and New York City. After it was lost, the credibility of *planning for systemic school integration*, an idea resisted and tattered even before the Complex battle, had no more life than geocentrism. Whatever dream of integrated schools black parents in ENY still harbored for their children would have to be achieved on an individual basis -- by deciding to put one's child on a bus to another school district or by moving elsewhere. It was also the last school *district-wide struggle* on any educational issue in ENY for the next two decades. The "community's" control of the schools, the "community's" control of the anti-poverty programs and in the case of ENY, the Charette planning conference were defended by local power groups funded with government money in a language and with a spirit that represented "community control" as an aspect of the black mission for liberation. In fact, however, "community control" was the principal instrument (along with the Democratic Party Clubs) of subduing, through incorporation into the established channels of the urban political system, the more global challenge to the structure of racism that the spirit of the black movement had promised (Katznelson 1981).

This was a local rehearsal of the process in which the independent black movement on a national and city-wide basis became moribund. Black leadership was

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incorporated into the system of service delivery, including the community school board and community planning board, and Democratic Party clubs through patronage and position.[3] In East New York, the decentralized school district never promoted the involvement of parents or their capacity to have a say, with some immediacy, about what happened in their local schools. In ENY, the participating membership of parents associations, as in many working class communities where the women work, was extremely small. Without informed organization, and in ENY , it was easy for School Boards to divert, placate and ignore the demands of the few brave individuals who occasionally voiced their concerns and problems at School board meetings and then, disgusted, never returned. The result was that in New York City, decentralization and the community control of schools quickly meant the intensification of local competitions for school-related resources and benefits among school boards and well as political battles for patronage within each district. In ENY, the way the School Board functioned, along with the Charette and the defeat of the Complex contributed to the general skepticism developing about social action based on ideas -- including militant black nationalism. What had appeared momentarily in the image of a community-oriented Educational Complex as a hopeful promise for change, turned out to be just another hustle.

But, it is worth imagining what might have been. Had the Charette been the open process of community planning for education that the U.C.C. had projected, then, even if the U.C.C. concept had ultimately been defeated, many more residents would have been involved, educated about the relevant issues, and exposed to U.C.C.'s analysis. It is fair to say that more people would have been activated, more people would have identified and supported U.C.C.'s position and possibly even joined the organization.

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Had the Charette's final plan embodied the U.C.C.'s concepts of the scope and integrated direction of the Complex, there is no assurance that the Complex would have been built. Considerable opposition to integration would have remained in the community, and the Board of Education's reluctance to execute a construction plan that promised embroilment in political conflicts would probably have produced the usual stalling. But, it would have been far more possible to mobilize residents to fight for a plan it regarded as its own, especially as it was a plan the Board had promised to implement.

Had the Board begun implementing something like the U.C.C. plan, it would probably have been blocked by the City's fiscal crisis. But, it would have meant that mobilized residents in at least one community in the City would have had a reason they could immediately taste for fighting against the City's austerity resolution to its budget crisis. East New York would probably have lost but not without a mobilized struggle to reach out to other communities that may or may not have been effective, but probably would have deeply educated the participants about the City's power structure, political economy, and how to struggle.

Had the construction gone on, there is no assurance that it would have been a racially integrated complex or that it would have reversed ENY's further deterioration in the 1970s. White people were leaving anyway, and there is little likelihood that the Complex could have drawn students from the influx of 5,800 mainly white families in the Starrett City development at the southern end. The white people who moved into Starrett City would probably not have moved in without assurances that their children would attend schools situated in Starrett City, not in the ghetto. If there were few whites left in

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ENY, political resistance and decentralization probably would have made it impossible to draw white students from Canarsie to the west and Howard Beach and Lindenwood to the east in Queens. It is not likely that East New York's deteriorated housing, high unemployment, poverty, crime and drug traffic in the 1970s and 1980s could have been reversed. These social problems were products of economic and social factors far beyond the community's reach such as post-industrial changes in the national and metropolitan economies, suburbanization and racial discrimination. But, it is imaginable that a cultural center and school complex with which people identified, and, in relation to which residents may have been drawn together in concert or conflict, might have provided some community-wide involvement and focus and relieved some of the unyielding social confinement and gloom into which the community sunk in the 1970s and 1980s. All these possibilities were lost.

The Freezing Consequences Of Defeat For U.C.C.'s Analysis And Organizing Strategy

The defeat also had specific consequences for the Center. Both the young Engels(1845) in his essay on Manchester and Marx in the Communist Manifesto emphasized the process of reflection, analysis and renewed vigor as the ultimate response of the worker's movement to defeat upon defeat. In their analyses of the social and political consequences of the dynamics of capitalist development, the concentration of workers in factories and industrial cities where they lived in quarters away from the surveilling eyes of the bourgeoisie would combine with worker immiseration to generate a new working class culture of resistance and political action. Inevitably, workers as an increasingly unified class would be set in opposition to the class of capitalists.

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In fact, however, there is an array of possible political and emotional responses to defeat. They range from reflection, new analysis and renewed vigor, to dejection, embarrassment and passivity, to a loss of confidence and tentativeness in action, to withdrawal and cynicism, to anger, sanctimony and rigid reiteration. Any one or combination of these is possible among the individual participants of a social movement that experiences defeat -- people may withdraw, hunker down, splinter off, reverse their political direction, become desperate, grow more methodical or rise with renewed inspiration. U.C.C.'s response to its defeat over the Complex was anger, a self-righteous sense of having been thwarted, and a persistence in its direction justified by its illusory belief that it would have won if not for a fortuitous convergence of agencies, people and events.

To say that the organization reacted with emotions hardly seems appropriate since it is individuals who have emotions. But, in a small organization, where social relationships are not simply instrumental and secondary , the emotions of leaders who personally interact on a daily and weekly basis with most members directly and indirectly affect almost everyone. The ideological stamina required to insist upon a class analysis and to retain a "militant integrationist position";[4] the chutzpa required to propose the Complex plan in the middle of the teachers' strike and in opposition to the combined school-related and anti-poverty forces in community; the obdurate willfulness, anger and sense of being "right" that undergirded the mutual moral support required to sustain the struggle on the Complex and five months of Charette participation; all these were qualities of the leadership that imbued the attitudes of volunteers. As a result, there was a shared emotional response to the defeat, structurally similar to what sustained the

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organization in the Charette: anger and stubborn persistence in the same direction because it was "right".

U.C.C. thought it understood the reason that the federal and city governments had supported the racial separatism expressed by the poverty program employees and others in the Charette. Its analysis was not much different from Merton's (1968:126-133) analysis of the functions of the political machine insofar as U.C.C. saw community control of schools and other services as generating an alternative structure to fulfill the existing needs of two subgroups: a political elite, and a stratum of professionals and political entrepreneurs seeking avenues for personal advancement who had been excluded from more conventional channels. To these, Merton adds another subgroup--the deprived -- some of whose needs would be met by the machine. But, from U.C.C.'s perspective, it was precisely the needs of this last group -- "working class blacks" -- that had been ignored in the process. Meeting those needs required a large investment of social resources, an investment that would not be made without mobilizing people, across the City and elsewhere, in a struggle for those resources. Insofar as "community control" focused upon structural reform, and directed each community to focus its attention upon the needs of its community apart from others, it diverted attention from the shared need for additional resources obtainable only through the coordinated mobilization of communities throughout the City. Furthermore, it took the Board of Education and the City (as well as other levels of government), where real power lay, off the hook. Problems of planning for school integration, or other city-wide problems could be thrown back to the districts, and no one any longer was required to dream a vision for the whole, of what adequate education for the late 20th century should be.

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Community control advocates did not articulate the need for educating and mobilizing the community in struggles to assure resources. That is why, in the Charette, they did not see a need to use the process as an opportunity to continuously try to expand the number of people participating. Their goal was to secure control of the Charette and its final plan. Only the U.C.C. projected the need for involving the community, because only U.C.C. had a vision that included a political economic analysis and the need for integrated struggle. Community control was advocated on the local level in ENY by people without a political economic analysis or class perspective, some of whom sought benefits and positions for themselves in the name of the community, and at least some of whom genuinely believed that local community control of the schools would make a significant difference in what was taught and what children learned. In East New York, decentralized school boards, the anti-poverty programs, Model Cities, the Charette and the rhetoric of separatism were all supported by government. U.C.C. concluded that government supported these programs *because* its goal was to construct a stratum of local black leaderships with a narrow, non-class, political vision with whom it could negotiate. U.C.C. believed that government anticipated that the benefits local leaders received from their positions in the urban system, the limited services those leaders would be able to deliver to the "deprived", and the ideological positions local leaders would develop, would make them effective in blocking the return of the insurgencies of the 1960s. Given its territorial and parochial orientation, community control not have led to any other result.

U.C.C. did not believe they were beaten because people in the community had turned away from integration. U.C.C.'s initial victory in beating back the school

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construction plan that would have fostered de facto segregation in the area: its organization of black community resident support for the Complex, especially among the unaffiliated; the fact that in its early stages all the major votes in the enlarged Charette steering committee had supported U.C.C.'s direction: these "proved" the existence of community support for its position. Defeat had not proved them wrong. To U.C.C. members and leaders, it appeared that defeat had simply been foisted upon them by the combined forces of the U.S.O.E., the Board of Education, and the federally funded anti-poverty program. The experience implied to leaders and members that the U.C.C. position was fundamentally sound.

As experience and relationships become valuable when people and organizations make a large and intense investment in them, U.C.C. held fast to the painfully learned lessons of the struggle on the Complex. The experience seemed to crystallize, with hardness and transparency, the "real" meaning of black nationalism as a self-serving form of ethnic pluralism, i.e., the ideology of a thin fraction of the black middle class hungry for patronage, and the tool of the powers that be. Further, U.C.C. had learned that black nationalism opposed school integration even when it was possible; that municipal and federal agencies of government supported black nationalism in order to avoid the conflict entailed by a policy of school integration; and, that the "real" black community supported integration as U.C.C. defined it. The defeat on the Complex and these meanings lay anchored as evidence, reality and reason in the backs of the minds of members and leaders for the next decade.

Since they were 'right', there was no need for new analysis; what was necessary was continued struggle, even harder. The defeat on the Complex contributed to the

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momentum of a stalwart commitment to integration among U.C.C. members. as well as to its obverse -- the beginnings of a movement toward an inflexible refusal to see the need to re-examine its own political economic analysis or to think about the impact of black nationalism on the newly developing understanding of black ethnicity.

The Lost Complex Burns in Memory

For several years afterwards. U.C.C. continued to criticize the plan turned out by the Charette and continued to assert its vision of what the Complex could still be. A year later. for example. U.C.C. wrote a letter to the Brooklyn Division of the Council of Churches of the City of New York accusing its Twin Pines Committee of "aligning the Division in complicity with certain elements in the community who presently control the Twin Pines Task Force in fostering 'racial and class segregation in East New York" ("Minutes of the Twin Pines Committee of the Brooklyn Division of the Council of Churches of the City of New York" February 19. 1971). The Council of Churches was the principal association of mainstream Protestant churches in New York City and professed a policy of integrated schools and housing. Its Twin Pines Committee was set up to examine the "churching" potential of the projected large housing development at the southern end of ENY (that was subsequently constructed as Starrett City with more than 5.800 apartments) and helped establish a Twin Pines Task Force that would begin to plan facilities. including school construction. for the coming residents. The Twin Pines Task Force included representatives of groups -- mainly white homeowners -- in the southern end and representatives of the Community School Board. The Task Force wanted to assure that an elementary school and junior high school were built for the children that would move into Twin Pines (Starrett City), and other children in the

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southern end. U.C.C. saw this as a continuation of the earlier effort to undermine the plan to construct all the new schools in the center of East New York. Even after it had been defeated in the Charette. U.C.C. continued to hope that the integrated enrollment of the schools would be insured if all the new schools were built in the central area.

In its April 14. 1971 minutes, the Brooklyn Division's Twin Pines Committee reported that the Committee had met with the U.C.C. Board of Directors "to discuss their grievances against the Committee and the Task Force" and summarized the meeting in the next month's minutes:

> The U.C.C. feels that the Task force is biased in favor of segregationists in the Spring Creek area of East New York.
>
> They felt that the Twin Pines committee had made a mistake in getting the Task Force started and should dis-associate itself from the Task Force.
>
> They claim that the U.C.C. is the only group which fought for a Charette educational complex in the core area of East New York. implying that it was the only group in the community that was really for integration.
>
> The [Brooklyn Division's] staff submitted the opinion that although the U.C.C. holds the same philosophical concepts which are shared by the judicatories represented on this committee. they give the impression of being very self-righteous and extremely rigid when engaged in the process of trying to work out the problems of race and education as they apply to their community.
>
> It was further pointed out that research has revealed that 95 community groups support the present Charette plan (which provides for approximately 1/2 the geographical area which was included in the original plan). with only the U.C.C. holding out in opposition to the present plan in favor of the original one.
>
> The Committee then turned its attention [to] its future relationship with the Task Force. (Minutes, May 11, 1971, Twin Pines Committee of the Brooklyn Division of the Council of Churches of the City of New York)

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Indeed, U.C.C. was rigid about its integration plans. The more it felt dismissed, the more it perceived the thwarting of its political direction locally and nationally, the more often its representatives appeared shrill and self-righteous. In fact, the U.C.C. *was* the only organization in East New York still calling for integrated schools. The notion that "95 community groups support[ed] the Charette plan" , many of which did not exist and most of which had left the Charette in its early days, was, in fact, the concocted, laughable, but official history -- the way in which the remnant Charette representatives and the Board of Education presented the plan and attempted to isolate U.C.C. as chronic, rigid, dogmatic disrupters.

Two years after the Charette, The Link observed that the struggle in ENY for better education had come to a halt, and then added with stale irrelevance that, "The Educational Complex is not lost. We need to build on the experience", without suggesting how (Spring, 1972). In those two years, The Link had urged whites not to abandon East New York and vowed that the Center would stay. The Center was in the peculiar position of criticizing the Charette's plan for a Complex because it did not plan for integration at the same time that the white population was on its way out foreclosing the possibility of school integration based on the population within ENY's borders. In May, 1972, the newspaper printed one of its last efforts to persuade the community that . "East New York does not have to follow the pattern of other changing communities. White, Negro, Puerto Rican and other groups ... can learn to live together and appreciate what each has to offer." But, even the southern end of East New York, as the writer of this failed exercise in self-delusion knew by 1972, was already replicating the pattern.

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Eight years later, their experience on the Complex continued to smoulder in the minds of U.C.C. leaders and still flared easily. As late as January, 1978, The Link reprinted a feature article by Francis X. Clines from The New York Times ("About New York: Plato and Mr. Eisenstein in Brooklyn", D 22, II, 7:1) that suggested the inextinguishable anger, self-righteousness and persistence:

> One of the points of pride of its principals is that the Center has been consistently in favor of racial integration especially through the period of the 1960s when separatism was fashionable among some blacks and white sympathizers and East New York's future was at stake.
>
> ...without a doubt the reason why the [U.C.C.] plan [for an Educational complex] died is a complicated bit of city history, but Center workers feel a political skein involving bureaucrats and politicians, black and white, worked for the status quo which soon tottered into retreat as nothing was done.[*sic*]
>
> It has only been in the last few years that so many block fronts fell vacant as if firestormed. Even with the School Complex plan dead, the Center hangs in working. Its members were cheered by the recent election of their candidate to the Community School Board after the Center once again raised the issue of racial integration like a proud if dated banner.

"Without a doubt", U.C.C.'s experience in the struggle for the Complex and the conclusions it drew, contributed to defining and freezing the theoretical understanding of members and leaders for a decade. It was not the only reason for U.C.C.'s frequently embattled rigidity, but it was an important one. U.C.C. continued to attempt to organize on other educational issues but, in the immediate aftermath of the defeat and over the next five years, its involvement and positions on locally focused educational issues had a piecemeal and disoriented quality. Moved by its own college student members, U.C.C. became involved in college student organizing against tuition at public universities, and against racially separate facilities on public university campuses between 1969-73.

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Later in the decade of the 1970s, educational issues and campaigns would energize the Center's volunteers and attract new volunteers -- for a day care coalition to fight against the cutbacks produced by the City's fiscal crisis, for full funding for public schools, for slates of candidates in school board elections. So also would, for brief moments, efforts to maintain the public library, to repair the buzzer systems in the housing projects, to organize effective parents associations and block association, to join with other groups in addressing the problem of the nearby saturated, odoriferous and toxic landfill, to re-route buses for more convenient use, and to join with other groups on the routing of local automobile and truck traffic. As a community organization, U.C.C. worked on all of these problems perceiving them expressions of community and class needs, and seeking wherever possible to link up with city-wide groups or groups in other communities involved in the same issues, including the issue of integration. But, *in the community*, the struggle on the Complex was the last social action campaign to embody all the meanings of integration that Center members thought their connection to the organization represented combined with the possibility of actualizing them.

ENDNOTES

1. Much of the information in this chapter about East New York's political history, the history of and characters in the local poverty programs, and what happened in the charette borrows heavily from the fastidiously well-researched, unpublished dissertation of Prudence Sarah Posner, "The East New York Charette: A Case Study of a Conflict Between Integration and Community control in Educational Planning", 1977, Rutgers, SUNJ. Posner was a camp staff member, a community volunteer, a Board member, the editor of The Link , and a staff member at U.C.C. for many years.

2. The preceding is Posner's (1977) analysis.

3. Katznelson (1981) recounts a similar story of how black insurgency was subdued in Washington Heights around the same time by incorporating the insurgents into the

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system of "city trenches", that is, established channels of power and patronage.

4. According to several U.C.C. members who saw the document (including me), "militant integrationist" was the negative term a Ford Foundation staff member used to describe U.C.C. in an internal paper as the Foundation prepared to reject a U.C.C. proposal for funding (1969). This document was lost at U.C.C. and the Ford Foundation's files for the rejected proposals of that year no longer exist.

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CHAPTER IX

A SOCIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON U.C.C.'S PROBLEM OF CLASS-ORIENTED ORGANIZING IN THE POST-INDUSTRIAL CITY

"It is interesting that people talk about unity when the basis of unity is identifiable ... For example, there was proposed for East New York, a low income housing project near Cleveland Street. Black and white homeowners joined forces to keep "those people" out. The poor...black, white, Puerto Rican...were the ones kept out. So, if you are talking about unity, who are you uniting? The color of your skin doesn't dictate who you are unified with. Your religion doesn't dictate who you are unified with. You are identified with those people whose economic interests are identifiable with yours."
The white U.C.C. Board President at a Charette meeting.

"Mrs. M.'s statement just exemplified even more this business of white people knowing what's good for black people. You take a lot for granted, like there is some sort of class struggle and there is some sort of common goal. I can tell you right now that my goal is not your goal...If you want to talk about class struggle and economic integration, I think that one of the most oppressed classes in the United States is black people. Black people recognize the nature of this system more than any other class, so I don't think we need you to explain to us our enemies because we already know our enemies."
Reply of a black high school student
(Quoted in Posner, (1977:153-154) from a tape recording of the Charette Steering Committee, 3/31/70)

This argumentative thrust and parry is fairly typical of the way in which angry participants in Charette meetings exaggerated their positions and persistently talked past one another. In this interchange, the black high school student clearly makes the better argument. Not only does the U.C.C. representative's statement that race and religion are not bases of solidarity contradict hundreds of years of history, it ignores the actual condition of community-based racial conflict in the meeting that evokes the statement. But, we should not apply criteria here too strict for the literal meanings to meet. Conflict-charged community meetings with high stakes and emotions are not forums for

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careful theoretical statements. Still, there is authenticity in U.C.C.'s invocation of the determining force of "economic interests" (or, as U.C.C. might have put it, the interests determined by class). The above quotation is faithful enough to the message argued by the U.C.C. integrationists in opposition to the nationalist and black pluralist positions, to warrant highlighting how reductively that message could be expressed and foreign it could seem at that historical moment.

The U.C.C. representative pointed to the governing power of economic interest in a single instance to illustrate her idea that significant social and political cleavages invariably express the opposition of economic interests (which are the interests of opposing classes) and that, in critical instances, economic interests do and should override racial solidarity. For the U.C.C. representative, the analytic recognition of classes in opposition implied the political need for members of the subordinate and exploited class, the working class, to create interracial class-based organization to conduct effective struggle against the dominant class. Her appeal could be effective, the U.C.C. representative believed and hoped, because her statement offered an interpretation of a community conflict that was rational both because it connected to a larger theory of social transformation and of how classes are shaped by capitalism, and because it was sufficiently close to the skin of everyday experience to be credible. But, however rational these assumptions may or may not have been, by 1970 they had ceased to fit with how whites and blacks saw their everyday experience. As the black high school student accurately insisted, "you take a lot for granted, like there is some sort of class struggle and there is some sort of common goal...my goal is not your goal."

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In this chapter, I reflect upon one element of U.C.C.'s theoretical and historical perspective that supported the apparent foreignness of the above statement. U.C.C.'s organizing strategy which led to its hope for the re-emergence of a "people's coalition" (of organized labor and racial and ethnic minorities) was based upon a modified version of the Marxism of the American Left in the 1930s and 1940s. This Marxian theory *seemed* to account for the emergence of the labor movement and a local class-oriented politics in the 1930s and 1940s. As a theory it presupposed but did not theorize the industrial city as a socio-spatial crucible, intermediate to factories and national organization, within which working class cultures and political class consciousness would develop. With the transformation of New York City from an industrial into a 'post-industrial city' --with all that term signifies about changes in the City's economy and class structure, the diminution of private sector unions, and the dramatic changes in the social economy of the metropolitan area including the accelerated movement of women into the labor force and influx of blacks from the South and Puerto Ricans-- the structural basis of the "people's coalition" crumbled and class awareness as a dimension of political identity faded. What emerged in its place was the political salience of other structures and other identities, notably those of race, ethnicity and territory, and then of gender. U.C.C.'s clenched and unexamined hold upon a theory that acknowledged no structures of power other than class (and its political derivatives), and whose presupposition of the industrial city was super-annuated, severely constricted the effectiveness of its basic organizing strategy.

As an organizing group, U.C.C. emphasized the possibility and importance of

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changing a broad range of people's ideas and values. It emphasized the possibility of building a movement for change based upon the common interests of the working class and lower middle class. In the sense in which U.C.C. emphasized the will, efforts and determination of organizers (i.e., 'struggle') as central to the construction of such a movement, its organizing practice was infused with a powerful element of voluntarism. At the same time, this voluntarism was framed by U.C.C.'s 'orthodox' interpretation of Marxism in which the dynamics of capitalist economy and its class structure determined class experience and interests and made it possible for struggle to work. It regularly appealed to working class commonality and economic interest in its efforts to generate class political consciousness.

Orthodox Marxism professed a theory of history that explained the changes from one epoch to another. It accounted for these broad historical changes within a framework that emphasized the struggles between social classes, the development of the technical aspects of production and the relationships of groups in the productive process. In addition, it possessed an analytic model of how capitalist economy worked including its tendency to produce ever-worsening crises and its power to shape experience in all social spheres. It claimed that the fundamental division in capitalist society was between those who owned and controlled the means of production and those who owned nothing but the labor power they were forced to exchange for wages in order to survive. Although political and cultural conflicts in capitalism might appear in the form of other kinds of social divisions, for orthodox Marxism, the basic cause of social and political inequality was the result of the deep, inherent conflict between the capitalists and

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proletarians. There were other classes in capitalism -- a petty bourgeoisie and a lumpenproletariat -- but these classes were relatively insignificant compared to the major class division. Furthermore, as capitalism, developed, wealth would become more concentrated and the class structure would become simplified. More powerful capitalists would gobble up the less powerful; members of the petty bourgeoisie would be forced into the working class.

The process of the development of working class organization was the process in which a class defined abstractly in terms of its relation to other classes in the productive system became a politically conscious and organized grouping with a knowledge of its historical role. As masses of laborers crowded into the great factories, Marxists expected they would react with hate and embitterment to the despotism under which they were organized. As industry developed, the working class would grow in numbers and concentration and therefore in strength and awareness. With the development of machinery, distinctions of skill would diminish, the wages of all would be reduced to the same low level, earning a living would become more difficult, and the battles between individual workers and individual bourgeois would take on the character of class conflict. Workers would form unions to fight for better wages. As they lost their battles again and again, they would learn the necessity of building an ever-expanding organization of workers, the process of which would be facilitated by the improved means of communication built by modern industry. The numerous struggles of workers in localities would be centralized into one national political struggle that involved the formation of a political party. Each time the workers' struggle was defeated, upset

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primarily by the competition among workers, it would arise anew, bigger, stronger and more conscious of what it had to do. Eventually, partly as a result of deepening cyclical crises that reflected basic contradictions in the process of capitalist economy -- that limited social and economic progress-- and partly as a result of working class organization and struggle supplied with ideological leadership and models of struggle by a communist (or vanguard) leadership, the capitalist system would collapse and the working class would transform society.

In this narrative of the movement of a working class 'in itself' to a working class 'for itself', there is no reference to the role of the industrial city. But, in Marx's famous discussion in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte of the French peasantry as a class unable to become a class for itself, he makes clear what he thinks are the conditions of class formation. "The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions but without entering manifold relations with one another. Their mode of production isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse" (Tucker 1978 : 608). The experiential conditions that Marx emphasizes are "mutual intercourse" and "manifold relations". Although Marx refers to the factories as the places where workers congregate as the basis for the new working class movement, it is hard to imagine these places, where workers were reduced to machines, as Marx describes them, as making 'mutual intercourse' possible. The"company, association and conversation" which become new needs for workers as they associate with one another in order to make theory and propaganda, to smoke, drink and eat together, and "where the nobility of man shines upon them from

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their work hardened bodies" (Tucker 1978: 99-100), does not occur within the factories. In fact, it is Engels who, in his 'pre-Marxian work', The Condition of The Working Class in England (1845, 1987), shows "how changes in the organization of city space affected social relationships within and between classes; and he tied this social geography to the suffering and coming to consciousness of the new proletariat" (Katznelson 1992:144).[1] It is the massing of population in the great cities that, according to Engels (1987:148-150) :

> ...forces the development of the workers yet more rapidly. The workers begin to feel as a class, as a whole; they begin to perceive that, though feeble as individuals, they form a power united; their separation from the bourgeoisie, the development of views peculiar to the workers and corresponding to their position in life, is fostered, the consciousness of oppression awakens, and the workers attain social and political importance. The great cities are the birthplaces of labor movements; in them the workers first began to reflect upon their own condition, and to struggle against it; in them the opposition between proletariat and bourgeoisie first made itself manifest, from them proceeded the trade unions, Chartism, and Socialism. ..[where the workers have learned to] speak other dialects have other thoughts and ideals, other customs and moral principles, a different religion and other politics than those of the bourgeoisie.

Hidden from the surveilling eyes of the bourgeoisie who despised them and did not want to view the horrible sanitary and housing conditions in which they lived, workers were creating their own clubs and projects. It was in those working class quarters that workers engaged in 'mutual intercourse' and developed the 'manifold relations' that were the social bases of their new thoughts, principles and politics. Marxists, including Engels, never subsequently developed this urban analysis (until 1970s and 1980s) but I think it is fair to say that this industrial city remained the presupposed socio-spatial ground of working class formation in orthodox Marxism. By

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saying that Marx's conception of the formation of working class consciousness presupposed the industrial city, I refer to the untheorized but multiple dimensions in which the everyday experience of the industrial city, socio-spatially shaped by industrial capitalism, made the appeals of leadership to class identity and action appear reasonable.

In the eighty years after the Communist Manifesto was written, the strong Left parties and labor movements that Marxism predicted had developed in Western and Central Europe, and Marxists had led a revolution in Russia. In the United States, on the other hand, labor movements and struggles for socialism had developed with only local and temporary successes. The unity of the working class seemed from a Marxian perspective to be continuously upset by the enormous size and uneven development of the U.S., by continuous immigration, by the corporate and political forms that ethnic and religious divisions assumed, and above all by racism.[3] At the Socialist Party's electoral high point in 1912, its candidate for President, Eugene V. Debs had won almost 900,000 votes when the electorate numbered barely 15 million. And, during the first two decades of the 20th century, workers had participated in socialist politics and gained representation in many cities, and in mining and rural areas in the Southwest. Ethnic working class constituencies in Milwaukee and New York City had sent two socialists to the House of Representatives. But, the Red Scare after World War I had repressed emerging anti-capitalist groups and the American Federation of Labor, which had distanced itself from the country's weak Socialist Party , suffered a terrible defeat in its 1919-1920 effort to organize the steel industry (Zieger 1986: 19-25). By 1929, the labor movement and socialism had experienced a decade of defeats imposed by the courts, the

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police and employers. A union membership of five million in 1920 had fallen to 3.4 million in 1929 and in 1930 was only 10% of the non-agricultural labor force, down from 19.4% in 1920 (Bernstein 1960: 84). 60% of all AF of L members were in construction, local transport, entertainment and the printing trades while steel, auto, rubber, textiles and other mass employment industries had only a handful of union members. By 1933, for example, the Socialist-led Amalgamated Clothing Workers had only 7,000 dues paying members when once it had 180,000. Nevertheless, between 1933 and 1953, a labor movement emerged and eventually enlisted as union members 35% of the labor force, the highest proportion ever achieved in the U.S.

In the 1970s, the dismal nadir of labor and radical organization of 1932 and the immediately subsequent history of the labor movement acquired emblematic meaning for some U.C.C. leaders and members as a counsel against surrender and as a consolatory reminder of the possibility of renewal: defeated, we arose; what happened once might happen again. For many U.C.C. members and leaders, the intense decade and one half experience of the labor movement (1933-1950), the "people's coalition" that transformed municipal and national politics, the burgeoning collective self-confidence expressed in workers' conception of themselves, and the anti-fascist war that seemed to seal all these elements together, converged in memory (even for the next generation who had not lived the experience) to give flesh, sentiment and validation to their theory and hope. Not only could a class-based movement for class-oriented goals be forged, it was precisely this movement that had provided the structure for overcoming the ethnic, and to some extent racial barriers that had persistently divided and stymied the American working class.

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In her analytic tale of the Chicago working class between 1919 and 1933, and the subsequent process of organizing the C.I.O., L. Cohen (1990) captures an aspect of how the spirit of the working class was elevated and transformed by C.I.O. organizers through the deliberate creation of a 'culture of unity'. Chicago was one of those crucibles in which a portion of the American working class employed in mass manufacturing -- auto, steel, rubber, electrical and other industries -- became class conscious and militant, even if not radical. Cohen argues that the success of the CIO's union organizing drives hinged upon the creation of a worker's "culture of unity" that became believable and possible as a result of both a more integrated production process in manufacturing and the integration of workers into a national commercial culture.

At the beginning of her narrative, workers and their families are deeply dependent upon the help of ethnic institutions to navigate across the rugged terrain of urban life. In 1919, ethnic welfare agencies, mutual benefit societies, banking institutions and church parishes were seen as the main protectors against poverty, illness and death, and used as vehicles toward security and prosperity. By the end of the 1920s however, because these institutions were required to compete with their mainstream counterparts, they looked very different. "In the course of adapting to change, these ethnic institutions redirected people's sense of affiliation outward, beyond the narrow confines of the neighborhood ...[They] consolidated local and regional European loyalties...[and,] departing from many traditional values of mutual aid, self-help and cooperativism, they became more commercial and bureaucratic." (Cohen 1990: 94-95)

At the same time, throughout the twenties, workers' sense of their ethnic identity

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did not diminish. They continued to patronize ethnic organizations and to protect themselves against the impersonality of, for example, industrial insurance, through the social communities of their fraternal lodges. They continued to shop in their local stores, attend neighborhood movies and dances and listen to ethnic radio. Their social lives were lived with others of identical backgrounds. But, the commercialization of ethnic insurance and banking and other institutions, and the development of a national consumer culture purveyed and embodied by the radio, movies, and national mass magazines were re-making the content of experience in local and quite distinct ethnic neighborhoods. What happened in one ethnic neighborhood at that time began to resemble what happened in neighborhoods of different ethnic groups. Last night's boxing match on the radio and the latest bargain at the A&P were talked about in all the workers' neighborhoods, and were matters that workers could talk to one another about across their ethnic differences. Further narrowing the differences among ethnic groups, the clear-cut skill differences imbricated with ethnic distinctions that kept manufacturing workers apart dissolved with the mechanization of manufacturing through the twenties and thirties and narrowed the differences between the skilled and unskilled (Cohen 1990:394-395).

With the onset of the Great Depression, as ethnic organizations collapsed because they could not deliver the mass assistance that was needed, people's dependence upon them quickly eroded. At this point, the CIO's effort to create a class-oriented "culture of unity ", made considerable sense to workers. According to Cohen, if any theme prevailed in the drive to organize manufacturing workers into unions:

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> ...it was the recognition that *workers themselves must change* to prevent the kinds of division that had doomed similar efforts to organize them in the past...The chasms that CIO unions devoted themselves most intensively to closing separated workers of different races and ethnicities... As a consequence, for the first four of five years of the CIO's existence, ordinary workers in mass production industries underwent an *intensive socialization* that affected almost every aspect of their lives.(p.333, my emphases.)

Polish dances, Mexican fiestas, and Irish ballad singing attended by ethnically mixed audiences, picnics, summer camps, softball teams, and bowling leagues-- CIO newspapers were filled with these events because it was believed that "recreation could provide the glue to bind workers of different races, ethnicities and ages together. Workers met at integrated taverns and restaurants near their plants and it was not unusual for white workers to threaten boycotts against establishments that refused to serve blacks" (Cohen 1990: 340-47).

The lesson U.C.C. leaders and members drew was that workers changed as a product of capitalist crisis combined with the cultural, pedagogical and strategic work of organizers. Ethnicity as a dimension of identity did not disappear, but it was relativized. With the help and leadership of organizers, workers learned about the ethnic experience and traditions of workers in other groups. As they changed their attitudes about others and about themselves, they simultaneously developed an awareness of themselves as members of a class that shared common interests with ethnically and racially different others.[2]

On a national basis, the results of efforts to organize across racial lines to build industrial unions (when there were such efforts) were more varied and often resisted by white workers. Successful interracial and equalitarian organizing varied directly with the

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extent to which local and national leadership groups were Left not conservative and the extent to which there was a high percentage of African Americans in the local workforce. Success in interracial organizing varied inversely with the extent to which the structure of employment was highly differentiated by occupation and pay (Goldfield 1993). Nevertheless, cross-racial organizing efforts were real and successful often enough for W.E.B. DuBois (1948) to conclude at the end of the 1940s:

> There can be no question but that the relations between American Negroes and the balance of the population in the United States have improved during the last generation...
>
> Probably the greatest and most effective effort toward interracial understanding among the working masses has come about through the trade unions. The organization of the CIO in 1935 was an attempt to bring the mass of workers into the union movement as contrasted with the AFL effort to unionize only the skilled workers of industry. As a result, numbers of men like those in the steel and automotive industries have been thrown together black and white, as fellow workers striving for the same objects. There has been on this account an astonishing spread of interracial tolerance and understanding. Probably no movement in the last 30 years has been so successful in softening racial prejudice among the masses (DuBois, W.E.B. 1948: 234-236).[3]

New York City was not an industrial city like Chicago. It was too big and too heterogeneous and without Chicago's huge steel and meat-packing factories and communities oriented to one or two industries. Nevertheless, it was a kind of industrial city and it became a union town in the 1930s and 1940s with a working class unified in spirit by relative poverty, low status, a common style of working life, and the relatively successful overcoming of social distance and mutual disdain among ethnic groups through its workplace struggles and the creation of a class politics. Even though 'labor' was not as cohesive as in smaller industrial cities, a class-oriented politics developed in

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the 1930s that lasted for two decades that was based upon a 'people's coalition' of trade unions, working class ethnic communities, official liberal leadership and an infrastructural radical leadership. In 1930, New York City had the largest manufacturing base in the country with 3.189 million workers employed in manufacturing, about 33% of the labor force, and only a little less than the maximum of 38% in 1880. When LaGuardia was elected Mayor in 1934, his was the first municipal regime to ally itself directly with the labor unions, appeal specifically to the Italians and Jews, who themselves were overwhelmingly working class, and claim as well to represent the 'down and out'. Under the liberal governorship of Democrat Herbert Lehman, NY State expanded its programs for social welfare, improved working conditions and housing, providing programmatic models for the New Deal. LaGuardia, who identified with the New Deal, was able to command intergovernmental resources to fulfill many Left objectives (Buck and Fainstein, 1992).

Hobsbawm's (1987:46) observation that, "rent and wages were...the two basic parameters of the big city worker's life" was as true in NYC as anywhere. The City's community-based struggles, especially with regard to housing, complemented its labor movement. Tenant activism for rent control, public housing and decent housing conditions, often spearheaded by tenant councils led by radicals and American Labor Party clubs and supported by unions, continued throughout the depression into the 1950s. (Naison 1986; Schwartz 1986) Although it would not be until after the war and the 1950s that public and publicly assisted housing became a significant percentage of New York's housing stock, by 1940, New York was and subsequently continued to be the

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largest producer of public housing in the country. As a class politics emerged, New York became and understood itself to be, at least in one dimension of its collective life, a working class city.

It was this image of the City --its public schools, colleges, hospitals and housing, its rent-controlled apartments and relatively generous public assistance -- so much of whose history had been infused by the effective efforts of Left organizers to create a class politics at workplaces and in communities, that the U.C.C. representative quoted at the beginning of this chapter held in the back of her mind. It had been the shared life of U.C.C. volunteers in this City before and after World War II, and, the convergent meanings of Left struggles and the war against Nazism and racism that had moved the first generation of U.C.C. volunteers to create their organization. What made the U.C.C. representative's language seem so unreal by 1970 was that the industrial structure of this city had been transformed, and its working class political culture had dissipated. A new kind of complex, capitalist city was emerging with a new population who had migrated to the City during and after WW II and in even greater numbers during the 1950s and 1960s. They came from the rural and sometimes newly urbanizing South and from Puerto Rico. For the most part, they had not experienced nor did they know much about those earlier struggles of industrial workers. Nor did they or the older white working class see one another as potential allies.

Between 1950 and 1970 the City's population size remained the same (7.89 million), but its racial and ethnic make-up changed dramatically. Over those two decades, two million whites lit out for suburban territory, a decline in the white

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population of 30 %. By 1980, another 1.2 million would depart, altogether a decline of 47% since 1950. The population of African Americans and Hispanics (mainly Puerto Rican) more than tripled from 1,002,000 in 1950 to 3,048,000 by 1970. Blacks were seven percent of the population in 1940, 10% of the population in 1950, 23% in 1970, and 27% in 1980. The Puerto Rican population increased from 3% of the population in 1950, to 15% in 1970, to a more mixed Latino population of 20% in 1980 (Fainstein and Fainstein 1988).

Further, in the two decades after 1950, with the regional shift and suburbanization of manufacturing, and the increased employment in finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE) and government (partly a response to black pressures) the structure of the economy changed from one whose center of gravity was in manufacturing to the much more heterogeneous sector of FIRE and other services. In 1950, 30 % of the labor force was employed in manufacturing. Employment in manufacturing, construction, transportation and utilities, and wholesale and retail trade comprised 43% of the labor force compared with the 24% employed by finance, insurance and real estate, and other services. By 1970, only 21% of the labor force worked in manufacturing. Total employment in manufacturing, construction, transportation and utilities, and wholesale and retail trade accounted for only 32% of the labor force. FIRE and services now accounted for 33%. By 1980, employment in manufacturing had declined further to 15% of the labor force and employment in FIRE, services and government had increased to 41% (Fainstein, N. and Fainstein, S. 1988: 162-163).

The problem went beyond the dissolution of the urban socio-spatial crucible,

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including the relatively homogeneous working class quarters that made up the industrial city, within which Engels had imagined, and orthodox Marxism had presupposed, working class culture and political consciousness would develop. Orthodox Marxism had also projected the increasing size of the working class, the levelling of skill differentials and the simplification of the class structure. But in New York City and elsewhere in the United States, the opposite was occurring -- the class structure was becoming more complex and the size of the industrial working class was decreasing. In the country as a whole, the proportion of workers in the labor force declined between 1960 and 1970, as the proportion of managers, supervisors and experts in labor force increased (Wright and Martin 1987).[4]

Paralleling the national shift in the economic structure was a decline in the New York metropolitan region, 1950-1970, of the proportion of the labor force made up of craftsmen, foreman, skilled workers, operatives and laborers from 39% to 30%, and an increase in the proportion of professional, technical, and managerial workers and officials from 22% to 26%. By 1980, the managerial, professional, technical and administrative workers as a proportion of the labor force had increased again, and the combination of precision, production, craft and repair workers with operators, fabricators and laborers had decreased to 23%. Service workers (not including private household workers) had increased from 9% in 1950 to 13% of the labor force in 1980 (U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1950 , 1970 and 1980. Labor Force Characteristics of the Population).

By 1970, the post-industrial city had not yet taken the form it would assume more fully and obviously in the 1970s as international economic restructuring intensified. But,

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it was well on its way. The old, working class culture grounded in working class struggles in the workplace and in communities that served as ballast to the City's politics and bridge across the structural and ideological disjuncture between workplaces and communities analyzed by Katznelson (1981) was fading by the late 1950s with black and Hispanic migration and white suburbanization. By 1970, that culture and its politics were gone, replaced by the non-class politics of race and ethnicity (although often based on class), grounded in territory and race-class cultures and typified by the black struggle for decentralized school districts and the white struggle in Canarsie to keep black children from Brownsville out of Canarsie schools (Rieder 1985).

In 1970, although empirically aware of many of these changes, U.C.C. was unable to digest them theoretically. It continued to call for the reconstruction of the 'people's coalition', but the structural and cultural basis of that coalition -- ethnic neighborhoods of workers' families, union-organized manufacturing jobs, levelled skill and pay differentials based on mechanization, a sense of commonality across ethnic and racial difference based on relative poverty and low status, class-oriented leaderships at the workplace and in communities, and the collective memory of, and identification with class-oriented struggles -- was almost entirely gone. What this also meant, although U.C.C. could not see it, was that its organizing strategy could not work. Capitalism had not disappeared. The opposing classes, capitalists and black and white workers were still there. Workers were still being exploited and capitalist dynamics still powerfully shaped the lives of black community residents in ENY. The Marxian model of the economy still seemed applicable as explanation for the process of capital accumulation nationally and

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internationally, the opposition of class forces, and the political power of capitalists over the local and national state. But, the possibility of forming a class-conscious working class and 'people's coalition' that could struggle for class-oriented goals, that *seemed* in the 1930s and 1940s to be the direct product of organizing efforts and economic crisis had dissolved with the dispersal of the industrial city.

In order to make this clear, I want to borrow the distinctions that Katznelson (1992:46-66) makes among what he calls Marx's three, distinctive, interrelated projects. The first was Marx's effort "to construct a theory of history to account for change between epochs on the largest possible scale." In his broad theory of history, "the central unit of analysis [is]... the mode of production; the key issue [is] the rules inherent in the basic dynamics of a given mode of production that govern the epochal shift from one mode of production to another." The second project was Marx's dynamic modelling of capitalist economy and its tendential logic (regardless of time and place) based on his assumption that here was "the most causally determinative feature of Western modernity". But, to argue the power of capitalism's causal determinativeness is not the same as claiming that capitalist accumulation is the exclusive determinant of the structuring of life in all spheres of society. Katznelson (1992:63-65) writes that in Capital, capitalists and workers are

"role categories without reference to specific people -- or to their lives, dispositions and actions", all of which can be shaped by other factors, structures and processes.

> "The realization of Marx's third project of a social theory appropriate for the analysis of capitalist societies depends on a shift in focus away from the epochal discontinuities in the mode of production and economic model-

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> building...to an engagement with *variations* within the capitalist mode of production. Marx's historical writings did not shy away from making this shift...[but] Marxism in this century... had shared in an unfortunate tendency to construct social theories of capitalist societies *without* making this shift."

In the "orthodox" or economistic version of Marxism, capitalism became coextensive with society, relatively independent structures of power and experience (such as the state and race) became merely derivative of capitalism, and the role of classes in the analytical model became the immediate potential of classes on the ground. Because U.C.C.'s role was organizing not analysis, it could never in its practice mistake the categorical role of workers in the closed model of capitalist economy for real workers on the ground: real workers were more complex. But, the difference was not theorized in terms of intermediate structures. The dispositions and choices, actions, values and ideas of real people were seen as primarily constituted by the dominant ideology of capitalism; therefore, their ideas and values needed to be changed in order to create a struggle to challenge capitalism. But, the causally determinative power of structures and processes other than capitalism that might generate other problems, other needs and other strongly held identities was not theoretically admitted. Nor was the possibility that other structures of power might make it more or less possible to move people defined abstractly as working class towards accepting and acting upon class as a dimension of their political identity . There was capitalism and its determining force upon lives and ideas, and there was the struggle to resist, to fight for other ideas and values. It was a perspective that combined the excesses of economic determinism on a theoretical level with an apparently boundless, that is, untheorized voluntarism focused

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on class-oriented goals on the level of practice.

This is not to say that the U.C.C. practice continually veered from rigid determinism to utopian voluntarism. Even though their theory limits and directs what they do, good organizers are often smarter than their theory. U.C.C. believed it possessed a theory that worked. It also believed that practice needed to be guided by theory. However, since organizing practice requires engaging a multi-dimensional social reality that is always more complex than theory, the organizational emphasis upon practice according to theory tends to foster a systematic theoretical blindness to dimensions of practice that consistently extend beyond existing theory. In fact, successful organizers tackle a complicated reality guided only broadly by their theory but then make numerous adjustments. They recognize the need for being guided by values as well as developing supplementary principles and ad hoc responses to fill in the gaps. They explain to themselves what they are doing in terms of their theory and their values, and the rest is treated as untheorized residuum: judgement, insight, craft. The result is that while there is probably always a disjuncture between theory and organizing practice, it is not necessarily felt by organizers until their efforts consistently fail. Even then, they tend to hold on to ad hoc explanations of failure instead of relinquishing old theory (that is bound up with proudly held organizational and individual identities) and exchanging it for new. So U.C.C. leaders and members held on, as though for the sake of their own dignity and dear organization's life, to their theory and values even as, during the late 1970s, members left and those who remained ceased to be able to recruit new members willing to assume responsibility for the organization.[5]

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ENDNOTES

1. Engels' book is considered 'pre-Marxian' in the Marxist tradition, including by Engels himself, but it is also the book in which, for the first time in classical Marxism there is an analysis of crises of overproduction, of the reserve army of labor, and of the development of a working class capable of challenging capitalism. Other gems as well, include an early criticism of 'culture of poverty theory', an analysis of the role of immigration in driving down wages, an analysis of the dynamics of urban development, an analysis of the competition between places, and a critique of Malthusianism. Besides Dickens, no one at the time did a better job of describing or analyzing what working class life was like in the industrial city of the mid-19th century. See also Marcus (1974).

2. For reviews of the various theories of American exceptionalism, including those of Engels, Turner, Sombart and Hartz, see Davis, 1986: Chapter 1; and Katznelson, 1981: chapter 1

3. The historiography of U.S. labor written in the last two decades (1975-1995) is full of stories of how ethnically and racially identified workers bridged the disjuncture between ethnic identities in the community and class identity at work. They built these bridges through their use of ethnic social networks and organizations to build unions that included workers of other ethnicities and through the participation of unions and ethnic voters in a class-oriented politics. In the process, ethnicity, and often race, became relativized as part of a process in which the class dimensions of people's sense of themselves became more salient. Gary Gerstle tells a story analogous to Cohen's of powerful ethnic loyalties among socially modernist Franco-Belgians and Catholic, corporatist, French Canadians, and the crossing of ethnic lines and tentative formation of class identity in the building of the Independent Textile Union in Woonsocket R.I., once the most powerful of New England's textile unions. In Woonsocket, the superseding of ethnic divisions by class identities did not mean a loss of intensely felt ethnic identity, but it did mean a change in its meaning. The developing solidarity between ethnic groups based on class recontextualized and relativized ethnic identity and diminished the power of mutual repulsion and disdain that had previously constituted the relationship of one group to the other (Working Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Peter Friedlander tells the story of a UAW local in the predominantly Polish city of Hamtramck, Michigan in which second generation Polish activists used their ethnic identity, relationships and membership in Polish organizations and communities as a basis for building class identities and their union (The Emergence of a UAW Local, 1936-39: A Study In Class and Culture, Pittsburgh, Pa.: Pittsburgh University Press, 1976). Joshua Freeman's story of the organization of the Transit Workers Union in NYC emphasizes the importance of the role of Irish republicans who identified as Irish and used their participation in NYC

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Irish-American social networks and organizations in order to bring together devoutly Catholic and anti-communist Irish workers with NYC communist organizers (In Transit: The Transport Workers Union in New York City, 1933-66 , NY: Oxford University Pres, 1989).

4. For a more mixed report than this brief paragraph by DuBois, but one that is in essential agreement, see Cayton and Mitchell (1939). For extended discussions of the way black identity assumed class forms see Robin D.G. Kelley's Hammer and Hoe (1990), especially chapter 5, "Negroes Ain't Black --But Red: Black Communists and the Culture of Opposition", and chapters five and six in Kelley's Race Rebels: Cultural Politics and the Black Working Class (1994).

5. Here, I follow E.O. Wright's neo-Marxian conceptualization of classes in advanced capitalist society. According to Wright, on a highly abstract level, the class structure of capitalism is still defined by a relationship of owners of capital and sellers of labor that is rooted in exploitation. In that sense, there are only two classes: capitalists and workers. On a less abstract level, however, Wright argues that matters are more complex.

> ...three forms of exploitation are crucial: exploitation based on ownership of capital assets, control of organization assets, and ownership of skill assets (particularly when these are legally recognized in the form of credentials.) In each case, to describe an asset as a basis of exploitation is to claim that the effective control over this asset enables people to appropriate part of the social surplus. For each of these asset-based exploitation mechanisms, the appropriation of the surplus takes a distinct form: for capital ownership it takes the form of profits; for control of organization assets, its takes the form of ... a "loyalty dividend" embedded in wage trajectories in firms; and for skill ownership, it takes the form of a rent component of the wage (i.e., a component above the costs of producing the skill). (Wright and Martin, 1987: 6-7; see also Wright, 1985, chapter 3)

This above quote shows how the exploiting class needs to be more complexly conceptualized. But, just as the exploiting class requires more complex conceptualization, so also does the working class, as it is defined on the highest level of abstraction by orthodox needs to be more complexly conceptualized on a lower level of abstraction to possess political and social meaning and consequence. This is not simply a matter of recognizing the existence of strata within the working class that orthodox Marxism always recognized (e.g., a labor aristocracy, the skilled vs. the unskilled). By including managers and supervisors, and experts in his class typology, in what he calls "class contradictory positions", Wright intends to designate that the manager-worker relation, and the expert-non-expert relation embody exploitation mechanisms -- and, therefore, are inherently conflictual -- that are distinct from the capital-labor relation.

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6. In this section I have focused exclusively on the theoretical reasons for holding on to a theory that ceases to work as well as it once *seemed* to have worked as the basis for an organizing strategy. But, there are always other reasons besides theoretical ones. Durkheim's point that religion is a society, not simply a body of tenets to which individuals subscribe is equally applicable to organizing theory and the groups that struggle to implement strategies based on that theory. People hold on to theory because it expresses social identity, meaning and purpose, that is, what they hold sacred. It sustains their group and the individuals in it by defining who they are, and it contributes to bestowing a sense of dignity upon members who believe they are fighting for what is right. In addition, the group glues members to one another in mutually supportive ways that involve dynamics of loyalty, companionship, gratitude, teaching and learning, sexual attraction, the desire for recognition, and the struggle to maintain leadership and position.

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CHAPTER X

TRYING TO CREATE ANOTHER GENERATION

PART I: THE FORMATION OF INTERCULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE CENTER'S TEEN GROUP

In the Fall semester, 1970, the CCNY (College of the City of New York) chapter of the United Community Centers College Group distributed a flyer to CCNY students emblazoned with the headline, "SOLIDARITY BASED ON RACE IS A STEP BACKWARD. COME TO SCHOOL ON NOVEMBER 3". It urged black students not to boycott classes on Black Solidarity Day and continued:

> "Solidarity based on race ... splits the fight to end the war in Viet Nam and the struggles for quality education, improved welfare budgets and the reconstruction of our decaying cities...
>
> "Our solidarity must be on based our ideas and the kind of world we want to live in, not on racial and economic divisions.
>
> "Solidarity based on race is an attack at the heart of education. It appeals to and reinforces the governing prejudices of our society. By separating Negro, Puerto Rican, Chinese and white people, racial prejudices prevent people from learning from one another.
> "THE FIGHT TO END THE WAR AND FOR QUALITY EDUCATION MUST BE INTEGRATED.
>
> "The United Community Centers College Group is a group of students who are struggling for an integrated education and an integrated society. We are organizing to end the war in Viet Nam and plan to send teams of students into key areas of NYC in order to reach working class and middle class people on November 14 and 15.
>
> "COME TO A MEETING TO DISCUSS INTEGRATION AND THE STRUGGLE TO END THE WAR, TODAY, OCTOBER 31, 1:00-3:00 PM Room 438, Finley."

In its mixture of forthright and public opposition to racially separatist organizing,

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its emphasis upon the need for integrated struggle to tackle the larger problems of the society, its emphasis upon integrated education as mutual learning across difference, and its invitation to discuss these issues, the flyer represented the understanding of the U.C.C. students. Both the College Group's willingness, with considerable trepidation to be sure, to challenge Black Solidarity Day as an expression of racial separatism, and to frame their challenge in the context of activity in which all could participate to oppose the war was typical of their approach. They were the only group to publicly oppose Black Solidarity Day on the CCNY campus, or probably anywhere else in the City University of New York (CUNY) or the State University of New York (SUNY) systems from the perspective of the need for integrated struggle for social change.

Their meeting did not attract a large attendance. Besides the members of the College group, only 15 members of the Black Student Union and two white student radicals attended. The black students made the standard argument of that time. What right, they asked, did the white U.C.C. students have to tell blacks what to do? The experience of blacks in the U.S. was radically different from that of whites. Whites were incapable of feeling and understanding the black experience. Even the best-intentioned of them inevitably got it wrong. The class-based and class-oriented interests and organizing goals that whites trumpeted as interracial insofar as they supposedly addressed common interests, in reality, represented white interests. "Common" interests were not so common. They always submerged or indefinitely postponed efforts to address the pressing needs and particular interests of blacks. More often consciously than not, the interests that whites said were universal maintained black subordination.

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Good will, even if whites had it, was not enough. Keeping whites out of the movement for black liberation and staying away from the clutches of white, i.e., interracial organization, therefore, was necessary until blacks, at long last, could throw off the external yoke imposed by the ' white masters' paternalistic and self-interested guidance and direction. Until then, blacks needed to determine their own needs, issues and destinies by themselves. Blacks had "to get themselves together" first, and *know* they could get themselves together first in order to feel strong and be able to assert their dignity -- to rid themselves of the yoke they had internalized -- before they could ever work with whites on a level of equality. Black solidarity, therefore, was essential to the process of exploring black problems, defining black issues, developing black culture and identity and combatting the oppressive realities of white solidarity. Black Solidarity Day was another, valid expression of the need to develop a "race" or "nationality" based solidarity in order to nurture black culture and identity and to struggle against racism.

This perspective on race and race-related struggles was so much the dominant one on northern college campuses at the time among black or white students who cared about social change that there was little social or political space in which to express any other perspective. Without a political economic theory or philosophy that reached beyond anti-authoritarianism, the white Left had no ground on which to challenge nationalism or separatism. The white Left, therefore, supported or deferred to the black nationalist/ separatist perspective both because their new Left anti-authoritarianism coincided with it and because, as they perceived it, the privileges that were attached to white skin left them morally unable to challenge it. Some supported the reasons

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developed by black theorists and developed some of their own -- blacks as a new proletarian vanguard, blacks as a forward movement against authoritarianism, blacks as an internal colony, blacks as deserving of moral reparation -- for supporting separatist demands. With pride in their racial sensitivity and anti-racism, white students on the Left claimed to understand how insensitive they were and agreed that it was impossible for whites to ever understand how blacks felt. Therefore, based on the logic of the moment, they concluded that whites had no place in black struggles other than to support, never criticize, demands formulated entirely by blacks. In the language of the day, whites had no moral or theoretical ground that allowed them "to tell blacks what to do." They could do nothing but withdraw from interaction with blacks that was unrelentingly rife with difficulty -- irritating, embarrassing, angry, provocative, and guilt-ridden. For at least the next decade, the opportunity for mutual criticism, learning or reciprocal change between blacks and whites who cared about social change was forfeited.

Besides the U.C.C. students the only other white students who showed up at the CCNY chapter meeting were part of a smaller grouping on the student Left who disagreed with separatism from a political economic and class struggle perspective but who also opposed the position expressed by the flyer. These groups tended to de-emphasize the importance of race as misguided because for them, class relations and class struggle were far more significant. Indeed, they wished for the submersion of race as a specific issue within a class-identified organizing process that claimed only class goals. Both the separatist and political economic perspectives agreed about this much:

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organizing that focused upon race was in opposition to organizing based on class for class-oriented goals. The difference marked by the U.C.C. College Group and the U.C.C. was that U.C.C., from a class perspective, insisted upon the significance of race and the need to address racial prejudice and racial issues continuously in the process of trying to build integrated organization and struggle, oriented to class issues.

U.C.C.'s Rationale For Interracial, Intercultural Organizing

The range of perspective in the CCNY meeting is significant both for its relative and representative narrowness. It also permits situating the place of the U.C.C. and its group within a broadly construed activist Left -- on campus and off -- in relation to the issue of race. U.C.C.'s organizing aimed to express and generate racially and ethnically integrated, class-based and class-oriented movement for democratic social transformation. Its aims rested upon a rationale that was both political-strategic and philosophical. Politically, U.C.C. insisted that no effective class-oriented organization or struggle could be mounted unless it were integrated because the working and lower middle classes were multiracial and their potential power resided in their relative unity. U.C.C. also stressed that integrated struggles could not be sustained unless other, more particular dimensions of identity and experience were welcomed, reciprocally understood and critically engaged.

Given its Marxian perspective, U.C.C. believed that class -- as a common relationship to the means of production-- and class identification as a universalist form of identity -- based upon a valuing of labor, a recognition of the fundamental and creative contribution of labor to social life, and an appreciation of the dignity of labor -- could

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provide a basis for unifying disparate groups. But U.C.C. believed that this was not enough. An integrated, class-oriented social movement could *only* be sustained if racial and other differences, as barriers and sources of conflict, were *thematized and continuously addressed* in a cross-cultural learning process of mutual challenge, criticism and support. It was this latter emphasis that marked U.C.C. in its own eyes as differing from important parts (not all) of the historical Left and from most of the Left U.C.C. members saw around them which required the submergence of race/ethnicity. U.C.C.'s name for this process was *integration.* As indicated earlier, U.C.C. named the inclusivist value this process embodied the *richness of difference.*

U.C.C. assumed that people who desired it could learn to understand one another, even imagine how others felt across differences of experience and culture. It required learning the history and experience of others. It required continuous practice because it was difficult. But U.C.C.'s pivotal assumption was that it was possible. Without this process of integration which entailed a commitment to the richness of difference and a critical openness to learning and change, a class-oriented movement would inevitably fall apart because of historically constituted, movement participant attitudes of distrust and disrespect.

At the same time, given how charged with mutually repulsive tensions and conflicts the process of mutual learning and change across racial difference was, even among those with common class identifications, the process itself required a political movement -- not merely racial sensitivity sessions -- for superordinate goals, (goals that could not be achieved without the support of different others). U.C.C. presumed that

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within a movement -- in continuous collective action over time -- participants bound together by commitments to common political goals would be afforded the opportunity to practice working and being together across difference, and would develop a shared mode of consciousness. In the process of integration within their movement, they would *construct a social and intellectual basis* and *demonstration*, for themselves and the larger society, of the possibility of trust, respect, equality and mutual knowledge across difference that were themselves, values that the movement sought to societalize. Further, the movement itself -- the process of building and making it, of struggling within it to change one another and of struggling to change the society -- was simultaneously a process in which participants clarified and developed the goals and strategies of the movement. In other words, the political movement U.C.C. sought required a process of integrated learning, and the process of integrated learning required a political movement, a structured basis for solidarity.

There was also a philosophical rationale for U.C.C.'s goal of an integrated movement. To the extent, that race/ethnicity divided people, it prevented the cross-cultural interchange and mutual learning and transformation essential to the development, in H. Arendt's phrase, of "enlarged mentalities" and expansive identities that included and valued different others and was critically open to further development. As U.C.C. conceived it, the process of interchange across difference was, or at least could be, a process of learning and growth, for individuals, groups and society. The process in which different others shared their ideas and cultural experience could provoke startling demands for reflection upon one's own parochial experience, ideas and

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culture, and thus might stimulate a dual process: the development of a deeper, relativized understanding of one's own background and self, and the development of a wider appreciation of differences and the self-incorporation of them.

As U.C.C. conceived it, this was not a process of live and let live, of developing a distanced anthropological understanding of others at the crystallization of which one went one's own way. The development of reciprocal understanding and appreciation of the perspectives and experiences of different others was crucial. But, beyond that, the point of a *critical* confrontation of different perspectives, ideas and experiences with one another was the development of new ideas that were broader and more embracing of the varieties of experience than the parochial perspectives with which individuals and groups began. Further, since the *historical* process produced individuals considerably short of embodying the articulated goals and values of the movement or the society which participants aimed to create, criticism and change of current identities was essential.[1] This might be a tedious, gritty, frustrating, bewildering, angry and humbling process, as well one that was thrilling and deeply satisfying. But, it was essential for self- and societal development. Each group, U.C.C. assumed, had something to contribute to the total society.

The Marxism of U.C.C. leadership presupposed the possibility of rational, historical development. Social development required and made possible the transformation of a wasteful, inefficient, exploitative, inequalitarian and undemocratic capitalist system into a more productive, fairer, more equal and democratic, cooperative society in which everyone could live with decency and dignity. In order to intervene in

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history and provide 'rational' direction, individuals and groups were needed who identified with the goal of creating the new society and with the task of creating the social movement that could create it.

U.C.C. recognized that the identity of individuals was in part constituted by the complex and often contradictory responses over time of individuals and groups to their historical experience. It recognized that these responses were not automatic, not totally determined. How these responses varied was not only a product of disparate historical condition; identity was also a product of conscious choices over which traditions to claim within a multi-stranded group and individual experience. Individuals and groups selected a tradition or traditions with which to identify based on their social goals and values, and their understandings of society, social change and political possibilities. Even as individuals and groups consciously mined historical memory for the material of current identity, they were simultaneously, if not always consciously, constructing identity for, and orientation to the present and the future.

Therefore, for U.C.C., the most important question about identity was: identity for what? The question of identity referred to the future, and to the goals, values, commitments and persons needed to create another kind of future. A social and political identity was not something 'natural', or 'given'; it was always a social product and, from U.C.C.'s perspective always in part shaped by conscious understandings and choices, that is, by self- and collective self-direction. The most effective way to create and self-create this kind of person was within a process of integrated learning and integrated social movement.

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Center leadership emphasized this process of integration and democratic identity formation within a movement for democratic social change over and over again with a sharpness that possesses relevance to many current arguments about multi-culturalism. Given the Center's emphasis upon interchange, it is unlikely that Center leadership would have been happy with the term "multi-culturalism". Its emphasis was upon *inter-culturalism.*

> Integration is not assimilation; ...where everyone becomes like the dominant culture...it isn't even a polite pluralism where everyone respects everyone else and stays out of his way. Integration is not mixing people physically in any set quotas or proportions. Instead, integration is a process of struggle, the living experience of dealing with the crucial conflicts of our world together instead of trying to escape them separately. Integration is the recognition of the richness of difference; of the right of different peoples, with different histories and experience, to influence and change one another during the common struggle to end oppression and war, racism and exploitation...
>
> ...Separatism is a self-defeating proposition. The preciousness of special identification, which by definition no one else can understand or influence fragments a common struggle. It even prevents the hardy growth of a real identity with one's own group that can stand up both in isolation and interchange with others. Identity with one's own group is a crucial part of one's knowledge of who and what one is. But the creation and strengthening of that identity takes place in a real world of struggle, with and against others. With whom and against whom are basic questions.
>
> To change fundamental things means a challenge to the central places of power. When that challenge is fragmented, nothing significant changes...those who have power hold it, giving up only the little that cements the status quo. (M.L. Eisenstein and F. Eisenstein 1969).

As individuals and groups offered one another new ideas, they simultaneously offered and jointly created new, larger, and unpredictable social possibilities and political directions. It was a process that could occur on a small group and larger societal

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level. On the one hand, the process afforded the opportunity for realizing a richer and more rounded individual and social development as identities and social relationships changed, expanded and solidified. On the other, from a movement building perspective, it was this sort of multi-culturally knowledgeable person whose identity was interculturally constituted in a culturally new movement who could be an effective organizer, leader and participant in struggles to tackle the consequences of class and of race.[2]

U.C.C. argued that the liberation of socially oppressed selves could occur and be sustained most effectively and democratically in a process of integrated struggle to address common social problems, especially those problems that derived from the dynamics of capitalism and its social consequences. From U.C.C.'s perspective, all identities, including selves that internalized inferior status, were formed in relation to others, as well as in relation to ideas about the world and the possibility of change. These selves changed as their ideas, experience with and relationships to others changed. The process, therefore, of enabling blacks to begin to change identities that were internalized as inferior, and enabling whites to crack their prejudices and frozen sense of superiority entailed the actual participation of both in the process of changing one another, that is, the relationship of "oppressed" and "oppressor" participants. For this to occur, it had to be in the service of a common goal (beyond that of changing one another). Learning through actual experience that they possessed the ability to initiate and sustain such efforts at personal change as they relied upon one another in struggle for social change, was the proof over time that they did not need to see themselves as

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superior and inferior. In the process, participants would become more flexible and freer to change and develop in relation to one another and their goals. In this position, the U.C.C. students at CCNY and at Harpur College (SUNY, Binghamton) were alone on their campuses.

As U.C.C. saw it, this process could occur, in fact had progressed, through the social and political conflicts and struggles in the broader society accomplished by the labor movement and by the civil rights movement (McAdam 1988). Although predominantly a black movement, it was also an interracial movement in which many whites and blacks in the larger society learned and internalized a rough understanding of the moral and intellectual equality of blacks and a different kind of person was collectively self-produced. Learning and internalizing equality in the movement was not without problems. In the civil rights movement, problems had arisen in the racial division of labor (Carson 1981), as well as in the gender division of labor (Evans 1980) based in part upon the significant gaps in the levels of academic training and skills between whites and blacks, and assumptions about the meanings of those skill gaps. Nevertheless, racial equality had been learned. U.C.C. believed that if there were any hope of successfully addressing the deep social problems of war, poverty, patterns of racial discrimination and class, the processes of mutual learning about different others and reciprocal change based on respect and equality had to continue.

In relation to all the issues that the U.C.C. chapter at CCNY tried to organize students -- opposition to the war, academic freedom, full funding for public higher education and no tuition at the City and State University -- the students always

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emphasized the importance of building integrated struggle, of crossing racial and ethnic divisions and of integrated education. But, given the dominant ideologies on campus, the group never won many recruits during its relatively short, four year existence (1969-73). U.C.C.'s resources and the group's internal discipline (compared to other student groups) enabled the CCNY Group to call more meetings, print and hand out more flyers than most other non-student government group at CCNY. But, except during its no tuition at SUNY and CUNY campaign, when the school authorities at CUNY, including the Chancellor and the Faculty Senate had become alarmed enough to begin to mobilize by what they perceived as real threats to tuition, the College Group's themes could rarely be heard above the medley of student organizing that characterized much of student life in those years.

The results were very different for the U.C.C. student chapter at Harpur College, the undergraduate division of the Statue University of New York at Binghamton. The Harpur chapter won only two new members. But, for two years (1970-72), when the College Group's struggle for integrated education took the form of opposing the Third World Corridors in the dormitories, they were the most controversial group on the campus, the focus of attention of the black students, of many white students and of the administration.

The Origins Of The U.C.C. College Groups: The Center's Teen Group And Intercultural Identity[3]

U.C.C. became involved with college student organizing in 1969-70 upon the request of several Harpur College (SUNY, Binghamton) students who had been through

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the U.C.C. summer camp and community program as high school teenagers. In order to understand how the request of these students issued from their perspective and sense of themselves as individuals and as a group, and to understand their bold willingness and ability to sustain what they did, it is necessary to describe their experience as teenagers in the U.C.C.

Their years as high school students coincided with the burgeoning of the black separatist movement and with a substantial project grant U.C.C. received from the US Office of Juvenile Delinquency from 1965-68. The OJD grant was for a project aimed at "re-directing delinquent youth from self- and socially destructive behavior into social initiatives for change." These funds enabled U.C.C. to provide scholarships to camp for 15-20 delinquent youth, mainly working class and poor, mainly black and Hispanic, who were included in its interracial teen work camp program for three summers. The funds also enabled U.C.C. to hire and train six youth workers and a research staff all of whom worked intensively with the delinquent and non-delinquent youth in summer camp and in the community throughout the year.

As part of an interracial group in East New York, the teenagers had acquired an organizing education by organizing other teenagers in their school and community based on the U.C.C.'s philosophy of integration. In their social action and social life, they were required to contend with black separatism as theory of organizing and a mode of social life on a personal and a political level. In these conflicts over ideas, they developed a sense of themselves as blacks, Hispanics and whites that included being part of an integrated (cross-racial and cross-cultural) group and integrated struggles.

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The summer teen camp program enrolled approximately 60 campers. The teen group program in the community involved approximately 100 teenagers in the last year of the grant, approximately 65 of whom were regular members of the group. Both aspects of the program involved teenagers in learning to think about and trying to resolve through group processes a broad range of problems and conflicts that arose when boys and girls of different economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and with different levels of educational achievement lived closely together. By the third year, the group melded in a remarkable way an interracial social life with interracial organizing efforts in the local high schools and in the community. The delinquency re-direction project had changed the behavior of most of the delinquent youth, at least while they were part of the program. At the same time, an unanticipated byproduct of the project was its impact upon the *social consciousness* of the non-delinquent and some of the delinquent youth who were upwardly mobile, working class and lower middle class, black and white youth.

One of their social action campaigns, for example, had included a three year, state-wide effort to amend the state welfare law to permit local departments of welfare to allocate funds to send children to summer camps of the family's choosing, not just to "welfare" camps. They had argued, based on their camp experience, that a summer camping experience for young people was essential for young people's development and should not depend upon their parent's income. The welfare camping bill was introduced by the Assemblyman and State Senator from East New York. The teens had met with youth groups attached to community centers and settlements throughout NYC and in

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Binghamton, Rochester and other upstate cities. They had learned how to present ideas and answer questions persuasively. The group had also enlisted the support of adult civic groups throughout the State. They had annually met with legislators in Albany, more regularly conferred with their own local state representatives, and had begun to learn how to work with legislators -- relying on them to carry out their commitments without relaxing the pressure they put on them. They had also tried to build a New York City-based Youth Assembly with representatives from schools and other organizations that could address a wide range of youth issues and would continue after the campaign on the welfare camping bill was over.

At the second of their annual Youth Assembly conferences in Albany (1967) the U.C.C. teens organized, they had helplessly witnessed Brooklyn CORE's youth group take over the final conference session with chants of of "black power" and "burn, baby, burn". Brooklyn CORE had no disagreement with the substance of the Youth Assembly's position on welfare or the camping bill, but they did want to assert their presence, demonstrate their capacity to disrupt and display their sympathy with the black liberation movement. The incident stimulated weeks of internal discussion among U.C.C. teens about separatism and black power that engaged the intellectual questions and mixed emotions black and white teens felt about the social and political meaning of their own interracial group. The CORE teenagers had seemed so forceful and sure of themselves. Did whites have any role in a social movement for change with blacks? Were blacks wrong and disloyal to their identity and people to participate in integrated organization? The questions would be raised again and again.

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When the U.C.C. teens finally met again with the Brooklyn CORE group they expressed their desire to have Brooklyn CORE as a part of the Youth Assembly but only on the conditions that they cease disrupting, assume responsibility for the Coalition they were jointly building and accept the discipline of the Youth Assembly. The CORE youth group agreed. It was not the only instance in which the teenagers saw that despite numerous disagreements on many levels, it was possible to create conditions in which groups, even those who might first seem to be in unalterable opposition, could work together on common goals, at least sometimes. In the third year of their campaign, the NY State legislature passed the welfare camping bill. For the next two decades, local departments of social services provided summer camping subsidies that enabled children whose families received public assistance to attend summer camps.

In ENY, the U.C.C. teenagers participated in diverse political activities requiring them to address the same agonizing issues of race, identity, separatism vs. integration, and class. The teenagers testified for school construction, for zoning and for integrated schools and integrated education before the Board of Estimate, the Board of Education and the City Planning Commission. They joined Center adults in rallies, demonstrations and petition campaigns in NYC and Washington, D.C. against the war in Viet Nam. They attended charette meetings on the ENY Educational Complex.

A plurality of the teens attended Thomas Jefferson High School, with a 20% white population, a sizeable Puerto Rican minority and a black majority. At Jefferson, their interracial group distributed flyers and organized meetings outside of school objecting to the segregated quality of their school experience (white honors classes and

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cheerleaders, black boosters, segregated clubs), challenged the use of police to discipline students in the hallways, organized a teach-in against the war, and campaigned for an independent student government that could discuss issues and arrive at positions without the prior say-so of the principal. They also organized a three day boycott of the food in the school's cafeteria in order to improve the lunchroom food. Their lunchroom boycott was a thrilling organizing peak for the student organizers because they obtained the almost unanimous support and broad participation of the diverse student body. And, the reduction in racial tensions and improved school attendance during the course of the boycott were palpable, especially when U.C.C. teens brought in several hundred sandwiches they had prepared for students to eat. Their efforts on the war, the student government, the lunchroom food, and their arguments for the importance of integrated education on differing occasions both won the support of the organized black students' groups and precipitated sharp conflicts with these student groups.

The U.C.C. white students never grew hardened to being called racists, and the black students never got used to the more hurtful accusations of disloyalty and being called "the white man's niggers". Nevertheless, whites and black teens discussed how they felt and were able to draw support from one another and the interracial U.C.C. staff and were able to persuade many other students -- black, white and Puerto Rican -- to join their campaigns. They also discovered that sometimes their persistence won the respect of many of their most embattled student opponents.

Communal and Associative Relations: Social Living and Social Action

Proofs of efficacy that were the product of a mere instrumentalist use of one

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another in interracial political struggles would not have been enough to sustain the group in this period when racial contention suffused every aspect of social life. Although every aspect of race relations in the U.S. has always been charged with political meanings, in this period all these meanings were glaringly unavoidable, especially for the members of an interracial group in a racially mixed, community rife with overt racial tension . The sharpened community peer and adult challenges about race, loyalty, and social change that these teenagers faced required them to think about, and, with leadership's direction, to discuss often the meaning of their choices in many aspects of their social lives. Within the larger societal and local community context, and given their yearnings as individuals and young people, the teenagers needed to know that they were valued as persons despite their differences, but in a way that also acknowledged and valued the social differences that were so profoundly a part of who they were. They needed a social life together based upon communal relationships without which their political efforts would have disintegrated.

To the point here is Weber's distinction between "communal" and "associative" relationships. Communal relationships are those in which "the orientation of social action ...is based on a subjective feeling of the parties, whether affectual or traditional, that they belong together." Associative relationships are those in which the "orientation of social action within it rests on a rationally motivated agreement, whether the basis of rational judgment be absolute values or reasons of expediency" (1978: 40-41). Weber says that one of the purest cases of associative relationship is "...the voluntary association of individuals motivated by an adherence to a set of common absolute values, for

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example, the rational sect, insofar as it does not cultivate emotional and affective interests but seeks only to serve a 'cause'. This last case, to be sure, seldom occurs in anything approaching a pure type" (1978:.41).

U.C.C. was both a political organization and a community organization. As such, while it deliberately identified itself in terms of its social goals and values (that were the basis of associative relations), it also deliberately fostered communal relationships based on its recognition of the multi-dimensionality of peoples' needs. Individuals joined or participated in various activities and campaigns for reasons of expediency and rational interest (e.g., a New Year's Eve party, building a school parents association or lunchroom boycott), or for reasons based on adherence to a set of values and to serve a cause (e.g., the equality and mutuality of relations between men and women or integration). In many organizations, if people stay with them over time because the organization serves their interests or provides opportunities for service to a cause, it is "natural" for people's associative relationships to acquire an emotional quality -- friendship, teaching and learning, romance, erotic love, loyalty -- that goes beyond utilitarian considerations.

But, this 'natural' evolution of communal relationships that was grounded in associative relations could not evolve comfortably and 'naturally' in an organization composed of ethnically, economically and racially different people that also challenged traditionalist gender relations. It was often uncomfortable to reach out to or disagree with people who were different especially when their reactions were unpredictable and could be scalding. It always required self-consciousness and a deliberate willingness in

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a process that made one feel clumsy, artificial and even a little insincere. In different places and at different times, circumstances might permit daring individuals to navigate this process. In U.C.C. the social atmosphere that enabled many young people and adults to dare to try was created by leadership's thematization of these problems in regular talk about the problems the teens faced in their everyday lives. The topics of these meetings included: how to deal with an individual's or the group's unwillingness to assume responsibility for something agreed upon; the problems of cliquish friendships that excluded others; how people talked to and treated one another; the reluctance of teens whose families were poor to invite lower middle class or working class teens to their homes; the difficulties of boy friend-girl friend relationships in a social context where girls were treated as sex objects and masculinity was defined in terms of 'scoring'; how teens who did not have boy friends or girl friends felt; how the boys and girls reacted to taking leadership from girls or anyone else; their use of drugs and alcohol; the far edgier difficulty when economic and racial differences were an aspect of these ordinary teenage problems; and, what being black or Puerto Rican or white or a girl meant to them and what it could mean.

In discussion after discussion, leadership insisted that these were not simply the problems of ignorant, prejudiced, vicious individuals with ugly imperfections. The problems were rooted in social, economic and historical relationships and the dominant ideas of the society. In this world, it was 'normal' for people to be racially prejudiced, to treat girls as sex objects or women as servers, to feel pride in the possession of a boyfriend, or to look out only for oneself. But, acting on these dominant ideas and

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accepting existing social arrangements perpetuated them with effects that were pernicious for large groups of people all over the world, and hurtful and destructive for others in their group. U.C.C. leadership also argued that it was possible, however, to examine one's action in terms of ideas and to change one's behavior -- together with others -- in a direction guided by other ideas. It was even possible to examine the ideas and actions of others inside and outside their group in terms of social ideas and try to move them to change. The process required learning how to use ideas to think about oneself and about how racially, ethnically, class and gender different others felt, thought and reacted to situations in which one's own reaction were very different.

These discussions and activities occurred over time in a context of political, social and organizational activities in which the teenagers learned they could rely on one another, and cooperate in action for common goals. Sometimes the activities were nerve-wracking, even scary, physically hard, or tiresome and repetitive. Then, the protectiveness, generosity, smartness, aggressiveness, enthusiasm, imagination, energy, internal drama, insight, light-heartedness, anger, hard work, dependability, empathy, kindness, and humor, in actions and talk, of different others that shared similar goals, made one feel better, made life more interesting and fun and were intensely appreciated. It became much easier to see the gulf between real individuals and the common stereotypes pasted upon their categorical group. They could see both how varied individuals were within those categories and also how aspects of their own and others' individuality were shaped by their social differences. The personal reactions of individuals to one another , whether they occurred while challenging a political leader or

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a principal, speaking at a public meeting, or doing organizational chores -- schlepping down blocks to distribute the newspaper, knocking on doors in the projects to solicit contributions, or building a cesspool, raking leaves and painting a cabin in camp -- built affective relationships piece by piece.

Because these valued and affective, i.e., communal relationships, required a deliberate and shared social and political consciousness to create, and because the problems in maintaining them might subside but would not dissolve, the relationships, themselves, never ceased to possess political meaning and value for U.C.C. teens or adults. The political and emotional content of these relationships were intertwined. One result was that instead of being surprised by the reaction of one's friends or colleagues in a restaurant when the waitress appeared to stall before serving their interracial group, they could anticipate and feel their friends' reactions, talk about it and agree upon whether to leave or insist upon service. Their social knowledge of one another did not extend to all areas of their personal lives, but it made possible a deeply felt intimacy in some dimensions of social life. Instead of being merely angered and burdened by situations like the one in the restaurant, they could also share a pleasure in what they created together -- their mutual understanding, reliance and willingness to act together. Associative relationships based on the struggle for and sharing of values and goals produced communal, affective relationships. Obversely, these communal relationships grounded and produced a thicker, fleshed out understanding of the meaning of the basis of their associative relationships, i.e., of their professed social values and political goals.[4]

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Teens or adults might join the Center along with friends to do something interesting, or to find friends. If they stayed around for any length of time because they enjoyed the sociability of the organization's life, they began to develop an understanding of the philosophical and theoretical basis of that sociability. In addition, the emotional relationships that people sought and developed had utilitarian value for the organization and people within it. People wanted to participate in organizational activity to be with others who wanted to be with them. Emotional ties that had a strong mutually obligatory character pressured members to participate in activities even when the purely instrumental reasons were vague or felt burdensome like the monthly distribution of 7,000 copies of the Center's newspaper.[5]

Over the three years of the teen project, the teenagers built their friendships and loyalties in a social life that included planning and attending meetings together, going on trips, raising money for their group, organizing parties and picnics, cleaning and repairing camp in preparation for the summer, rehearsing and performing theater pieces for community audiences and folk dancing together. They spent hours visiting one another's homes, playing ball together, shopping, and traipsing to different parts of the community and city. And, they had spent hours in adult -guided meetings discussing the wide range of issues and conflicts that arose in their social and political lives together. In sum, the teens built an interracial social life, an inclusive communality, that functioned as the connective tissue of their political efforts and probed the meanings of their political values and goals making them less abstract. But, it is also true that their interracial social life could not have been sustained amidst swirling racial prejudice and

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the challenge of separatism, in the absence of their political activity in the real world to achieve real effects. They needed evidence that their social life was not an insular fantasy. It was their continuous and complex combination of social action and social living that grounded the sense these teenagers developed that their group really embodied an alternative and possible social reality or movement for change.

At the end of the three year grant period, approximately 50 of the teenagers had accumulated a range of experience in organizing and political action, and in conducting a social life across class, race, ethnic and gender differences that was unusual even among most adults. Aware of the retreat from integration in the larger society and on the Left, knowing the uncommonness of their experience, the U.C.C. teens were self-consciously identified with the U.C.C.'s philosophy of integration. They valued their experience but they were knowledgeable about how much different others -- staff, adult volunteers and teen -- had contributed to and were included in what they, as individuals, had become. They prided themselves upon their creation of a community of difference in which differences were valued for the strength, knowledge and excitement of living they brought. For some, their form of intercultural identity was, to be sure, a tentative and fragile thing. For others bound by tougher threads to one another and to their ideas about integration, it was sturdy enough to last for the next several years and beyond.[6]

ENDNOTES

1. As this process was conceived, it did not theorize the need to be critically reflexive about the norms and values U.C.C. urged, or the possible need to develop new critical norms and values that were more appropriate for the movement and society participants wished to create. Just the opposite. There was a sense that "we" possessed the right values and norms that would not require changing.

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2. Gary Delgado (1993) discusses the central role of the multi-culturally skilled, sensitive and knowledgeable organizer in building a multi-cultural coalition for children's inoculations in Oakland, Ca.

3. The following is based on the interim and annual reports of U.C.C.'s juvenile delinquency project that were written for the funding agency, the U.S. Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development. These reports are vividly written descriptions of a three year experience that are rich in ideas and analyses. As such, what follows is a skimpy summary.

4. In his discussion of the variable nature of ethnic groups, Stephen Cornell (1985) refers to four potential bases of group affiliation: affinity, interest, institutions and culture. Affinity groups are the most volatile because feelings may be quickly satisfied or diffused; interest groups may last longer but focus only on parts of people's lives; and institutional groups, while more stable than the other two because they meet needs and may involve daily member contact, may be restricted to specific spheres of life or life stages (e.g. church, school, work). Groups that represent communities of culture last longest because they "are most closely linked by their participation ...in systems of meaning and attendant patterns of interaction and behavior which reflect distinctive paradigms of groupness, world views, or ways of being" (1985:5) As a result, "movement in and out of a community of culture is difficult because it involves putting on and taking off a system of meaning, patterns of customary behavior, a view of the world...often involving a profound redefinition of self and its relations with the world" (1985: 8; quoted in See and Wilson 1988).

U.C.C.'s effort to braid associative and communal relations may be understood to have combined aspects of affinity, interest and institutional groups. Most important, however, U.C.C. tried to modify in a more relativized direction how people felt their link to their ethnic and racial cultures within the context of adopting another set of meanings, world view and definition of self. In that sense, U.C.C.'s work represented an effort to involve participants in developing a new set of cultural ties and meaning. That this effort would have a hard time succeeding is obvious. That it succeeded among teenage and adult participants (not all) is evinced by their having defined themselves in terms of their intercultural identities, their need to struggle for an integrated society, and their willingness to act upon their new world view, over time, in the face of much opposition. On the one hand, the development of these new cultural meanings emboldened individuals, bound them to one another and girded their persistence. On the other, it forged tough shackles that made it difficult to leave the group without considerable emotional turmoil -- as Cornell, in the above quotation, indicated is the case for "movement in and out of [any] community of culture."

5. At the same time, it is important to note, especially for what happens in later years, as the organization assumes importance as a field of communal relationships and way of life, members often found it more difficult or became less open to alternative

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ideas. For all of the leadership some of the time and some of the leadership all of the time, the introduction of new ideas, even those undeveloped and half-baked, could threaten the pride of their creation and identity. In some circumstances the anger, self-righteousness and contemptuousness of leaders towards challenges could be withering. Some questioned anyway, did not find satisfactory answers and left. Others resisted but became less willing to question and disagree about the most important aspects of the theory. As in many organizations, many became less willing to challenge leadership anticipating that even other members, friends, might react negatively or coldly.

In other words, what began as rational association, theoretical understanding and philosophical agreement ended, at least in some areas of their theory and practice, in irrational closure for the sake of self and social maintenance -- a resistance to new ideas that might entail conflict, damage to relationships and hurt to the self. The organizational leadership might proclaim that volunteers could always vote with their feet and leave an organization with which they develop disagreements. But, such references to utter individualistic freedom are belied by the obligations, mutual dependency, coercions, shared life and emotional entanglements that develop over time for real, socially bound personalities. In addition, emotional relationships to others or to leadership may be used, especially by leaders, consciously or not, to invoke or count upon loyalty as a basis to move people into actions with which they might, upon examination, disagree. Weber writes that "the communal type of relationship is .. the radical antithesis of conflict. This should not, however, be allowed to obscure the fact that coercion of all sorts is a very common thing in even the most intimate of such communal relationships if one party is weaker in character [or knowledge, experience, organizational position, power -- M.E.] than another" (1978 42). In other words, power and coercion are important processes even in organizations with an important communal dimension. In this case, unfortunately, there was no possibility of examining these processes of power.

No small organizations with communal relationships are ever entirely free of this irrationalist closure process. But, it did not become a burden until the 1970s. As the organization's capacities and effectiveness were reduced by structural and ideological changes in the community, political reaction on a national level, social reaction to the sixties movements, and the mobilization of anti-tax, anti-social welfare forces against the welfare state, the organization became more defensive and self-protective about its theory. Defensiveness was exacerbated by conflict within the top leadership.

6. This aspect of the U.C.C. project is summarized and analyzed in the unpublished manuscript by Morris L. Eisenstein, Fannie P. Eisenstein, and Martin Eisenberg, 1969, "Interchange and Identity: Record of a Teenage Struggle to Cross Race and Class Lines in a Central City (East New York, Brooklyn)".

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CHAPTER XI

TRYING TO CREATE ANOTHER GENERATION

PART 2: THE FORMATION OF THE COLLEGE GROUPS AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THIRD WORLD CORRIDORS

U.C.C.'s Decision To Organize College Groups

The ex-teen group members who enrolled in college perceived campus life through the lens of their teenage experience. Their reaction was to feel squelched as individuals and stymied as political persons by the strict racial separations in student organizing and in the social and academic life of their campus. The dominant atmosphere and organizing philosophy on these campuses seemed to deny what they had lived and learned and valued and the kind of persons they thought themselves to be. Bewildered, they sought the assistance of the Center to try to figure out what they could do to change what they saw.

In 1969-70, the U.C.C. had four paid staff members, two of whom were working at half-salary. U.C.C. was a community organization without "extra" staff time to devote to college organizing. Nevertheless, tied to these young people by empathy and a sense of obligation, U.C.C. leadership assigned a staff member to work with them. It seemed irresponsible to create experience and develop commitments and leadership for integrationism among young people and not to assist them. It also seemed organizationally wasteful to have developed a direction with young people and then ignore the possibility of enlisting, sustaining and developing their capacities to support the U.C.C. in the future, upon their graduation. Some of these college youth were

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children of the Board President, the Board Vice-President, two other Board members and of the executive director. Each of these five parents had older children whose relationships to the U.C.C., its ideas and in part to their parents had become more or less attenuated. If U.C.C. had a chance to maintain itself and grow after many of the current Board leadership and the director, who were in their fifties retired, it needed to build another generation of leadership. Working organizationally with these young people and with whomever they recruited in their organizing efforts over the next few years seemed worth the effort. While these reasons were discussed, other assumptions were not analyzed.

The idea that working with upwardly mobile black and white college students would produce another generation of leadership for an organization situated in a working class and poor community that was becoming entirely black and Hispanic, was one such assumption. It implied the expectation that upon graduation from college or graduate school they would choose to reside in East New York and devote volunteer time to the Center in addition to pursuing their own time-consuming professions. The idea that these white and black college students would provide the next generation of Center leadership for integration in a mainly black and Hispanic neighborhood was far-fetched. But, these ideas were not entirely unrealistic. Even though a majority of the ex-teen group members ceased to be associated with the Center either immediately upon entering college, during the course of their undergraduate years or later in graduate school, six ex-teen group members along with seven other college students recruited during their college struggles settled in ENY after graduating from college.

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Although the combinations of reasons that majority of teen group members broke with the Center were as various as the individuals themselves, they boiled down to just a few. The most general reason was that, as young people, they wished to experiment with new ideas, new experiences, new courses in their lives, including pursuing studies in various arts and natural sciences. Many did not want to be accountable to an organization led by adults their parents' age that was based in a community and oriented to community issues. In one sense, breaking away from the organization of their teenage years was a form of asserting their young adult independence. A few others, exposed to different experiences, new challenges and political directions that seemed to make sense, and seeing what they believed were fundamental inadequacies and contradictions in the Center's theory and practice, developed different political perspectives.

The black students who attended college had an especially wrenching time, made more so if they attended colleges where there were no other U.C.C. college students. More than one-third of the teen group and one-half of the leadership had been African American boys and girls. Within a year after their high school graduation, all the black college students except three ceased to be affiliated with the U.C.C. As new students on their campuses, the black students were isolated from white students who were non-political and who possessed the larger society's common stereotypes and prejudices. They were also isolated from liberal and radical white students, who despite what might be called their political good will, accepted the black separatist direction and possessed little knowledge of, or social experience with blacks. During their lonely first year in college, the social relationships of the U.C.C. black students in schools where there were

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no other U.C.C. members socialized almost exclusively with other black students. Ideologically isolated, U.C.C. black students could not sustain opposition to the strict demands of organized black students for conformist loyalty to the nationalist/separatist position that dominated black college student consciousness in those years. Some eventually developed reasons to support or at least not to challenge the separatist position. Most others, given their blocked opportunities to sustain expression of alternative ideas ceased to be politically active at all.

With far less at stake and less intense difficulty, many U.C.C. white students had an analogous experience. They were distanced from the black students on their campuses, many of whom led their social lives in relation to newly installed academic and social programs for blacks and some Hispanics. They were also distanced from the white radical and liberal groups who accepted the black separatist and third worldist position. Supporting an integrationist position as a white meant challenging the positions on racial issues of white and black radicals knowing they would be accused of ignorance and naivete or attacked as reactionaries and racists. In that situation, many white U.C.C. teens opted out of politics. Some who wanted to remain political began to see validity in the positions of one white radical group or another.

Nevertheless, many of the whites and several of the blacks remained a part of U.C.C. The Harpur College chapter would eventually have 13 members, including two blacks and ten whites, seven women and five men. All had attended the U.C.C. summer resident teen camp and participated in the community teen program except one white man who joined after working one summer in the camp and one other white man who

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joined temporarily. Around the same time, 1968, when the juvenile delinquency grant expired, one of the ex-U.C.C. staff members began working as a social worker at the CCNY Student Affairs department in the college's program to help students create a small group social life analogous to fraternities and sororities. In addition to his regular work, he organized nine white students who expressed interest in being related to U.C.C. and its philosophy of integration. Eventually, the CCNY chapter would have 21 members, including two blacks, 2 Puerto Ricans, one Japanese-American, and 16 whites. Only six of the 21 had attended the U.C.C. resident teen camp and participated in its community teen program. Among the students in both groups, almost all the students were of working class and lower middle class backgrounds; all had attended NYC public high schools; almost all the whites were Jews and the parents of six of the students (including those who were Center members) had some experience in the U.S. Communist Left. The parents or grandparents of the black members came from the American South, not the Caribbean.

The decision in 1969-70 to devote the scarce time of its paid staff to organizing college students involved another motivating factor, although it was not discussed. The decision was made not long after the struggle on the Educational Complex at a moment when no clear program of community action had been formulated or was even discernible. The Center had lost the battle on the Complex and had come face to opposing face with the politically organized black groups which at that moment in East New York meant the poverty programs. But, in 1969-70, after the OJD grant had run out and the battle on the Complex was lost, U.C.C. was faced with the problem of what

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to do politically, and what strategy to employ to continue rebuilding the organization. With only a small staff, limited facilities, and limited finances, there seemed no possibility of re-creating the range of activities the Center had sponsored while located in the housing projects. Resources might expand but not greatly in the near future.

Sometimes U.C.C.'s strategic decisions were prompted by the social and theoretical understanding of the leadership as in the campaigns against the repeal of the Blaine Amendment or the campaign on the Complex. At other times, strategy was prompted by the articulated needs and desires of members constituents. Regardless of which combination of factors was immediately impelling, good strategy was strategy served five (sometimes conflicting) aims: building the organization, meeting the needs of constituents and members, expressing the theoretical perspective and philosophical goals of the organization to the people it sought to organize, and achieving pedagogical and/or political effects. As in other small, oppositional organizations, whether their purposes are secular and tied to social change in this world, or religious and tied to individual changes of spirit, the fifth function of strategy was to provide food for the collective spirit in order to maintain morale. Unlike some other organizations, holding on to members and leaders cannot be achieved by offering or promising non-existent lucrative economic rewards, political power, or the social esteem of persons outside the organization. That does not mean that power, social esteem and salaries, however paltry they may appear from the outside, are unimportant processes in shaping decisions and social relationships within the organization. But morale is the organization's life blood. It must be attended to and sustained at a relatively high level, not treated merely as by-

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product of other processes. Members and leadership need to be persuaded and to persuade themselves that what "we" are doing is important and effective in the world.

For members and leaders of small, oppositional organizations, skepticism and doubts (acknowledged or not) about the organization's purposes and practices are concomitants of the opposition of the society. Losses and lulls make doubts loom. Indeed, such organizations cannot thrive on long lulls. In his book on The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber writes that only John Calvin *knew* he was saved. Other early Protestant fundamentalists subdued their lonely and torturous doubts by throwing themselves into constant worldly activity for the greater glory of God. Their activity suppressed the doubt that showed insufficient faith and their successes were signs of election. In small politically oriented organizations, occasional lulls in political activity are unavoidable -- after an intense campaign, after a victory or defeat. That is why U.C.C. always tried to maintain several programs, several campaign, several activities going at one time so that even as one ended, others on-going or in the immediate future engaged the members.

In 1970, there was nothing that could replace the weight of meaning or the demands for adult energy and action of the combined loss of the OJD project and the struggle on the Complex. There was no other political field within the community on which to struggle for a program of integration. It is conceivable that if U.C.C. had won a substantive victory in the Charette that the on-going effort to assure the construction, curriculum and community center program of the Educational Complex would have engaged all of U.C.C.'s energy, and U.C.C. would not have become involved with college

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students. Since that was not the case, U.C.C. turned to organizing college students to maintain its own spirit, to build its organization, and to retain a connection to a struggle for integrated education.

In addition, however, what that suggests, although this meaning was not consciously articulated, was that the U.C.C. leadership intuited and perhaps hedged the possibility that in the near future it could not expect to discover or develop its leadership. or sustain and build its organization based mainly on the voluntary participation of working class and lower middle class, black and Hispanic community residents. That did not mean the leadership and voluntary participation of community residents were unimportant, even crucial to maintaining and building the organization. Although no one was conscious of it at the time, the change it ultimately signified was this: while the U.C.C. was located in public housing, the bulk of the voluntary leadership was demographically identical -- in terms of race, income, occupation and educational level -- to most community residents. The organization was not only situated in the community. It was "of the community". In the near future, however, as many of these students graduated, and as almost half of them decided to reside in East New York and eventually assume leadership positions in the Center, the majority, albeit by no means all, of the voluntary leadership would be demographically different from the community in terms of race, occupation and educational level. By 1975, although the bulk of U.C.C. leaders and members lived in ENY, many of its leaders were not quite "of the community" in the sense of being economically and socially chained to it by the racial discrimination in housing and jobs that the rest of the community faced. Nor did many other residents,

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especially those in opposition, see U.C.C. as "of the community" in the ways that earlier U.C.C. opponents had been required to do. In the 1950s, in a predominantly white community, opponents of the U.C.C. called its leadership "communists" and "nigger lovers", but could not label as intruders the voluntary leadership. In the 1970s, however, in a predominantly black and Hispanic community, despite the fact that the U.C.C. Board members and participants in U.C.C. activities were far more racially mixed than in the 1950s, opponents would be somewhat more persuasive in the community when they accused U.C.C. of being "white run" for white interests.[1]

The U.C.C. Groups At Harpur College/SUNY and CCNY/CUNY

There were important differences between the two campuses. CCNY was a municipal college situated in Harlem whose students were commuters, mainly of working class and lower middle class families. After CUNY's open admissions policy began in 1970, a large portion of the students were black and Hispanic. Harpur College was located outside the small city of Binghamton, NY. At the time, it was the most academically selective of the state university colleges, and the student body was predominantly middle class. Almost all the students slept in the dormitories or nearby off campus. Far from the metropolis, the campus was much more self-enclosed than CCNY and offered less room for anonymity. As a result, the experiences of the U.C.C. Harpur students -- of isolation on campus, of fear and hostility, and of relief and exhilaration when their small successes came -- were less diffuse, more continuous and much more intense. In contrast with CCNY, Black and Hispanic students were only 10% of the student body. What was identical on both campuses, as members of both chapters

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saw it, was the problem of racial separation in student activities, student organizing and student life in general. The U.C.C. groups were the only organized action groups on these campuses who publicly defined racial separation as a problem.

At first, both groups had floundered in an effort to develop a program that would define them and enlist student enthusiasm. At CCNY they handed out flyers calling for meetings on numerous issues including academic freedom, opposition to the war and to reductions in the CUNY budgets proposed by NYC and NY State. In all their flyers, meetings and in the articles they managed to get printed in campus newspapers they emphasized the importance of student organizing across racial/ethnic differences to tackle common problems, identified themselves as an interracial group and urged students of different racial backgrounds to join them, with little success. Eventually, their emphasis upon common problems and the need for integrated struggle, in the context of budget cuts that threatened aspects of the universities, evolved into their no tuition struggle.

At both Harpur College and at CCNY, the U.C.C. students judged that their concepts of integrated education and integrated struggle for common goals could not be actualized unless they explicitly challenged separatism because it was the dominant organizing theory and way of life on the campuses. Separatism's definition of the problems and goals of black students as entirely different from the problems and goals of white was a boulder in the road. The black student movement ideology, accepted by those white students who cared about social change, was expressed through social and political organizations, by strict racial separations in black and white student social life

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, e.g., clubs, eating and sleeping arrangements, and by a less strict tendency to enroll in different kinds of courses. Therefore, the U.C.C. concluded, it was necessary to challenge the ideology and the concrete social forms it took on the campuses.

The nationalist ideology was not only carried by organized student groups and informally structured in student life. It was often institutionalized on campuses in programs established by college administrations. It was a period in which many public and private colleges were making significant efforts to find and admit more than a token number of black and Hispanics. These programs were part of a larger societal effort to create opportunities for blacks. The programs were established for reasons of fairness as a response to black struggles. They were also an effort to create a larger black middle class and leadership more fully identified with U.S. institutions that might prevent the recurrence of the challenging and worrisome urban disruptions that marked the second half of the 1960s. But, simply admitting these black students into predominantly white colleges was eventually understood as insufficient. Inevitably, as black students experienced these predominantly white campuses as isolating and hostile arenas that exhibited the racism of the larger society, the campuses themselves often became theaters of challenge. At the same time, the black struggle for political and economic incorporation into the society became more explicitly focused upon efforts to combat the cultural stigma of inferiority attached to racial status and upon efforts to define and elaborate a black ethnic identity.

The issues upon which these nationalist and pluralist struggles focused varied in cities throughout the nation. On campuses, there was less variation. Black college

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students called for black studies programs, black student centers, and black dormitories. They fought, in other words, for what they perceived white students had, including a range of social and academic programs and facilities that would provide social and academic support during their sojourns on these campuses. Many of these programs were effective in providing social, psychological and academic support and in developing more knowledge and a deeper understanding of the black experience in the U.S. Simultaneously, however, most of these programs exerted pressures on black students for doctrinal conformity to a nationalist/separatist perspective, within a socially isolating context that did little to challenge the divisions between black and white students on campuses, and often contributed to reinforcing them. Interstitial space for the development of integrated struggles, an interracial social life or the development of integrationist ideas did not exist for either black or white students.

The Campaign On The Third World Corridors

Beginning in the Fall, 1970, at the request of the black student organization, the Harpur College administration established two Third Word Corridors (hereafter, TWC) in one of the dormitories where only minority students could reside. As at most predominantly white colleges where the administration created special facilities for minority students, the TWC presented little problem for most white students. Indeed, for both black and white students, separate living facilities offered relief from the racial tensions that had often erupted into nasty conflicts or abrasive interchanges. Previously, there had been arguments over loud voices and musics, accusations of theft, and even reactions to the manner in which white students posed questions to blacks -- either with

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the naivete, abruptness, snobbery, timorousness and insensitive curiosity of youth, or with more purposeful rudeness -- about why they ironed their linens or blue jeans, or whether the hair they braided was their own. The problems were typical of those that arose when black and white students, unaccustomed to each other, lived side by side but distanced from one another by divergent experience, clashing ideological and cultural perspectives, and often hostile prejudices. At that moment in U.S. history, as old norms of racial etiquette dissolved and new norms were being asserted but not established, black and white students felt each conflict across racial lines as a racialist challenge. Typically also, these conflicts had no subsequent resolution other than angry assertion and careful avoidance. For the U.C.C. students at Harpur, the college administration's welcoming and institutionalization of avoidance was part of the problem. As Thomas S., the only black male member of the Harpur Group, put it:

> I was at Harpur from September, 1969 to June 1974. Anita F. and Beth T. were there the year before. We didn't do much that year although by the second semester we started to meet and discuss issues. The biggest issue for us then was the racial division on campus. We wanted to develop some of the ideas we learned in camp and practiced in the Center. I can't remember whether we proposed doing something or Morris proposed it.
>
> There were no groups on campus who saw this as a problem. There were some individuals which I know from talking to people. There were people who had negative encounters and there was bad feeling from the white students I met. ...There was the issue of the Black Student Union who had been talking about the Third World corridor. I had spoken out against the Third World Corridor in meetings of the B.S.U. in the Spring, 1970. The response to me at that time was cordial, a real exchange of ideas because they were people with integrity. It was an exploration of how we were going to live on campus ...where there was discomfort at being isolated and a focus on them as being different.
>
> Black students were thrown into a situation where there was no

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> support for dealing with the basis of racial tension, for acknowledging its existence or for seeking alternatives... Give the Third World Corridor students what they want and they will leave us [the administration] alone... Their [the administration's] thing was to just find somebody to take the blame for the tensions that existed --and that eventually was us [the Harpur Group].

Beyond taking steps to create a more diverse student body and, within limits, accommodating to the expressed needs of minority students, it was a rare college administration that envisioned changing the relationships among black and white students. Equally rare were those with ideas about how to address racial tensions on their campuses. Administrations did not see this as the role of the college, except at moments of disruptive racial conflict, but the Harpur Group did. According to Josh K.:

> We wanted to create a different kind of society. We saw our location at that time, a college campus, as the place where we would do what we could to create that different kind of society. Had we been in another setting, we would have done it in another setting. We believed that there had to be possible a different way for people of difference to live together, especially on an educational facility where the living experience was as much a part of the education as the formal academic experience. Many of the students were from New York City, and we wanted to set an example that people could take back with them for the rest of their lives: that people could live in another kind of way, that they had commonalities, that they could work together in trying to create different political and economic structures, but also that they could benefit from just what we called the richness of difference. To me, at the time, that meant everything from learning the stories that people from different neighborhoods told about their experience to the more formalized sharing of literature, dance or food. Once Sue and I made friends with an African student who made us some peanut butter soup which must have been 90% chili peppers because it was the hottest stuff I had ever tasted in my life. We felt those kinds of sharings were limited by the separation of people.

Eric W. remembers:

> We had a popular democratic leftist position. U.C.C.'s connection to a working class and middle class community gave the Center a groundedness in daily reality that was important, and gave its politics a more sensible

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direction in the 60s and 70s -- education, civil rights, war, traffic lights... The effort was to try to build coalitions, to work across racial and religious divisions, to try to organize on issues of immediate concern and try to build people's understanding to a larger world view.

The larger view was that people of difference were all accepted, that people should participate in shaping their own life circumstances and the institutions in which they lived, where everyone was guaranteed a decent standard of living with the state as the institution of recourse. We were opposed to war... The points about class and social change were subsumed under the goals. We don't have what we want because of capitalism, political power and we have the right to challenge that power. What we couldn't explain was why people without power could be racist and in support of the Vietnam War. We had a "materialist" understanding of the world meaning everybody who doesn't possess capital and political power is a potential ally and victim of false consciousness so we tried to raise consciousness. But, we didn't understand culture and the hold of irrational ideologies.

'Integration' was the single most important idea in the Center. What we stood for and why we had to fight for it against all these other currents. It meant that people should live with one another, work and struggle with one another. That there would always be differences but that there were commonalities that were overriding that enabled people to live together across their differences.

To create integrated education and integrated struggles meant dealing with the attitudes of white and black students. But, it also meant, the Harpur Group reluctantly concluded, figuring out some way to address the racially separate social, academic and political forms on campus that had been established and sanctioned by the college administration. These administratively sponsored forms pressured black students to limit their relationships with whites and took white students off the hook of having to confront their own prejudices. With trepidation based on their foreknowledge that they would be attacked as racists and "oreos", and only after much discussion, combined with the urgings and support of the Center leadership, the U.C.C. student group announced their

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opposition to the Third World Corridor. They began a campaign on campus for its elimination in the Fall, 1970, the first year of the Corridors' existence.

Before school started in the Fall, 1970, they held a floor meeting with other students in one of their dormitories. While they handed out their flyers the next day, stating their objections to the Third World Corridors and calling for a meeting the following evening, black and Puerto Rican students who supported the corridors forcibly took their pile of leaflets and burned them. The following day, students and administrators from the official "Race Relations Committee" set up by the President of the college asked for an emergency meeting with the group. During the course of their discussion, Committee members urged the U.C.C. students to call off their meeting or be responsible for a violent race riot and urged them to apologize to the black and Puerto Rican students for having insulted them. In addition, Committee members threatened the U.C.C. students and informed them who was going to be beaten up by whom. Despite, and to some extent because of their fears, combined with their feeling that they ought not to succumb to intimidation, they insisted upon holding the meeting and sent a note to the President of the college about the leaflet burning and the threats. ("Harpur Student Report to U.C.C.", Fall, 1970)

The next night 400 students showed up at the meeting including 175 of the 200 black and Puerto Rican students on campus, astounding the U.C.C. students. According to the account published by the Harpur College newspaper (Pipe Dream, 9/18/70), the meeting was held "to ease racial tension on campus resulting from the newly established all black corridors in several dormitories" and the U.C.C. Harpur College Group was

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responsible for getting opposing factions together to discuss the issue of "voluntary segregation". Beth T., chairperson of the U.C.C. group called the segregated corridors "a reactionary stand which only serves to promote the continuation of our divided society. U.C.C. students feel that at this university students are learning to deal with racial problems in this country by separating people when they have conflicting ideas. This attitude does not help us deal with our world and the administration's decision to approve Third World Corridors was welcomed by many white students who also wanted to run from this conflict."

Harpur College President Dearing's answer was that "after a good deal of discussion and investigation, I approved with high enthusiasm last semester the proposed establishment of the Third World corridors during this current Fall semester. I am convinced that the Third World Corridors are sociologically, educationally, personally and individually sound. They are a justifiable item of choice in the varieties that we permit and encourage on this campus." Then, after expressing awareness of the differences of opinion concerning the origins and nature of campus racial tensions, and the manner through which they could best be addressed, President Dearing added, in order to reassure the black students, "I know that black students are sensitive, suspicious and aware of past betrayals and broken promises. I know that I still have a long way to go until I can gain the confidence and trust of the 200 black students on this campus, and I doubt whether I will be able to do so during my time here." But, "I will not submit to intimidation. I believe in the democratic process that accompanied the establishment of the Third World Corridors. If it is to be changed, it will have to be done by some power

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higher than myself. If the courts tell me it must be done away with, I can only decide whether to abide by judicial decision, or resign my post as president of this university. The future of the Third World corridors is not up for grabs, nor is their position so tenuous and shaky as to be affected by protests, letters to the editor, and mass meetings"' Finally, at the conclusion of his presentation, the newspaper reported that the president warned the Third World corridor students not to over-react to the kinds of provocations they have experienced all their lives and will probably continue to receive. 'This campus has many racial injustices as does all of society, but good will, courage and readiness abound at Harpur. Don't let emotions overcome your intellect. Violence can accomplish no good."'

According to the newspaper, Beth T. responded to Dearing' s remarks by saying, "people must begin to deal with one another in a culturally and physically integrated environment. It is very convenient for people like Nixon and others of prestige and wealth to try and keep the world in a separate state. Racial problems are shoved under the rug here as in the outside world. Integration has been bastardized in society. The word integration means people dealing with each other and learning from each other."

Immediately following her, a black student declared, "We want our Third World corridor and we will keep our Third World Corridor" . At that point, Linda T., responded. The newspaper identified Linda only as "a black student in Bingham Hall instrumental in bringing the racial question out in the open in a floor meeting in her dorm during which the situation initially arose", not as a member of the U.C.C. (which she was and had been since her days as a teenager in ENY). "Many people", she said, "are afraid

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to walk on certain corridors of the campus and are afraid to eat with black students in the dining halls just as they are afraid to walk through Harlem. I cannot accept segregated corridors as an answer to the racial problems on campus. Just as Jews, Italians, and Catholics are not segregated in the dorms, blacks should not be also. It's going to be damn hard to work things out, and it's probably not going to happen in your lifetime, but I am not going to accept the kind of pressures I feel now".

After Linda's comment, almost all of the 175 black students left the meeting. The remaining, mostly white students, continued the discussion for another two hours. Before the meeting ended, the president of the Student Government remarked to the students gathered, "As a liberal school, many students on this campus are incredibly naive in understanding the difficult position of the black students on this lily white campus in a lily white world. No white student has undergone the hatred and bigotry leveled at many if not all black students. The Third World Corridors have been sought by black students for close to two years now as a means to improve their chance to survive in the academic community here at Harpur. It is my position, as president of U.S.G., to support unalterably the present status of the Third World Corridors." Immediately following the meeting, the student government met and officially resolved , "that U.S.G. supports and endorses the concept and implementation of the Third World Corridors and other living areas."

The newspaper's editorial accompanying the article was typical of how white liberals and the Left would construe the U.C.C. student efforts. "The meeting in Newing Dining Hall last night perhaps destroyed any rational opposition to the Third World

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Corridors, as they now exist...Pleas for common understanding and community work on the part of opposing factions, as expressed by several white students point out the reality of racial tension on this campus. It is time that members of the UCCCG realize that an offer, or rather an insistence, of brotherhood is not enough to satisfy the demands of the black students. It is no longer a question of civil rights, but of black liberation." In fact, whatever else the U.C.C. students were saying, they were not pleading for a common understanding that was simply the product of good will. They were arguing for mutual learning within common struggle for common goals that could not be achieved without joint action in a process that simultaneously thematized tensions and prejudices that existed across racial difference. Nor, were they invoking, offering or insisting upon an idealistic concept of brotherhood. In fact, it was the U.C.C. group that had organized the meeting and required Harpur College students to acknowledge publicly, for the first time, the on-going racial tensions and separations on the campus in all its different forms. including the Third World Corridors.

At the end of the meeting, Thomas S. was asked by a "member" of the Third World Corridor, who had threatened him on several occasions, to talk privately about the issues away from the meeting and they walked together down to the lake. After a while when Thomas did not return, two of the U.C.C. students anxiously walked towards the lake to find out what was happening, then ran towards his shouts as five students from the TWC began beating up Thomas. They dispersed only after the other U.C.C. students ran to Thomas' assistance.

The size of the audience in the meeting U.C.C. students had called astonished

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them after the much smaller dorm meetings they had led. The unanimous opposition to them of the black students, white students, student government and administration, and Thomas' beating rattled and intimidated them. For the rest of that academic year, although they would sometimes raise their issues on campus, often talk to individual students about their ideas, and hold an occasional meeting, they did not pursue their challenge to the Third World Corridors with any continuity. They immersed themselves in academic work. Most exposed on campus were Linda T. and Thomas S., the black members of the U.C.C. group, who were branded traitors to the black cause by leaders in the TWC because they did not agree with the separatist political line and because they challenged the validity of the TWC. Some of them were sometimes physically fearful, especially Thomas S. who was verbally abused, called "Tom, Uncle Tom", picked on by a few TWC "enforcers" on a regular basis, and sometimes received threatening notes under his door in the dorm. Sometimes U.C.C. members felt they had to slink back to their dorms to avoid what they perceived as threatening stares and comments that might, they nervously believed, in a moment be acted upon. Not a single group and very few individual students agreed with them. But, they persisted, limply as a public group, mainly accepting the theoretical and philosophical rightness of their program but with doubts about its strategic or tactical viability. They could not see how to crack the perception of other students that their program was anti-black and Puerto Rican, not just against a particular manifestation of a separatism they deplored. They wanted very much to be seen as the "good guys" especially by black students, but also by white students who cared about democratic social change.

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Thomas S. remembers:

> After that first big meeting when I got beat up we kind of went into shock and it immobilized me and affected my studying and eating habits. We had other meetings in which I felt highly exposed because only I and Linda were black. There were people who looked at us as a threat because we raised questions about the legitimacy of that way of life. There was a lot of ostracism and I was shunned by many of the black students. I don't think the whites in the Harpur group understood how exposed I was and in that sense they were naive. Other blacks were using me as an example for anybody who might get out of line and I was stared at as though I were a piece of garbage.
>
> What sustained me was that people in the group were trying to look out for me. Also, I didn't quit because I knew they were wrong... To me we were fighting for a view of the world where people could live together with respect and learn from one another's cultures. The richness of difference was real, not just words... They said integration was a failure, that you couldn't trust people of different backgrounds and somehow separatism was a way out. Segregating based on race, they would gain strength. I felt there was a clear difference between the Ku Klux Klan and people who were willing to accept people as they were. Experience for me was the most powerful teacher. My prior experience in camp and the Center, not any intellectual arguments alone, were powerful and persuasive.

Linda T.: A Memory of That Moment

In her first years at Harpur, Linda T. , the only black female student in the Harpur Group, had made a conscious and successful effort to develop friends among the students in the Third World Corridors. Now, after Thomas' beating it was more difficult. She dated one of the young men on the Corridor for a while but became uncomfortable being on the Corridors and they could not go anywhere else without being recognized. The young man never voiced an opinion on Thomas' beating and she did not feel like she could ask. But, she was torn, feeling on the one hand that it was unfair to him and to her desire for a relationship to introduce all her political issues immediately, and, on the

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other, feeling disloyal to Thomas and the group for not discussing how others in the Third World Corridor were treating Thomas. The relationship ended quickly and Linda, an attractive young woman who yearned for a relationship with a young man, did not date for the rest of her college years. She and Thomas were perceived for a long period as being in the tow of the white students and traitors to the black cause. Nevertheless, with the stubbornness of youthful resolve, she greeted every black student on campus as she passed them on her way to classes, cafeterias and dorms for the next two years. Until her last year in school, most of them ignored her greetings. As she remembers it,

> Shunning me proved easier than labeling me although they tried that also. I was politically aligned with the Harpur group, but I visited with individuals on the TWC.... I was a biology major (only black in classes of 500 white students), but I discovered and loved classes in African American history and urban sociology (predominantly black students). I...deliberately danced the troika in the dorms, Latin in the Pub and performed African dances on the stage as part of my class grades.

Linda had joined the U.C.C. as a young teenager when she left a relatively "benign street gang" whose members, like her, lived in the local NYC housing projects, and talked only about boyfriends, sex, parents and drugs for a group that was "safe, exciting and purposeful". Even if she didn't at first understand everything some of the other teens talked about, she felt welcome, especially by the white adults, one of whom lived in a nearby building. Eventually, and to her surprise at what seemed to be this woman's encouragement, she began a boy friend/girl friend relationship with her white son. Linda was troubled when the boy's father objected to his son's relationship with a black girl and demanded that the boy end the relationship or leave home, but both she and her boy friend had anticipated the father's response. It was when the boy's mother, a

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U.C.C. board member, denied any knowledge of their relationship that Linda felt confused and ashamed for being so naive, so accepting, and so unacceptable. At the same time, she felt bolstered by the white Center leadership's objections to the actions of the boy's parents. The director's emphasized the importance of the issue in teen group meetings and his private chats with her and her boy friend, and the white U.C.C. board president welcomed the boy into her home when he moved out of his. But, despite the frequent discussions the group conducted on racial and economic divisions and societal norms and how these affected their everyday lives, few of the other teens wanted to talk about this issue with her. She was irked and resentful of her friends' silences which she interpreted as uncaring. The irony was that she had already reached a point in her relationship with the boy that she wanted to break it up, but she also did not want to appear to cave in to the father's racial prejudice. As the issue faded, she began to feel belligerent, frustrated and unapproachable.

She felt especially hostile toward Rose H., the brown-skinned Puerto Rican assistant director of the U.C.C., although she did not understand why. And, she began to develop closer relationships with the other black teenage girls in the group. She perceived that neither the black nor the white teenage boys in the Teen Group pursued or teased the black girls as ardently as they did the white girls despite all the discussions about what "beauty" was, about the need to see girls as full human beings or about the need to reject narrow definitions of beauty that excluded blacks. For her, as for most teenage girls, the burning questions were "Am I pretty? Am I smart?". To her, the answers about black girls, in the society and community, but, most importantly in the

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Center, based on the behavior of her male peers, was, "No". To her it meant that her ex-boy-friend's father was not so unusual. More than two decades later she would remember that time:

> It was Rose I looked up to. She was so beautiful. She even sat pretty. I remember how she reclined in a hard metal chair as if it were a chaise lounge, with her legs crossed as a shoe dangled off her toes, which I was certain were polished and pretty too. And smart. I liked to hear her speak Spanish. When she spoke, it truly did sound like a romance language. Short hair for a black child was a curse during those days, but Rose's was so elegant and attractive. She didn't have to wear clothes which accentuated her beauty because she looked great in anything. And, it was then that Rose singly or with other black females should have gathered together the young black females and counselled them individually and as a group, on their blackness. I remember talking with you Martin, and Morris... I remember teen group discussions. There was no way I could express to you or any white male or female the inexplicable shame I felt. Only a woman of color could help me (us) find the words to express the lowliness I felt... and reassure us that if others were unable to see our beauty as clearly as she did, then perhaps the problem was in their blindness.
>
> Rose could have, should have, but didn't. The system of beliefs of the Center could not support this action. How often did Morris say, "You don't have to be' blank' to understand how it feels to be 'blank'." ... . Mandated or forced segregation by either white or black is intolerable, as is a written or unspoken policy of exclusion. [I now think] there are simply times when one has to "go home" to learn special lessons, heal, learn and carry on traditions, teach our children, rest, be understood, without having to explain first, and love and be loved.

Joanne K., another intellectually serious and attractive teenage girl, whose looks and intensity also did not fit the narrow groove of what charmed teenage boys, and who was white, felt more supported by the discussions about how girls were treated. She remembers:

> Even before college, we had discussions about beauty and the [society's] idea that blacks can't be beautiful, and that was a really important issue. .. We would have meetings all the time about how girls were treated

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and how they saw themselves...I remember my sense of liberation and being taken out of myself about am I too fat or too thin, and having my mind moved to a whole other level of consideration of things.

Clearly the valences of these two memories are poles apart although they are both about the same organization at the same time. Joanne, white, felt supported as a young woman by the Center's efforts to discuss the relationships between boys and girls, how women were seen, and how the treatment of women could be changed. Linda, a black teenager, hungry for a relationship, and needing more confirmation for her worth as a young woman, found much less support than she needed. Given her memory, however, Linda's subsequent choices to participate in the Harpur campaign are remarkable. She remembers:

> ...The Third World Corridor was an authorized and sanctioned agreement by the public university system to allow segregated dorm facilities at the insistence of some of the 200 black students where choosing to live on them was voluntary. Shortly after being established, there was an unspoken mandate for all blacks to reside on the corridors. The black peer pressure to reside on TWC was enormous and enforced by self-elected punks who intimidated their own into conformity. The formation of TWC was illegal. The school administrators knowingly broke the law. There were many black students who preferred the TWC. There were many more blacks who wanted out, but were afraid to leave. ... I know they did because people [on the TWC] could tell me things they couldn't tell the other black students. I had associates on the TWC but there were limits to how friendly I could be with them and I didn't push it because they were even more afraid than me because they lived on the TWC... It is not known how many new black students transferred the following semester because of the pressures. It is not known how many black students moved off campus, but there was a large contingent living off campus. Many whites were oblivious...[others] wanted to know why the divisions.
>
> And I was torn. Not about the TWC, for there I agreed with the Harpur Group. Where I diverged is where I recognized the need for 'like to be with like', to be with one's own, to go home, to touch base with those who knew and loved you...But the Center was supposed to be our everything.

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There was a pressure to conform, even heed mindlessly, not unlike the pressure exerted by the TWC. When Eric W. chose to spend his summer on a kibbutz in Israel, instead of camp there was a good deal of discussion regarding his decision, its validity and merit. We questioned his choice calling it a "mistake", a "waste of money," and "wasted time. " I guess our tactics weren't that different than those used on the TWC with the exception of a good sound beating.

What Thomas and I had to face was different from what the white kids in the group faced. There were so few black students. We couldn't hide. Our butts were out there all the time. And there was the added element of being branded a traitor by the black students because my beliefs did not conform with their own. I don't know if this was acknowledged [by the others in the Harpur Group]. We all felt we had to take it but we couldn't talk about it. At the same time, each individual had to call upon an inner reservoir of strength to make it through some of those days. The opposition, including the administration, black and white TWC supporters underestimated the strength of conviction, tenacity, intelligence , creativity and courage of the members of the Harpur Group. I'm still in awe of the courage they demonstrated.

Once I fell asleep at night on the floor in the room of some of the guys. They were sleeping and I woke up and saw a focused red beam travelling from one of their sleeping bodies to another. This was before all those movies with the high powered rifles and laser beams. But, it looked like a laser to me and I was very frightened. Nothing happened, and I don't think I ever mentioned it. But there was lots of anxiety all the time. After the first year, I didn't want to go back to the issue. I wanted something easier. We felt isolated and alone. The Center's response was, if you originally decided that the TWC was the important issue on the campus, why were you changing your minds now. We were scared but doing anything else didn't make any sense. We knew we had to do something. Being part of the Center, this is what one did. The organization had expectations of us. There was no reason to be together if we weren't political. It is what we were supposed to do, like in the civil rights song, "We were soldiers in the army, we had to fight...".

By the beginning of the following year, four of their white members had dropped out.

The Third World Corridor Campaign Continues

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The U.C.C. Harpur College students returned to college in the Fall, 1971, their resolve to do something stiffened by their experience together and with the other U.C.C. students and staff as workers in the U.C.C. summer, sleepaway camp. The summers in the camp during their college years for the 20-30 students who attended Harpur, CCNY and other schools were a crucial dimension of their experience in the Center and require emphasis here. Their shared physical and emotional rigors of work as counselors, drivers, kitchen help and maintenance staff bound the students more tightly to one another. Further, the summer camp trained the staff in group work and organizing skills: democratic group planning, preparation, and execution; anticipating, seeing and addressing problems of racial, class and gender conflict in everyday living. They became accustomed to the emotional turmoil of talking about racial and gender conflicts and trying to resolve them from the U.C.C. perspective. Working with children and staff of different economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, they digested several humbling lessons. They discovered again how difficult it was to change the ideas and values of children even within the relatively controlled environment of a resident camp. People, even children, were committed to their ideas and values and ways of doing things. Disconnecting people from old ideas and motivating them to test new ones required knowledge about other people and their varied experience and cultures and a willingness to challenge what they thought and how they acted. Changing people, deliberately trying to change them, required an involvement with them and their concerns, not just talk, talk, talk of which there was a lot in the camp. The students learned that the believability of adult words was for children always attached to continuous adult action which signaled

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whether or not adults understood and cared for them.

In any reflection upon the quality of experience and political activity of the U.C.C. college students, one of the variables that requires consideration is their youth. As young people, they possessed in abundance the ardor, rigidity, arrogance, self-doubt, idealism, insensitivity, emotional expressiveness and limitations of understanding that in part constitute what it meant to be a young adult college student in the U.S. in the late 20th century. They differed because of the quality of their experience in the Center. They had learned how to think about different others and how to deal with issues of race, class, gender, leadership, and social responsibility in their social and organizational lives and in their social action struggles. They were the same as other young adults in many ways. But, as a group, they were as informed, as well-trained and as organizationally disciplined a political cadre of college student organizers as one could be outside of nations and historic moments that require a total and full-time immersion in an all-encompassing social movement. If the results of their organizing efforts were limited, the limits were mainly a product of the ideas they used in the context of that oppositional historical moment, not to foolish arrogance, insensitivity, or their comparative lack of experience or knowledge as young people.

With all that training, and perhaps even because of it, the Harpur students were apprehensive and still reluctant to pursue their challenge of the TWC. But, when the Center leadership prodded them to imagine another issue that would enable them to confront the issues of racial separatism and integrated education as effectively, they concluded that no other issue or campaign could as sharply precipitate the ideas and

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value they wanted to struggle for. In the Fall, 1971, they began again to distribute flyers, to talk up their issue and they held two dorm meetings packed with black and white students, although not many Puerto Rican students. Often the arguments would be lively and engaging. At the end of their third meeting in one of the dorms, they noticed that several of the bigger TWC students had lined up to block the doors inside the meeting room. When they tried to leave and one of the big student football players roughly pushed Thomas backward, Linda, no longer able to tolerate the abuse of Thomas, raced up to the student and hit him with her strong-shouldered fist in the chin. He flew backwards and fighting erupted everywhere. Linda was embroiled in the fighting and most of the guys in the Harpur group were attacked and fought back, while other members of the group rushed Kenny L. out of the room because he had just had surgery on his jaw. At the end, no one was seriously hurt--Josh K. needed two stitches and Eric W. had to wear a neck brace for several weeks. As Eric remembers it,

> It had been a very tense meeting and we got beat up by some of the tough black guys. That was very frightening. I didn't like being physically threatened. I got hit and hit back. But, afterwards, one of the guys who beat me up, and whom I think I had slugged, was very friendly. It may be that they just thought of it all as more fun or more of an everyday thing than I thought it was. The guy I had traded punches with was always kind of friendly towards me. I guess the fighting for him was not as big a deal where he came from as it was for me.

As Joanne remembers it, "Then, there was fear. We were afraid of walking on campus and being attacked...That was a source of conflict within our group. There was a feeling that if you walked around scared then people wouldn't respect you and you would become more of a target." Within a few days, U.C.C. sent four black adults -- two men

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and two women-- and one of the white U.C.C. student to distribute flyers with the Harpur Group. Rose H. was the Puerto Rican assistant director; Mary B. was a U.C.C. board member and a federal government worker; her husband, Sam B., was also Board member, a janitor employed by NYC Housing and a tall, dark-skinned man built like a tree; Troy B., the husband of another board member, was a bus driver with the NYC Transit Authority, a shop steward with the Transit Workers Union and a former middleweight prizefighter. This time the Harpur Group's flyers appealed to an issue they hoped would enlist a broader student interest. They called for support of the Harpur Group's "academic freedom" to discuss controversial issues on campus without fear of violence. As Eric W. remembers:

> I leafletted with Sam and Josh at one of the dining rooms where the black kids ate. People didn't know what to do. Sam's appearance was of a stereotypical big black guy from Brooklyn. They could always claim that Thomas and Linda were exceptions, but when we showed up with people from the community, it showed we weren't just a bunch of white kids with a couple of Uncle Toms in tow. Here were people from the community, and that was probably decisive for what happened afterwards.

Josh remembers:

> I was grinning from ear to ear. It was with a great sense of pride and security that I gave out those leaflets. Sam's physical size contributed to my sense of security and when a group of TWC students came by, including the one who beat me up, and they saw Sam giving out the leaflets, I knew they weren't going to be messing with us. It reinforced our message that we weren't anti-black. Certainly the students on the TWC took note of it, although I don't know if the white students took note of it. It added to their confusion as to what we were about. ...Everybody thought we were Martians, because we didn't stop.
>
> We also had a meeting with the administration with Rose H. and Sam B. there. The administration was flabbergasted at that because they couldn't call us all the things they wanted to call us. Sam sat tight-lipped the whole

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time but he didn't need to say anything because just his presence kept them from saying things they would have said. Rose did much of the talking basically telling them that if they didn't guarantee our security there would be hell to pay for it.

Joanne, the chairperson of the group at the time, remembers:

When the people from the Center came up we held a big meeting and it was packed. I remember Ricky B. got up, a black guy, and we later became friends, not great friends, and he said that to put out leaflets and call meetings that we should get rid of the Third World Corridors was like yelling fire in a crowded movie theater. I remember that the people from the Center's having come up was a tremendous relief to all of us...It was helpful having someone defend us, not physically, but help explain us to others, having black people explain us. It was the fact of being an adult, not a young adult that made a difference. Yes, skin color and life experience, but also being an adult and being able to say as an adult human being who's raising kids, or not raising kids, but living a life, that these ideas make sense (even though I don't agree with how we did it now), it was validating. It made you feel less crazy. It affected our relationships with other students on campus.

After that, and the campaign on no tuition and budget cuts, there could be some discussion with people who had otherwise just been hostile. Particularly when we were doing the budget cuts and no tuition stuff, there were lots of people joining with us, not necessarily tons of black students, but many students who joined with us who thought what we had to say was valid and spent more time with us and our little group expanded even though they were not necessarily members of the U.C.C. and that was nice.

Thomas S. remembers:

Many people came to the meeting because the black students were getting tired of all this violence. They asked, why are you putting yourselves in danger by raising this issue. The questions from the black students were phrased in terms that reflected concern for us. I was so relieved the adults were there, people I regarded as powerful figures. People began to see us as less a fringe group that was creating tensions and more as a group that was trying to deal with tensions. The adults gave us credibility. They spoke with intelligence and experience with handling conflicts, and there was a lot of discussion about academic freedom on campus anyway. It gave us a context for discussion of what freedom actually means -- the need to examine people's experience based on the ideas that shaped those experiences. We had floundered, because people looked at us as people who were relentlessly

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> pushing on an issue but they couldn't see why we kept bringing up the race issue. They knew we weren't racists, but they couldn't understand that we were trying to raise these issues about race for discussion. The adults helped people begin to see that, and I began to feel more confident about myself. The adults showed we weren't isolated, that we were part of a real interracial organization with responsible people in the City. For students who thought about anything, their visit confirmed us. There was no question here of not trusting adults, either on our part or on the part of the other students.

A Preliminary Political Critique of the TWC Black Nationalism

Except for a theory of internal colonialism, more theoretically informed metaphor than theory, that was advanced for a few years by some (see Blauner, 1972), separatism had no political economic account of the condition of blacks that extended much beyond a theory of racism. At a moment when the global capitalist economy that Marx and Engels vividly anticipated in the Communist Manifesto was emerging more concretely and pervasively than ever, producing the restructuring of national economies and classes, nationalism turned away from political economy and class analysis. The restructuring of capitalism on global scale, combined with the political and legislative victories of the civil rights movement was creating in the 1960s-1980s a sizeable black middle class and working class that were fully incorporated into the national economy, as well as a sizeable black population that was chronically underemployed or unemployed. The nationalist perspective treated any analysis of capitalism as a dynamic system and mode of production (indeed, any kind of political economic analysis) that reshaped race relations as suspect.[2]

Instead of seeking to meld a strategy that would attack restrictions on blacks with a strategy for a more universalistic, class oriented movement (or even trying to project a

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dualistic strategy), nationalism insisted that such efforts were diversions from the singular, insidious problem facing blacks which was racism. Nor could nationalist separatism do otherwise. From the separatist/nationalist perspective, the forms of racism might change but essentially and everywhere it remained a static phenomenon. The distinction between "racial prejudice", from which no one in the society was free, and programmatic "racism", an ideology that justified the subordination of blacks, became blurred. One of the meanings of the "institutional racism" of that period was that all people with prejudice, that is, all whites, were racists. From the separatist perspective, since whites could neither understand the black experience nor feel what blacks felt, as none of them were free of prejudice, they could only mislead and dilute the definitions of black interests and seek to dominate black struggles -- (almost) all were racists.. Consequently, in the nationalist/separatist theory of struggle, blacks could have few allies. The idea of a an interracial class-based struggle for class-oriented goals that moved toward the social control of an expanding economy could be nothing but a diversion.

When pushed, some nationalist separatists might theoretically allow for cautiously conducted coalitions with white groups in specific campaigns against racism, but in actual practice such coalitions were, of necessity, rare, fragile and ephemeral. In "cautious coalitions" where not only historically constituted distrust existed (which was to be expected), but where distrust was defined as normative, every disagreement amidst the stresses of ordinary conflictual politics was magnified by the nationalist lens into an attack on racial integrity. Since ordinary conflicts were perceived as efforts of the

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"masters" to reassert their dominance, the disintegration of the coalition always and necessarily came quickly. Despite, for example, widespread agreement among separatists that the war in Viet Nam was a "white man's war" (despite disproportionate numbers of front-line black troops), for a long time separatists resisted participation in the major anti-war activities that were often led by whites, and rarely sustained participation in multi-racial coalitions against the war.[3]

Other nationalist/ separatists argued that the need for separation would only be temporary until blacks could liberate themselves from the identity of inferiority and incapacity they had internalized and then they would be able to work with whites on a level of equality. In practice, that moment never came, nor could it ever arrive. The creation of psychological, social and economic equality for the entire U.S. black population itself required changes in the economy and structure of political power that could not be achieved without antecedent, integrated struggle. In action, the argument that integration might be possible in the future but, that separatism was currently necessary, ignored the ways in which some members of dominated groups developed vested interests in narrowly defined identities, fixed forms and limited struggles in order to pursue and maintain material rewards and social prestige accessible to only a few. For the U.C.C., the battle over the ENY Educational Complex exemplified the political realities of separatism on a community level and how its rhetoric permitted the emergence of vested interests (supported by government) that blocked the community education and organizing necessary for progressive educational development.

The motivating desires that impelled nationalism, -- for liberation from

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domination, for a sense of dignity and self-worth, for the ability of the oppressed to hear their own voices and to express their own needs and interests --were rational. These are desires that drive oppressed peoples everywhere in the modern world and frequently take separatist forms (Avineri 1981). In African -American history the separatist expression of black nationalism existed since before the end of slavery (Draper 1969). It emerged fully in the Garveyite movement in the 1920s. It emerged again in full force as a national movement from within the integrationist civil rights movement. It was inspired by the struggles, achievements and limitations of that movement which created the political space for it. The achievement of the universalist political goals of the civil rights movement made possible the formal, and to a large extent substantial, incorporation of blacks into the polity (Browning, Marshall, Tabb 1990). The subsequent black liberationist focus upon and elaboration of African American ethnicity, and the assertion of its pleasures, and dignity were also motivated by rational desires. Black liberationists pursued an attack upon the status structure of racial subordination in order to cast off the stigma of dishonor and inferiority (Deburg 1992). But, it is important to distinguish between the rationality of desires -- the need to resist oppression and struggle for liberation -- and the forms established to realize those desires.

If the forms of liberation struggles are effective in realizing some desires and not others, for some people and not others, then the forms initially constructed to protect and liberate turn into forms that accommodate to what is and constrain development. In fact, nationalism/ separatism and the forms it created quickly froze into intellectual and experiential fortresses that were irrationally closed both to the multi-dimensionality of

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African American history and experience and to other possibilities for struggle. Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray were scorned for their insistence upon the variety and complexity of African American life and the need to see blacks as autonomous, resisting human beings not only as victims of oppression . Nationalist/separatists declared as heretical (i.e., beyond rational consideration) any ideas (including integrationism and political economy) that challenged its narrow conception of black solidarity and identity, and they ultimately lost purchase upon a changing social reality . Separatist nationalism quickly became a defensive set of unexamined slogans about "the" black movement, racial solidarity, black goals versus class goals, that continue to haunt many blacks and much of the academic, non-labor-oriented white left.

The response of many black students to the U.C.C. student struggle at Harpur typified the movement of rational desire into fixed forms defended by irrationalist closure. The Third World Corridors were the outcome of black students' rational desire for protection, recognition, dignity and empowerment. But, protection, dignity and recognition needed a defense that seemed to many black students to require unanimity of ideas and action in the face of the enemy (as is true of the sides in any intense conflict, and as was true of many U.C.C. members). Support for black dignity and recognition was rigidly defined in terms of support for the Corridors. When the U.C.C. students challenged the existence of the Corridors, not from the perspective of racial hostility, but from an integrationist perspective that sought to create a larger, more inclusive movement of blacks and whites, they were attacked as racists and heretics. The U.C.C. students anticipated some of this response but as young people, they were surprised and

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intimidated by its ferocity.

From our vantage in time, it should not be surprising. Within every oppositional movement (with abundant examples in the history of the Left, the U.C.C. being no exception), there exist powerful tendencies to treat the deviants who leave or who disagree as weak and inadequately committed, self-interested, or traitors to the cause. The social response to deviance, as Durkheim pointed out, functions to reassert and clarify internal norms and exercise social control upon the remaining members by promoting a sense of "our" rightness. In this light, the abusive treatment of Linda and Thomas as Toms and moral traitors can be understood as a warning, a form of controlling the behavior of the entire black student body some of whom were much more willing to engage the U.C.C. group's ideas than others. Some were more abusive, more willing to be violent, less intellectually open than others. Often these were students who felt most defensive either because they had the least academic preparation , or came from the most racially and economically insular backgrounds racially and economically, or for other reasons, felt most in need of the protective Corridors. But, to differing degrees, almost until the end of the U.C.C. student struggle, most of the black students at Harpur College fell in line. A national movement of separatist nationalism with dramatic leaders had interpreted integration as a white ploy and was especially successful among college students. The experience of the black students in the world and at Harpur College seemed to confirm the separatist interpretation. The idea that there could be a more integrated and educationally richer way to learn and live on the relatively controlled environment of an isolated college campus was not worthy of intellectual

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consideration. Since it was impossible, the idea could only be racist or misleading. U.C.C. and an integrationist perspective had to be stopped, ignored and stopped again.

Eventually it was the black students themselves who were repulsed by the rigidity and pressure to conform within the Corridors and the black student population. The defense of the Corridors had elevated the status of the rigid, violent and insular. Instead of more freedom, the irrationalist consequences of defending the corridors had produced less. Black students who wanted to be free to grasp their opportunity to learn -- most of them -- detached themselves from the Corridors. That the U.C.C. students persisted and achieved what they did, including winning respect from some of the black students, consideration of their ideas --not agreement -- and later, as we shall see, a willingness on the part of many black students to cooperate with some of their efforts was one of those small, remarkable and anomalous achievements that history buries.

The U.C.C. Harpur College Group Position And What They Learned

The Harpur student struggle for integrated education and against the TWC within U.C.C.'s overall perspective presupposed the possibilities of a racially inclusive struggle for class-oriented goals and of an expanded, integrationist identity that included but did not obliterate or ignore difference. It saw the black separatist movement as self-defeating and socially destructive for two reasons. First, separatism's insistence upon racially exclusivist organization and particularist goals blocked the development of the integrated struggle necessary to address issues of political and economic power and the economy that shaped black lives and those of millions of others. It defined any meaning of class power and political economy that extended beyond racial subordination as

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illusory. The second reason the separatist version of black nationalism was socially destructive was that it blocked the process of cross-racial learning and growth through mutual interchange based on the idea of the richness of difference. The 'richness of difference' was understood as a social value that ought to inform one's general perspective and guide one's choices in the world.

U.C.C.'s fight was for integration and for expanded white and expanded black identities that could be a basis for connecting groups in a class-oriented struggle for larger social change. They had concluded, therefore, that it was necessary to combat narrowly construed and defensive identities that prevented the emergence of more universalistic identities. They realized, after a time, that fighting against separatism and narrowly construed identities was not enough. The U.C.C. student effort at Harpur, in particular its challenge of the TWC, was rife with misunderstanding, fear, anger, resentment, and racial prejudice, as it inevitably had to be. Perhaps their struggle would have been less charged with misunderstanding and hostility if they had not chosen to attack the Third World Corridors and if their fight for integrated education had taken another form. The inherent difficulties in pursuing their program may have been similar, but perhaps they would not have precipitated, even provided an additional reason for the hard collective defensiveness they encountered. In either case, what was missing in their efforts, they understood, was a movement for superordinate goals that could provide a structure for building more positive relationships and solidarity across difference. In the absence of such a movement, U.C.C. students could see that the difficult process of integration as mutual learning could not succeed. Without a movement for common

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goals, a structure for solidarity, even if they ceased to be seen by most of the black students as hostile racists, they would not be seen as political friends.

ENDNOTES

1. Given how often readers and advocates tend to understand and intend any description of the attitude of some members of a minority community as *the community's* attitude, I think it is important to state here that the accusation that U.C.C. was "white run for white interests" was believable to some and not believable, at least, to the large number of black and smaller number of Hispanic volunteers who participated with U.C.C. throughout the 1970s. Every community of this size, whatever its structural homogeneities, also has structural heterogeneities, and a considerable diversity of opinions.

Whether or not the young college graduate, middle class, educated, and white, who continued to live in the community for five, ten and twenty years were *of* the community is a complex question. Of course, they possessed a freedom to leave that other residents did not, had more spatial mobility and cultural opportunities, were employed at a higher level of income than most and they did not have to experience racism. On the other hand, they experienced East New York's lack of amenities and its fear of crime as well as actual assaults. Their neighbors and many of their friends were of the community. Those who had children in the public schools experienced some of the same problems as other residents. Everyone felt the burden of the austerity resolution to NYC fiscal crisis. If one defines "the community" racially or ethnically, or in terms of income, they were not of the community. If one defines the community in terms of territory and the considerably shared experience that territory provides, then they were of the community.

2. A typical example of this was the initial response in 1978 to W.J. Wilson's book, The Declining Significance of Race. Wilson (no Marxist) argued that racial discrimination in the area of the economy was less significant than it had been, although still powerful in housing, education and politics. He argued that political economic changes, especially the loss of unionized and decent paying manufacturing jobs in urban areas where blacks lived, and the expansion of a service sector that required high levels of education that many black did not have , had to be considered in any account of the emergence of a black underclass.

Black and white critics charged him with "blaming the victim", dissolving racism

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as an explanatory factor, ignoring the fragility of the black middle class, and ignoring the particular needs of blacks because he called for more universalist political strategies. Wilson incorrectly had down-played continuing racial discrimination in job markets, and he did ignore the fragility of the black middle, but he definitely did not "blame the victims". But his critics were still frozen in a mode of argument that saw only racial structures as contributing to black inequality and refused to admit the differential impact of changes in the economy on black groupings. Racism explained everything and in some quarters still does.

3. Barbara Epstein's (1993) case study of the "Bay Area Movement Against the Gulf War" discusses the same issues in the form they assumed 20 years later. In the Bay Area movement, Blacks, Chicanos and Asian Americans were present in large numbers, while San Francisco's diverse network of politically progressive gay and lesbian organizations provided the strongest and most vital community base. The rapidity and strength of the Movement's organization rested on its access to people who joined based on affiliations with others with whom they already felt connected and comfortable. In this instance, the virtues of identity politics were that its constituents were already organized and it brought groups and perspectives heretofore marginal to the peace movement and to other progressive movements, into its mainstream.

Unfortunately, the Bay Area movement quickly fell apart, mainly, according to Epstein, because no forum existed for arriving at a national strategy, but also because identity politics magnified internal divisions in the movement. Identity politics simply did not provide a framework enabling groups with different identities to stay together in issue-oriented coalitions when faced with the stresses of ordinary conflictual politics. She concluded that when politics is conceived mainly as an expression of identity based on oppression, it slides too easily into a politics of self with no connection to a "progressive vision of overarching social change".

It would be wrong to try to squeeze the diverse impulses, groupings, political and social programs and struggles of the variegated black nationalism of the late sixties and early seventies into the category of "identity politics". But, it would be equally wrong to ignore how powerfully identity issues shaped every expression of the black nationalism of the period. To anticipate the discussion of a later chapter, identity politics was the form taken by the status struggle that impelled black nationalism.

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BEING LEFT IN EAST NEW YORK:

TENSIONS BETWEEN RACE AND CLASS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING,

1954-1980.

by

Martin E. Eisenberg

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CHAPTER XII

TRYING TO CREATE ANOTHER GENERATION

PART 3: THE CAMPAIGN FOR FREE, PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT STRUGGLES

The Campaign For No Tuition At CUNY and SUNY

During their years in college, their struggle against separatism and for integrated education was, therefore, only one of two major organizing efforts of the two groups of U.C.C. students. Their other major effort was to oppose the imposition of tuition at the City University, and then to campaign for state legislation that established a policy of free, higher education in all the public colleges and universities of New York State.

Their campaigns for integrated education and integrated struggle had resulted in direct conflict with black students and some whites over the Third World Corridors, Black Solidarity Day and other issues. Their no tuition campaign was intended to demonstrate the possibilities of integrated struggle, to create a social context for integrated education, to maintain and expand the possibilities of working class students' enrollment, and to educate students about the ways in which the decisions of ruling class elites affect working class people's every day lives. The impetus for the development of the campaign for no tuition came from the CCNY students who experienced with immediacy a political threat to the more than 125 year old no tuition-free tradition at CUNY.

The U.C.C. student group at CCNY differed from the Harpur College group insofar as only six of the eventual 21 members had participated in the Center program as

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teenagers. As the Harpur Group had been unable to recruit anyone in their group, it is worth asking what made it possible for the ex-U.C.C. staff member to convince ten white students previously unrelated to U.C.C. to begin thinking about integration as an approach. Because their political understanding and ideological commitments were just beginning to develop, they were more open to an approach which did not exist elsewhere on the campus. A few of them, as part of a social group program led by an ex-U.C.C. staff member attached to the CCNY student affairs department, began to run a weekend recreational program for community children (in Harlem), all of whom were black. But, this was 1969-70, the end of almost a decade of movements for civil rights, against the Vietnamese war, and student organizing and the year after the battle for open admissions at CUNY. Both the student anti-war movement and the black power movement were in full swing and these students were not immune to what surrounded them. The points made earlier about how much of local organizing is accomplished by the existence of broader social movements are pertinent here. Despite their lack of political understanding almost all assumed or were easily persuaded of the need to participate in student organizing. Nine of the ten joined the U.C.C. after their experience with a U.C.C. student effort at CCNY to organize a student coalition against the war.

They began to be related to U.C.C. through anti-war activity the Center organized. They remained because there were specific aspects of the Center and its approach to organizing that engrossed them. They liked the sense of reality and groundedness that being related to an adult organization in an interracial, working class community provided. They liked being related to working class, black and white adults

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the same age as, or younger than their parents who were identified with the idea of creating integrated struggle for social change. They liked the continuing emphasis and support for their learning and doing well in school. They were engaged by the U.C.C. leadership's history and theory, and its emphasis upon intellectual exploration and understanding before programmatic positions were taken or acted upon. They responded to the emphasis upon action and the importance of connecting action to ideas. And, they were young men and women who enjoyed being related to a previously existing, interracial group of young men and women that was a social group as well as a political group, within which they would be respectfully welcomed and where their various qualities and contributions --not just physical attractiveness and verbal/intellectual fluency -- were often recognized and appreciated. Two joined because, energized by the movement activity around them, they saw the U.C.C. as a place where they could learn to be effective organizers and leaders, where they might even learn to be the "revolutionaries" everyone seemed to be talking about. Many joined because they wanted meaningful social relationships with other young men and women. And, almost all of them joined because they wanted to be part of a group in which their social relationships and political activity were coherently connected.

From its inception, the CCNY chapter tried, with dismal results, to organize students to join a campaign to defend full funding for CUNY. In particular, they had tried to mobilize students for full funding at hearings of the Board of Higher Education, and the NYC Board of Estimate. The Board of Higher Education was the lay Board responsible for setting CUNY policy and approving CUNY budget requests to the City.

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The Board of Estimate revised and approved the Mayor's budget. Its members were the five borough presidents, and the City Comptroller, all elected officials. But, at most of these hearings, except for an occasional student government representative, the U.C.C. students were the only students who testified. In the meantime, the varied streams of sometimes separate and sometimes overlapping political opposition to both CUNY's open admission policy and to the no tuition policy accumulated power. All these strands converged at the opportune moment of NYC's fiscal crisis in 1975 over-turning CUNY's no tuition policy in June, 1976, and installing drastic reductions in its budget.

A Historical Digression: Political Economy and Tuition Politics

Structuring the setting for the confluence of forces that eventually overthrew the no tuition policy at CUNY were the broader social, economic and political factors that contributed to NYC's fiscal crisis in the mid-1970s and produced the austerity resolution to the crisis. The story of the fiscal crisis begins after WWII. The U.S. emerged from the war as the world's preeminent military and industrial power aimed at maintaining the American postwar hegemony through the Bretton Woods agreement and other economic and defense measures. Domestically, two strategies emerged that were a reaction to and a continuation of the politics and the labor struggles of the 1930s. The limited capital-labor accord that developed after the war was an informal agreement between 'Big Capital' and 'Big Labor' to pursue economic expansion through growth at home and through empire overseas. Productivity gains in key industries would be shared and higher costs would be passed on to others. A limited capitalist-citizen accord also developed to accept the policies established by the New Deal and to continue to provide

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economic security both through social legislation (social security, medical care, etc.) and the reduction of cyclical unemployment through demand management (Glickman 1987). In addition, the existence of a "communist" society that had become a Superpower and the fear of communism as an ideology offering an alternative to and critique of capitalism and its possible effects on workers may have played a role in the placation of labor through these welfare provisions. There were two deep faults in these strategies. First, the unwritten 'social contract' implied by these accords was confined to certain sectors, classes and interest groups. The whole arrangement was predicated on the ability to reward those inside (and to a lesser degree, outside) the accords by distributing the fruits of continuing and substantial economic growth. Second, key mass production industries in the U.S., traumatized by the union organizing of thirties and early forties and seeking to protect and expand their profits against an organized and more powerful working class, began building factories in stable, cheap labor areas of the world. Backed by U.S. military might, U.S. business could invest in low wage countries with military dictatorships willing to stifle any union organization that might develop. In addition, mass production industries in textiles, clothing and automobiles in the fifties and sixties, deliberately built their new factories and shifted their old ones to the low wage, non-union south and southwest of the U.S. where local government and citizens were less sympathetic to unions and sites were cheaper (Bluestone and Harrison 1982).

Beginning after the war, the social economy of the American cities also began to change as a consequence of a double population movement. During the 1930s depression, with unemployment at an all-time high, the migration of African Americans

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to northern cities had declined from a peak of 800,000 in the 1920s to 300,000. The demand for labor during the war and the continued mechanization of southern agriculture after the war again pulled and pushed African American agricultural workers to leave the rural south and move to southern and northern cities in search of jobs. More than one million blacks moved to northern and western cities in the 1940s, and this enormous internal migration continued at roughly the same rate for two more decades. It produced in Southern cities the communities that subsequently mobilized their collective resources of money, organization and leadership to make the civil rights movement (MacAdam 1982). In northern cities, the large African American communities created by this migration provided the political organization and electoral strength that helped push the Democratic Party to support the civil rights movement, and were the bases for the organized insurgencies and urban disruptions of the 1960s (Piven and Cloward 1977). The War On Poverty and the expansion of other social programs was the federal government's response to the civil rights movement and the urban insurgencies in order to still political and social disruption by providing an array of social welfare programs to the poor, relatively unskilled and combustible populations of African Americans and Hispanics (mainly Puerto Ricans) that had gathered in American cities.

The other population movement that began after the war was stimulated in part by efforts to prevent an anticipated depression, and continued throughout the fifties and into the sixties. Millions of white, middle class and upper working class families moved out of the cities into suburban homes financed largely with V.A. and F.H.A. government loans. In addition, highways connecting the homes and workplaces of the new

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suburbanists were built with federal monies and employed millions of workers (G. Wright 1983; Jackson 1985). As the suburbs filled with residents, the suburban construction of new factories, shopping malls and office complexes began to accelerate, partly to sell to new consumers, partly because the land was available and less expensive than in central cities and partly to employ a more sparsely unionized labor force. In the two and one-half decades after WWII, large sections of the white middle class and upper white working class moved out of the cities, and were replaced by working class and poor African Americans and Hispanics seeking jobs, and, without them, in dire need of social services.

By the late fifties and early sixties, the dual accord established at the end of WWII began to unravel for both international and domestic reasons. The industries of countries devastated by World War II as well as those of less developed countries that had been built up both for markets and geopolitical reasons by the U.S. now began to compete with U.S. business in global and internal U.S. markets. At first they produced cheap goods of inferior quality, and then began, first in clothing, then in electronics, automobiles and steel to produce higher quality and less expensive products than American business could (Bensman 1985). This new competition combined with U.S. support for the military in Vietnam to produce powerful depleting effects upon the economy. In addition, the political refusal to raise taxes to pay for both the expanded social programs and the Vietnamese War strained U.S. fiscal and political capacity and created inflation. The rise of OPEC and other countries that produced raw materials also weakened U.S. hegemony and raised the rate of inflation further. The economic

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result was stagflation: inflation plus low rates of growth and high unemployment (Glickman, 1987).

The domestic reason for the unraveling of the accords was that many people were not included in the first place. Excluded workers in non-core industries, racial and ethnic minorities and consumer groups began in the 1960s to become political forces challenging the state for a bigger slice of the pie. Wage bargaining in the core industries of the unionized private sector and among emerging unions in the public sector became much more aggressive in the 1960s because of tight labor markets and unemployment benefits. The combined result of these internal factors -- including the expansion of costly social programs that were a response to the African American movement, the conduct of the war and the protest against it, and the U.S. loss of overwhelming economic hegemony -- contributed to a fall in the profit rate and a significant decline in the productivity growth rate (Glickman 1987).

The profit squeeze of the late 1960s to early 1970s inevitably brought a national counterattack by corporations. Businesses took the offensive at the negotiating table, mounted strong anti-union drives, and lobbied hard for restrictive macro-economic policies in order to reduce wage pressure. This included the mobilization of business on a national scale for lower corporate taxes, increased business benefits (e.g. low interest loans, lower real estate taxes and infrastructural giveaways), and the mobilization of fund-raising and financial support for conservative, anti-labor, anti-social welfare candidates that eventually led to the Reagan election in 1980 (Edsall 1984; Glickman, 1987). The civil disruptions and expansion of social welfare programs also brought

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forth a counter-attack. This took the form of the mobilization and connection of the anti-social welfare expansion, anti-black, law and order forces, each element of which stood for the other (Edsall and Edsall 1992). By the mid-seventies, when NYC confronted a fiscal crisis, the forces being mobilized by corporate and conservative efforts aimed their anti-tax, anti-social welfare cannons at NYC (and other cities). New York, they claimed, deserved no outside assistance because its too generous wages for inefficient public employees and its too generous social welfare allocations had permitted public workers, but especially the black poor, to live too high off the public hog, undeservingly for too long.

In addition, locally, five significant groupings fed into growing streams of sentiment against CUNY's policies of open admissions and no tuition. Important groups of CUNY faculty and alumni opposed open admissions. Upstate legislators and publics perceived unfairness in the different tuition policies in CUNY and SUNY. Fiscal conservatives in the City and State legislatures resisted the expansion of CUNY budgets. Still underrated as a factor in the overthrow of the no tuition policy, NY State private colleges facing competition for students from an expanded and high quality public system had begun to mobilize and lobby the state legislature to secure public monies and more students. Finally, a broader public increasingly perceived open admissions as a give-away to undeserving minority students.

The successful struggle led mainly by black and Puerto Rican students in 1969 to establish an "open admissions" policy at CUNY had meant that every NYC high school graduate would be admitted to some unit of CUNY including thousands who were ill-

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prepared to do college level work. Before the new policy, admission to the four year senior colleges and the two year community colleges was based upon high school grade averages and entrance exams, with admission to the senior colleges requiring higher high grades. With open admissions, high school graduates with an 80 average or who graduated in the top half of their class were admitted to a four year CUNY college. All other high school graduates were admitted to two year community colleges.

The rationale for open admissions was that many students enrolled in NYC public schools, especially minority students, given the racial discrimination they had faced in life and in these public schools, had never had the opportunity to acquire academic skills commensurate with their real intellectual potential. With college degrees becoming increasingly essential for obtaining decent paying jobs, and prodded by the 1969 student disruptions and the threat of more, accommodation and fairness to these students seemed to imply that the City University should assume responsibility for providing these students with another chance to acquire a college degree. Recognizing the lack of academic preparation of many of these students, CUNY developed an extensive and costly program of remedial courses that students with academic deficits were required to take to improve their skills after which they would be enrolled in course for credit towards their degrees.

With open admissions, student enrollment in the CUNY system increased by tens of thousands, in 1974 to 270,000, and the CUNY budget expanded dramatically. Although in the first few years of open admissions, the majority of open admissions students were white, the program would always be perceived outside CUNY, and by

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many groups associated with CUNY, as a minority student program. Much of the opposition to open admissions, and by extension to expanded CUNY budgets, (as well, eventually, to the no tuition policy) was energized by racial bigotry. For example, the 125 year old tradition of no tuition at CCNY and CUNY had produced a long list of Nobel prize winners, as well as uncountable numbers of successful engineers, scientists, teachers, parents, citizens, doctors, lawyers, politicians and professors. The occupation by CUNY graduates of leadership positions in government, business and the professions in NYC, NY State and the nation, notwithstanding, it became commonplace to argue that students would not value their education and work hard at it unless they were required to pay for it from their own pockets. It was an argument that pointed to the "undeserving" new students and resonated with racial prejudice.

Further, a core of CUNY faculty members accustomed to more academically skillful students and thinking of themselves as the defenders of CUNY's academic and intellectual integrity resisted what they perceived to be the dilution of courses, grades, and the value of the CUNY baccalaureate and challenged the educational legitimacy of open admissions. Their position contributed to the ambivalence of the support for open admissions of large numbers of CUNY alumni even though the official policies of the alumni associations supported the new policy. Although not all upstate legislators perennially joined the resistance to CUNY budgets before open admissions, the main political resistance to CUNY had always been situated upstate. The legislative resistance was joined in these years by Governor Rockefeller, one of whose prides was the expanded State University, but who also sympathized with the needs of private colleges.

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With the establishment of open admissions, the legislative resistance to CUNY -- to its expanded budget, its autonomy from the State and its no tuition policy -- stiffened and increased. They were joined by fiscal conservatives in the City and State governments who resisted CUNY pressures for additional funds to pay for a substantially increased student body of which a large proportion required remediation.

Around the same time, in the late sixties and throughout the early seventies, the NY State Association of Independent Colleges mobilized and began to lobby intensively for legislation that would expand the public monies available for financially needy private colleges experiencing severe competition from the public systems. Their argument was that public monies should be available "directly" to needy students who could choose among more alternatives which college to attend. Their hope, a hope that would soon be realized, was that "direct aid" to students would serve as a channel for public funds to the private colleges. In fact, in 1974, the political muscle of the independent colleges and their allies generated the passage of tuition assistance legislation. At that point the way was clear to impose tuition at CUNY, because, it was argued -- without emphasizing the future when tuition costs rose faster and higher than the proportion covered by tuition assistance -- no one without funds would be excluded.

Beginning in 1969 and 1970, arguments for reducing the CUNY budget and imposing some form of tuition including, for example, tuition based upon a sliding scale according to need, began to be discussed more loudly and frequently in many different venues of State and City government. In the year 1970-71, and especially in the Spring semester, the U.C.C. students began an intensive effort to organize students. They

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testified at hearings before the Board of Higher Education, the NYC Planning Commission, the NYC Board of Estimate, and the blue-ribbon Citizen's Commission On the Future of the City University. Before each of their appearances at these official bodies, they distributed flyers urging students to attend their meeting to prepare to testify to defend full funding for CUNY, its open admissions program and the no tuition policy. And, they talked and talked and talked with other students. There was little student response. In their testimonies, U.C.C. students criticized the official bodies for their acceptance of budgetary cutbacks at CUNY and for their refusal to declare unequivocal support for no tuition at CUNY.

Then, in the Spring, 1971, a sense of budgetary crisis spread throughout the university that would remain chronic for the same reasons for the next two and one-half decades. The CUNY University Senate declared it was "deeply concerned by the seriousness of the present fiscal crisis and the very severe consequences that substantial budget reductions will have on the Open Admissions program, the community colleges, and the educational mission of the City University." It "unanimously approved a proposal calling upon the President at each college within CUNY to convene a special meeting of faculty and students or student government representatives for the purpose of mobilizing a united college community response to the budget crisis confronting the University. (Letter sent to the Presidents of CUNY's colleges by the Chairman of the Faculty Senate, 3/16/71).

In a public statement, the CUNY Chancellor characterized the pending state budget as "educationally destructive and even catastrophic". "I am aware that this is the

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year of fiscal deficiency and budget austerity. There is an unquestionable mood -- and a need -- for budget austerity and cutting, " declared Chancellor A. H. Bowker on April 1, 1971, rehearsing an argument that would chronically be made in NYC and the nation for the next three decades, not only about public higher education. "We expect to make some cuts in our planned and projected expenditures and educational undertakings. But, what looms ahead as a result of blind cuts to fit budget formulas, rather than educational and social needs" would foreclose the expansion of the SEEK program, eliminate stipends for 3,000 disadvantaged students, and threaten the new open admissions program (CUNY Press Release, 4/1/71). Further, although Bowker expressed relief that State legislative leaders had decided against their original move to impose tuition, he pointed out that the proposed State budget would inevitably exert pressure to impose tuition on CUNY day session undergraduates. The following Fall the CUNY administration publicly admitted the mounting attack on the tuition policy.

The Campaign For No Tuition at CUNY And SUNY Continues

Given its class-oriented position, U.C.C. would probably have formulated a position against tuition at CUNY, written about it in its newspaper and testifiedagainst tuition before public agencies even if there had been no U.C.C. College Group. Situated in East New York, its members knew how tuition at CUNY would erase higher educational opportunities for many ENY high school students. Even before the College Group had begun their campaign, U.C.C. had joined the Ad Hoc Committee For CUNY. This mainstream liberal coalition included the Professional Staff Congress, CUNY Faculty Senate, the CUNY Student Senate, the Alumni Associations of almost all the

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four year colleges, the UFT, the NAACP and most of the most prominent civic groups concerned with issues of public higher education. Operating within a mainstream, pluralist political framework similar to PEARL's (and including many of the same organizations), the member groups supported no tuition and full funding for CUNY and annually rode AMTRAK to Albany to lobby for the CUNY budget.

Without a student constituency in the colleges, however, U.C.C. would not have chosen tuition as an organizing issue. Few adult community residents felt the CUNY problem with the same immediacy as they felt the public school problems of their children, and even fewer could act upon it. It was the existence of the student group at CCNY that moved U.C.C. to try to organize on the issue.

At the same time, the Harpur College students urged U.C.C. to expand its no tuition program to include the State University. They believed that so long as their programmatic thrust focused on the TWC, they would not be able to slice through the minority student perception that U.C.C. students, despite their meetings, flyers and newspaper articles, were opposed to minority interests. Harpur students wanted to fight publicly and politically for a program that explicitly indicated their support for the expansion of the minority student population at SUNY. They agreed with the minority students with whom they were fighting, that the simple dispersal of the small number of minority students on campus could not assure their program of integrated education and integrated social living on campus. To the Harpur College students, a struggle for no tuition at SUNY was a necessary step towards diversity and integrated education at SUNY. Motivated by its work with students groups in SUNY and CUNY , and based

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upon its own social philosophy, U.C.C. expanded its programmatic conception of the no tuition struggle at CUNY to include no tuition at SUNY, that is, to the idea that public, higher education should be without tuition on a statewide basis.

U.C.C.'s philosophical rationale for no tuition was straight-forward. A complex society, if it were to be democratic, needed more citizens with higher education who could think about and contribute to the resolution of its increasingly complex social, economic, environmental and political problems. It also needed highly educated workers who could maintain and expand productivity in an increasingly complex and technologized economy. Higher education for citizens and workers seemed as necessary to this form of society as elementary and high school education had been to an earlier form. The productive development of the society required that those with talent, interest and ability be able to make the largest possible social contribution as they maximally developed and realized their talents. Therefore, higher education should be universally accessible to all competent students. U.C.C.'s class perspective, and fairness implied that the economic success or failure of parents in the market, should not determine their children's access to higher education. And, since the economy would continue to change rapidly and people would be employed in several jobs during their working lives, higher education needed to be available throughout their lifetimes. From U.C.C.'s perspective, the society's need for highly educated citizens and workers and the societal need for universal accessibility implied that the costs of higher education should be borne collectively. Instead of being paid for out of the pockets of individuals, higher education should be paid for out of general tax revenues based upon a progressive system of

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taxation that required persons who benefitted most from the economy to contribute to the operation of the society at higher rates than those who were not as well-rewarded by the market. There should be no tuition or fees of any kind and stipends should be provided to students who needed them to attend college.

As U.C.C. put it in a statement to the Citizen's Commission On The Future of the City University, (3/9/71) :

> For the Commission to consider introducing tuition at CUNY means that you still assume that higher education is an individual privilege, not a social necessity. If you saw higher education as a social value, then you would not place the responsibility for filling CUNY's budget holes on the shoulders of individual students and their families. The responsibility belongs with the society as a whole and should be met with social revenues. The income tax structure must be changed so that those who accumulate the wealth of our society pay for the education of the human resources that create the wealth. Let us 'soak the rich', no one bothers them nowadays.

At the same time, U.C.C. also argued that public monies should not be allocated to private colleges, either in the form of direct aid or in the form of aid to students.

> [There are]...crucial differences between public and private education. Private college education is sectarian and elitist. Private universities need not be concerned with society as a whole but only with the dictates of the social interests their trustees represent. They are not accountable to the public, nor are they open to the public exchange over ideas over which direction higher education should take. ...Public monies must not be diverted to prop up financially impoverished private colleges which are not accountable to the public.
>
> ...There is an even more important point...Even within the selection process which admits students there is a greater diversity of students in the public colleges than in the private schools. They come from different economic, religious, ethnic and racial backgrounds. What they can learn from one another, and what students can learn about the relatedness of peoples in our society could be of enormous significance in teaching students to see their common problems and to deal with their conflicts and prejudices

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> in relation to one another. This diversity and the possibility for integrated education does not exist in private colleges nor would it exist with a voucher system (*ibid.*).

But, it was not only the U.C.C. class perspective, social philosophy and the existence of U.C.C. groups in SUNY and CUNY that prompted U.C.C. to expand its no tuition campaign at CUNY to include SUNY. There were also two political reasons. U.C.C. reasoned that the attacks on CUNY and no tuition issued most often from upstate legislators and their constituencies. Many of the colleges had remained tuition-free after the State University was formed in 1948 when the State's 32 public colleges had been pulled together into a single coordinated body (SUNY Office of University Affairs and Development 1985). By the early 1960s a uniform tuition charge had been imposed (NY State Committee on Higher Education 1960) and raised gradually. In 1970, it was still very low, approximately $250 per semester. Enlisting the aid of SUNY students and their families who lived upstate and on Long Island might be a way of turning around upstate and Long Island legislators, of pressuring them to support state legislation for tuition-free, public higher education. From U.C.C..'s perspective, it seemed to make sense to try to organize an upstate/Long Island student constituency and the way to do that was to fight for an idea and a program which was in the common interest of CUNY and SUNY students, and which neither group could achieve separately.

The second reason was that a campaign on no tuition and full funding for public higher education seemed to carry the potential of appealing to a racially diverse working class and lower middle class student and community constituency. A campaign on no tuition might demonstrate the possibilities of integrated struggle and create a structured

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arena for solidarity across difference within which, and afterwards, processes of integrated education that might be further developed.

In the Fall semester, 1971, the CCNY chapter began a sustained effort to organize students throughout CUNY in support of their program for no tuition at CUNY and SUNY, full funding for public higher education, and no public aid to private colleges. This time, given the sense of crisis that even the Chancellor and the Faculty Senate admitted, there was a different response. On the CCNY campus, they continued to distribute flyers, hold public meetings, have articles on the issue printed in the campus newspapers, and now they initiated meetings with as many of the organized student groups at CCNY as they could. These included the student government, the social clubs, many of which were ethnically, religiously and racially based, the political groupings, and the clubs based on academic subjects. They also met with representatives of student governments throughout the CUNY system urging them to initiate educational and organizing campaigns on their campuses. And, they sent out information and flyers to student governments and student groups throughout the State University. Near the end of the Fall semester, although most of their organizing efforts had focused upon CUNY students, they decided to hold a student conference on the no tuition issue in Albany, on February 12, 1972 to which all the student governments and many other student groups in SUNY and CUNY were invited.

Most of the early work for the no tuition campaign had been accomplished by the CUNY students, but the Harpur students quickly adopted this issue as part of their program. They agreed with it, certainly, but they hoped it would provide an opportunity

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to clarify their position and offer some relief from the intense conflict surrounding their TWC campaign. With no tuition at SUNY and CUNY as their issue, they envisioned and hoped for recognition of their leadership in the fight for the widest possible access to the SUNY system for working class and poor students. Since in New York State that would mean the enrollment of many more minority students at SUNY, black and white students might finally see their true intentions and understand their opposition to the Third World Corridors as part of an effort to create an experience in integrated education and integrated struggle that was in the interests of black students as well as white students. As no other student groups in SUNY at that time were acting on the issue of 'no tuition', they began to meet with student governments at several of the four year and community colleges near Binghamton and with groups on their own campus.

Joanne K. remembers:

> When we got involved in the campaigns on the budget cuts and tuition struggles it was a tremendous relief for all of us because ...we had been accused of not caring. And I remember a black political guy on campus with whom I had some argumentative interchanges saying to me, 'When you fight to bring more black and Latino students here,' -- he just said black students actually -- 'I'll start listening to you.' And, there we were, fighting to bring more black and Latino students into the school. I approached him with that and said, well, this is what we are doing. It didn't have the effect of having him speak to me, I mean the group in a serious way. I think he was embarrassed. But, it felt good to say, this is what we mean, this is what we meant in the campaign on the TWC and this is the proof of it --an odd way of saying it. The TWC issue was too narrowly formulated but the no tuition issue did much more.

The February, 1972 conference in Albany which was held at SUNY, Albany, was a success from U.C.C.'s perspective for several reasons. Over 250 students attended including student government representatives from many different four year and

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community colleges throughout SUNY --from Binghamton, Buffalo, Albany, Mohawk Valley, Oneonta, Cortlandt, and others --and throughout CUNY from colleges in all five boroughs. Also attending were several groups of high school students mainly organized by U.C.C. teens in various NYC high schools. Although the majority of students attending were white, as much as 25% of the students were black and Hispanic. The conference was extremely well organized in terms of the timing, speakers (including State Assembly and Senate representatives from East New York who promised to introduce legislation for no tuition at CUNY and SUNY), panel discussions after the plenary and literature distribution. Approximately 10 U.C.C. board members and volunteers had travelled to Albany that morning to help type, duplicate and distribute the minutes and decisions of the conference before the departure of the students.[1] At the end of the Conference there was unanimity about the program and consensus about the next steps . The students would organize on their campuses for a no tuition mass rally and lobbying effort in Albany on March 20.

U.C.C.'s Perspective on Coalition Versus Carmichael (Ture) and Hamilton

The defining moment of the conference occurred at the end of the opening plenary. As usual in this period at interracial conferences that addressed social issues, one of the black students announced that the black and Puerto Rican caucus would meet over lunch. One of the black U.C.C. high school students, a middle class girl from Queens, quickly stood up and announced her belief that a separate caucus at this conference would be a mistake. "Race is trivial compared to our need to fight together for no tuition. We need to stay together as one group." She was followed by a U.C.C.

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black college student at CCNY, a working class young man from East New York who supported her position.[2] The result was that there were no racially separate caucuses and no changes in the program agreed upon at the plenary session.

The importance of this moment is connected to U.C.C.'s concept of coalition which differed from the concept of coalition that was pervasive on the student Left of the time. For much of the student Left, the political programs of coalitions often consisted of a string of items coalition members thought would appeal to the particular interests of groups within the coalition or groups that coalition leaders hoped would join. The idea was that by adding an item to the coalition's program, the coalition signified its concern for particular groups. The membership of the coalition would be augmented by the groups whose particular interests were signified.

In contrast, U.C.C.'s concept was that a coalition was an organization of organizations to which individuals could affiliate. Each item added to the coalition's program might be one which included some groups, but it was often a position that excluded others who disagreed. Constructing a coalition program *for a specific campaign* that intended to involve the maximum number of potential constituents -- organizations and individuals -- required keeping the program to a minimum. It meant including only those issues upon which all potential constituents could agree. This did not mean that groups surrendered their other interests or other aspects of their program. It was crucial from U.C.C.'s perspective that it be able to struggle organizationally for other parts of its program outside and inside the coalition so that important parts of its own program, e.g., integrated education, were not buried and its independence not

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relinquished. Within the coalition, member groups might eventually be persuaded to support other issues of the U.C.C. or other groups. As social arenas in which member groups could share ideas and argue with one another, coalitions could develop new positions and campaigns. But, even then, the programs of particular campaigns needed to be kept to a minimum at least until the point when a mass constituency was created that might be receptive to a broad range of issues. Each campaign was also seen as a building block for enlarging and solidifying the membership of the coalition -- developing ways of working, building trust, connecting member groups and their constituencies on a broader range of issues, and for building a theoretical consensus. At the far end of that road, if the moment ever came, the coalition might become the core of a larger movement, even a political party.

The concept of coalition held by many black nationalist groups (and many other kinds of groups then and now), as exemplified by Carmichael (Ture) and Hamilton (1967,1992) was deliberately sectarian and even anti-political. They wrote:

> The major mistake made by exponents of the coalition theory is that they advocate alliances with groups which have never had as their central goal the necessarily total revamping of the society...these groups accept the American system and want only...to make peripheral, marginal reforms...inadequate to rid the society of racism (60-61).
>
> We do not believe it possible to form meaningful coalitions unless both or all parties are not only willing but believe it is absolutely necessary to challenge Anglo-conformity and other prevailing norms and institutions. Most liberal groups with which we are familiar are not so willing at this time (62).
>
> We do not see how black people can form effective coalitions with groups which are not willing to question and condemn the racist institutions which exploit black people; which do not perceive the need for, and will not work for basic change. Black people cannot afford to assume that what is good for

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white America is automatically good for black people (66).

First, this concept of coalition was sectarian. It implied that coalition was only possible with groups who agree about fundamental goals, values and strategies -- "the necessarily total revamping of society" -- and differ at most over tactics. It refused coalition with people who seek "marginal reforms". In fact, however, short of insurrection for the purpose of seizing the state, every campaign on one or two issues is by definition "marginal", that is, one which by itself does not change everything. What differentiated a "moderate" campaign from a more radical one, from U.C.C.'s perspective was not the particular issue, e.g. "no tuition", but that the radical campaign sought to raise the level of political discourse. Instead of grounding itself only in the values of liberal individualism, e.g. "higher education is a right" , it asked the question, "How should our society democratically provide higher education for the maximum number of members?" and argued that higher education is a social responsibility. The radical campaign raised ideas that pointed in the direction of greater social responsibility, democracy and social transformation. It saw the campaign itself as a pedagogical arena for "our" members, for the members of other organizations in the coalition, for potential constituents, and for the society as a whole. Carmichael's and Hamilton 's concept of coalition, in contrast, called for total agreement all at once and sought to avoid precisely the gritty, careful, suspicious cooperation needed to build a coalition without which an effective campaign on any issue that requires mass support is not possible. In short, their concept of coalition was anti-coalitional.

Second, their concept of coalition was one of the merging of one group with

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another, not of a temporary alliances for a specific purpose. Since the only structure of power shaping the lives of blacks and worth challenging was racism, there was no point (60-66) in creating coalitions with the 'white-run' Democratic Party, organized labor or liberal reformers on political or economic issues because their interests were not identical with "ours"; they always betrayed black people and could not be trusted. Aligning with those groupings could only mean surrendering independent action on race. In contrast, from U.C.C.'s perspective, organizations join and drop-out of coalitions as their self-interest requires, and at no time forfeit their ability to act independently or join other coalitions on other issues.

Carmichael's and Hamilton's concept of coalition implied that in the absence of a willingness to challenge all American institutions infected with "institutional racism", i.e., all American institutions, there could not be and must not be coalitions: in opposition to the war in Viet Nam; for increased budgets for public education; for universally accessible, tuition free, day care; or, finally, for tuition free, public higher education. Campaigns on these issues did not require the condemnation of racism, or the total revamping of the racist institutions of the U.S., but all of them addressed a specific need of the black working class as well as broader class issues.

Finally, Carmichael's and Hamilton's concept was destructive for political organizing in black communities. By requiring broad-based agreement as a condition for participation in joint struggle, Carmichael's and Hamilton's concept (shared by many black nationalist groups) logically generated an insurmountable obstacle to the organization of black individuals and groups (most of them) who did not agree with

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every item in the black nationalist agenda . Inevitably, the concept led to an approach that focused not on how to make political change possible, but rather upon the conditions for admission to the coalition, i.e., the possession of the correct consciousness. The result was a focus upon the demonstration of the proper point of view, not on organizing people for action and struggle within which movement additional struggles over ideas, values and programs could occur.[3]

U.C.C. conceived the campaign for free, public higher education as a program that addressed the interests of a broadly inclusive population statewide. The campaign seemed to U.C.C. to carry the potential of demonstrating the fruitfulness of integrated struggle for goals that opened possibilities for all. The no tuition issue and the issue of full funding for public higher education --that funded open admissions and remediation -- was understood by U.C.C. as a universalist program on a class issue. It represented the needs and interests of the working class, the lower middle class and the poor. In NY State, black and Hispanic students' families disproportionately occupied working class positions. Therefore, from U.C.C.'s perspective, the no tuition campaign represented the interests of blacks and Hispanics (as well as other students) even if it did not address all the needs and all the interests of all groups.

Blocking the formation of a black and Hispanic caucus at this first conference prevented a subsequent conflict that day over whether issues particular to the interests of black and Hispanic should be included in this coalition's program. Had their effort to include items of particular concern to the black and Hispanic students been defeated, many of the minority students would no doubt have been soured by the conference's

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conclusions and withdrawn their support. The more likely scenario, one that had already occurred on several occasions on the student Left, was that the conference would have voted to include items addressed to the particular interests of blacks and Hispanics. Then, after the white students returned to their campuses to organize other students, they would either underplay these issues, or, if they emphasized the particular issues of minority groups, many white student groups and individuals would decide not to participate.

U.C.C. had not anticipated the call for a minority caucus and no discussions had been held with its student members about what to do if a call for such a caucus had been issued. The two black students who spoke did so on their own initiative based upon their experience within U.C.C. Their experience had included discussions of the problems of racial prejudice and division within their group, some successful efforts to address these problems, and experience with the possibilities of integrated social living and struggle. Their voices said to the other minority students in the conference, "our" interests are represented in this program. But, not all minority students in the State were at the conference. When the U.C.C. students returned to their schools, they were successful in organizing an interracial campaign based upon specific initiative to black and Hispanic students in groups such as a West Indian Club, or a Black Engineering Society, or the Hispanic- lead student government at Hostos Community College, and to individuals. But, they rarely succeeded in enlisting the support of the major black student organizations most of whom had separatist agendas, or the student leaders of programs specifically established for minority students such as the Third World Corridor at Harpur

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or the SEEK programs at CUNY.

The Official Student Opposition To The U.C.C. Campaign

Other student organizations also would not support the campaign. Eventually, in fact, the Student Association of the State University (SASU), the official organization of SUNY student governments as well as most of the individual SUNY student governments would vote to oppose the U.C.C. students' position and campaign. With students, state legislators and up-state communities having accepted the inevitability of tuition at SUNY colleges, these SUNY student government representatives considered the idea of returning to a tuition-free State University as politically unrealistic, even utopian and "radical". Further, for students in SUNY, tuition was still quite low and affordable, especially for the more middle class students enrolled in the four year colleges, in contrast to the working class students enrolled in SUNY community colleges. Reducing tuition to nothing seemed to them not to advance their interests much. To the SASU student leaders, a more practical political program dictated negotiations with supportive up-state legislators either to maintain low tuition levels at SUNY or to restrict the tuition increases

while simultaneously refraining from opposing the imposition of tuition at CUNY. The unstated but underlying current here was the hope that the imposition of tuition upon CUNY students might loosen up state monies allocated to CUNY and contribute to keeping student costs at SUNY down.

Eventually also, the City University Student Senate, the CUNY student

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organization of student governments and most, although not all, CUNY student governments would resist, and sometimes oppose the U.C.C. program, or reluctantly offer no more than passive, official endorsement. To the representatives of the CUNY student governments and CUNY Student Senate, as well as to the CUNY administration, all of whom wished to maintain a no tuition policy at CUNY, the fight for a tuition-free policy at SUNY seemed utopian. In addition, they feared that the denouement of a campaign that tied the budgeting and no tuition policies at SUNY and CUNY might be the imposition of tuition at CUNY heralded by invocations of the need for tuition parity for upstate and downstate students. To the official CUNY representatives, it seemed politically more practical to focus the fight that year upon maintaining a no tuition policy at CUNY while insisting upon CUNY autonomy from the State. They liturgically reiterated that the economic and social needs of CUNY students were different from those of upstate, ignoring the fact that many SUNY community college students came from economic strata similar to those of CUNY students. More importantly, the arguments for CUNY difference ignored the possibility that a statewide struggle for public higher education might make it more possible to fulfill the different needs of CUNY students if sufficient funding were won by a unified state-wide battle, and some forms of administrative decentralization were in place.

Less resistant to the philosophical sense of joining the CUNY and SUNY no tuition struggles, but almost as politically unenthusiastic about it, the Ad Hoc Committee For CUNY, at U.C.C.'s urging, adopted no tuition at SUNY as part of its program. The Committee's mode of functioning, like many mainstream liberal coalitions, was to

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negotiate for better CUNY budgets with the contacts they had at City Hall and in Albany within the budget parameters established by the powers in City and State government. In 1974, for example, when U.C.C. urged the Committee to oppose the tuition assistance legislation being pushed by the Association of Independent Colleges because it would divert public money away from public higher education to the private colleges, and because "the reflexive action of the legislature will be to impose tuition at CUNY", the Committee refused. Its leaders argued that CUNY had a liveable budget and that it would be "counter-productive" to enter into direct conflict with the private colleges who might become annoyed and use their political power to attack the SUNY and CUNY budgets ("U.C.C. Minority Report of the Committee to Review the Tuition Assistance Plan, 3/14/74). [4]

Two years later, a political steamroller, fueled by the NYC fiscal crisis in a context of national attacks on NYC's social extravagance, pushed approval for tuition at CUNY through the NYC Board of Higher Education (June 1, 1976), then stacked with governor-appointed members. The Ad Hoc Committee For CUNY permitted itself to be flattened with barely a political twitch. Despite their civic prominence, and the tens of thousand of members on their mailing lists, the members of the Ad Hoc Committee could not conceive of initiating or organizing a political movement to defend no tuition because that was not how they conceived their role or interest. A year later, when the Committee, whose written programmatic goals now referred to no tuition at SUNY as well as at CUNY, changed its name, it deliberately chose not to call itself the "Committee For Free Public Higher Education" because, as one of the members said,

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such a name would be "too restrictive"

The Results of the Tuition Campaign

On March 20, 1972, 1,700 college and high school students rallied and lobbied at the state capitol in Albany to support legislation proposed for no tuition at the City University of New York and the State University of New York, full funding for public higher education and to oppose public funding for non-public colleges. The principal emphasis was upon the no tuition program. The students attended most of the senior colleges and a few of the community colleges in CUNY, 10 senior and community colleges of SUNY and five high schools in New York City and Nassau County. This was the last year the U.C.C. College Groups were able to systematically organize on the no tuition issue. U.C.C.'s effort to convene representatives from participating groups later in the 1972 Spring semester to plan for the following year failed, a victim of the rhythms of the student academic year. By the following year, although U.C.C. students continued to raise the no tuition issue, many of them had graduated. U.C.C. Groups suffered another chronic problem of student organizing: they were unable to replenish their diminished ranks. Four years later, tuition was imposed at CUNY.

It is relatively easy to assess the results of the no tuition campaign. The rally and the campaign it climaxed had no discernible political impact. The Assembly and Senate bills for no tuition that the students supported never reached the floor of either house. No student governments or faculty group would organize for a similar program in the following year, or for the next three decades. Into a turbulent political sea blown for the next two decades by chronic fiscal crisis in municipal and state budgets, U.C.C. had

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thrown a message in a bottle that no one would ever read about or think about. The actions of government over the next decade -- the passage of tuition assistance legislation that salvaged financially weak private colleges, the shifting of public higher education funds from the public to the private colleges, the imposition of tuition at CUNY, the raising of tuition at CUNY and SUNY, the movement of CUNY from City to State control, -- would prove, ironically, how impractical the political pragmatists at CUNY and SUNY had been. Despite tuition assistance, in the first two years after the imposition of tuition CUNY student enrollment dropped by 70,000 (Rothbard 1982: 38).

Perennially trapped in the current year as structured by the academic calendar and the annual public budget cycles, none of the major groups-- students, faculty organizations or civic groups -- would stretch beyond a tactical vision of what to do about the current year's Governor's budget and how to lobby the state legislature. None would develop a theoretical consensus based on a broad political economic analysis of the problems facing public higher education. None would develop a philosophical rationale for the defense of ***public*** as opposed to private higher education. Although student organizing efforts would accomplish some momentary successes to minimize CUNY budget cuts and tuition hikes, student efforts would be continuously plagued and undermined by ethnically and racially based organizing efforts, division and distrust. A commitment to integrated struggle would disappear, and even the class analysis of tuition policy would begin to fade and be replaced by a racialist analysis. NYC and CUNY budgets would face chronic crisis. Tuition increases would outstrip assistance increases. Open admissions would be persistently challenged. And, none of the groups would ever

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initiate or seriously consider the necessary strategic political vision for a long term struggle that joined CUNY and SUNY supporters within NY State in a movement that might eventually connect them to supporters of public higher education, or public education in general on a national level.

The no tuition and budget struggle's only discernible effect was upon the U.C.C. students at CCNY and at Harpur. They learned more about what it took to organize anybody, especially people of different backgrounds; about how much and what kind of organizing effort a major political campaign entailed; about presenting their issues in a way that engaged different kinds of audiences. In addition, their political economic understanding of the issues deepened; they became more effective in struggling for their ideas and shrewder in their political insight; and they learned to anticipate and not be frustrated by problems in organizing people vastly different from themselves, even when they could not always solve the problems. They had been defeated, not demoralized, but what they learned was entirely lost to any future struggle for public higher education.

At Harpur, the tuition campaign extended the impact of the visit of the U.C.C. adults discussed above. It modified and broadened the relationships of the U.C.C. students with black and white students. Even before the no tuition campaign, the Harpur students' relentless willingness to engage black students on campus in argument on an individual basis, even if sometimes clumsily, arrogantly and provocatively, contributed to changing the minds of some of the black and white students about them as a group, even if it hadn't changed their political opinions. The no tuition campaign pushed the changes in campus opinions about their group even further. In individual arguments with

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students, they had been challenged to indicate what they were prepared to do to demonstrate their professed concern for minority students. U.C.C. students felt the no tuition campaign demonstrated their concern, and at least some of the minority students and many white students outside their group agreed.

The End of The Campaign On The TWC

The next year at Harpur, although the students continued to work for on the tuition issue, they also focused on arranging social and cultural occasions which might bring white and minority students together. Students on the Third World Corridor began to disperse and there was no need for U.C.C. students to focus their attention upon it. They showed the film, "Salt of the Earth", about Mexican-American miners and the involvement of their wives in their struggle for rights and dignity. They organized a successful party in one of the dorm lounges with a racially mixed crowd, although Linda T. was embarrassed about the stilted way the white members of the group danced. Josh K. remembers a folk dance festival they organized in the Fall, 1972:

> We wanted to show what we meant by the richness of difference and how this could be an exemplar of what could happen on campus...our partners in setting that up were an Israeli folk dance group and the Black Student Union. So, with all that had happened, we had established enough credibility with the Black Student Union that they were willing to participate in an event we sponsored. There were 100 people in the audience. First there was the Israeli dancers and then the African dancers, and then our dancers from Brooklyn. There was a thunderous ovation for them not only because they danced fantastically but also because the contrast between them and the prior all-white followed by an all-black group was unavoidable. It was a culmination and restatement of our position and it was clear from everybody's response that they knew we weren't just talking the talk. We were related to people in another locale who also were an interracial group; we had experiences that were valuable. And, you could see the audience's recognizing that we were engaged in something meaningful, even though

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some of the people on the white Left wouldn't have recognized it.

> I remember a discussion [after that] with a radical white sociology professor who had written a book on the black revolutionary auto workers in 1969-70, and he said something to the effect that in his book, an interracial folk dance concert didn't mean diddly-squat. That was probably the reaction of most of the white Left.

By the end of the Spring, 1972, there was no more reason to fight on the TWC. Before that, in 1971, the students and Center leadership had met with and requested support from Kenneth Clark. Clark was then a member of the New York State Board of Regents, the highest educational policy making body in the State whose policies directed the Commissioner and NYS Department of Education. Clark was the psychologist whose brief for the plaintiff in the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court case, Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education, contributed to the Court's decision to declare racially segregated school systems unconstitutional. Clark's point of view in the early 1970s had not changed much since 1954. His staunch integrationism was based on his belief that racially segregated schools or facilities, in themselves, contributed to weakening black students' self-esteem. Further, he believed that the society would never provide black students with an education equal to that of whites in segregated schools. He was dismayed by the racially separate programs and facilities for black students proliferating on college campuses throughout the country which he regarded as misguided and retrogressive for blacks. Stimulated in part by the U.C.C., and with the publicity and documents about their experience provided by the Harpur Group and a group at SUNY, New Paltz that had begun to affiliate with U.C.C., he used his influence to move the Regents to issue a policy statement on racially segregated facilities in May, 1972. The

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policy called for all colleges and universities in the State to submit plans by October, 1972 for the integration of any currently segregated facility by the Fall, 1973, and strongly criticized separate facilities, even those requested by students. It urged colleges to take steps to admit minority students beyond the special admissions programs and called for the sensitization of faculty, staff and students to the diverse life styles of minority students. To back up their request, the Regents also announced its readiness to get tough and withhold state funds from colleges that did not follow their "request" (New York Times, 5/26/72, 1:4). So the U.C.C. Harpur students contributed to eliminating racially segregated facilities in all of NY State's colleges and universities.

At Harpur, the influence of the TWC eroded well before the new policy was officially implemented. Black students had, in groups, already dispersed to various dorms and off-campus living quarters. As Thomas remembers:

> I don't even remember the Board of Regents decision. People got tired of the TWC and moved off campus, including the major proponents of it. Students who came later didn't want that environment. There were power struggles in it, people being intimidated. Serious students couldn't study in that environment. I talked to some of them in my pre-med classes.

Linda remembers:

> I graduated in May, 1974, but I left the Harpur group at the end of the Fall semester because I needed to be apart and I felt something was missing in the Harpur Group. I didn't feel any closer to them and none of it was fun. It was all hard work and some of the people I had felt close to were gone. I moved into a suite with five roommates who were all black. One of them braided Thomas' hair and he was very relaxed there, much more like himself, and with all that had gone under the bridge, he got some acceptance there. By that time, even the year before, the TWC was ineffective. The black students had chosen to live in groups of three in the white dorms. The Harpur Group was the impetus for that in discussing something that would never have been discussed. Our efforts gave voice and strength to those

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black students who couldn't say anything but who disagreed with the TWC. They could move off the TWC or move off campus. But, our saying so, and my presence and Thomas' presence told them that this was possible. I know it did because people told me.

Also the TWC destroyed itself. Upper classmen typically would move off campus and new freshman would come in every year. But, their hearing horror stories about the TWC, the pot and loud music, and when they took a tour they could smell the pot so it wasn't an atmosphere for studying. Also the bullies weren't as effective. They had bullied the white kids who had come on to the TWC and bullied the black kids in the TWC who wanted to study with the white kids in their classes. Students didn't want people telling them what to do and the enforcers were dangerous, so many students decided to move off campus.

I was registering for my last semester at Harpur and the registration line was long and slow moving. A young black man who I had seen around campus for years seemed to be in a hurry to register and asked nicely enough if he could cut in the line ahead of me. For years this attractive young man received a greeting from me and responded each time with silence as if I were invisible without feelings and now only saw me when he had a need. More saddened and disappointed than angry, I reminded him of this and said it would probably be more appropriate to ask this favor of someone else. For a moment I saw a stunned, speechless expression on his face and then he became invisible to me.

A week later this young man approached me, blocked my path and handed me a piece of paper. He said he was sorry and the paper would explain. I never saw him again. The poem was "To Linda, Who Slapped Me In the Face With Her Beauty"...It had phrases like ..."blessings of blackness", "soft skin tones of black gold", "a 4-real smile", "sincerity", "love n respect". In 15 seconds a stranger conveyed a multitude of affirmations and validations that were in stark contrast to the messages I received during my eight years with the Center. I don't know that a white male could conceive such imagery of a black woman, although there's a place in Holy Scriptures in the Song of Solomon where a Jew refers to his black love with words of adoration. Of course, that is a totally different context. I was still in the habit of saying hello to those who continued to shun me. Then, two months later I received another poem from a different unrelated black male who I didn't know, also about me as an attractive woman.

These two gifts were more precious than diamonds because they spoke to my femaleness and blackness in a way that was sorely lacking in the

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> Center environment. It would be an impossible task for the Center to supply and fulfill all of its members basic needs. For some of these needs to be fulfilled, one had to go "outside" the Center's circle of influence. But we were discouraged from doing so...Being a small organization with limited staff and economic resources, the Center could not possibly tackle all of the community's social ills. At times I was unable to focus on the organizational task before me, because basic needs were not met. For some, the problem wasn't a disagreement over ideological principle or social platforms. The principles and platforms simply didn't address their very basic needs.

Thomas remembers:

> The Harpur Group spent a lot of time talking about things other people took for granted, continuing stuff on male-female relations, interracial relationships, self-esteem issues on sex, and how to deal with conflict. We tried to pin each other down on issues and deal with tensions within the group. The quality of our interaction was always up for discussion and we helped one another about our classes. It was a good opportunity to see how with conflict you can have growth and explore new places where people hadn't been in terms of awareness of things. Also, I developed tremendous respect for Anita, Beth T., Linda and Joanne. My respect for women increased tremendously during that experience. We valued and tried to preserve and improve our interpersonal relationships.

Thomas' and Linda's evaluations about their personal experience at Harpur more than 20 years later diverge considerably, based in part on the differences between what needs they felt most intensely at the time as a black young man and particular individual and as a black young woman and a particular individual, and, in part upon their subsequent experience. They were young people as were their comrades in the group and the memories of all of them overlap considerably even though it has been decades since most of them have talked to one another. All of them, for example remember well the incidents described above and how they felt about them. All of them remember the on-going discussions within their group about problems in their relationships to one another, including their own racial tensions. Their general sense is that they liked one

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another and felt that they knew one another very well, although they did not feel they made their closest friends within the group.

What they are not in a position to assess well are the subjective reactions to them, of other black and white students on campus, or the dynamics of their impact upon the TWC students as a group, or the immediate impact of their experience upon them. I remember, however, as someone 10-12 years older than they were, being struck by the difference between how I remembered them before their experience and how they appeared to me in 1972-73. They seemed secure, polite and respectful in their relationships to one another. They seemed more serious and secure about themselves. Their judgements and way of thinking about problems, their patience and ability to listen to others were all much more finely tuned. They evinced a centeredness about them, at least temporarily, that was unusual for anyone and less so for young adults. The poems Linda received for example, may have been made possible by the dissolution of the TWC, by the fact that she was no longer seen as an enemy, by the stature she had acquired on her campus, but also because she glowed as a person and as a young woman. She was in no position to imagine that, nor were any of the others.[5]

Reflections On The Harpur College Experience

Assessing the campaign on the Third World Corridors is more complicated. U.C.C. wanted to create a public space at Harpur to challenge the implications of black separatism. The purposes of this challenge were to involve black and white students in a process of integrated education and to lay a basis for the creation of integrated struggle for broader common goals. To open up space for that discussion, to change the

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relationship between white and minority students on campus, and to create integrated struggle, the College Group initiated a campaign to eliminate the Third World Corridor. In order to examine further the problems that U.C.C. faced, I want to borrow, with a little stretching, the model of democratic discourse that Jurgen Habermas (1990) develops in his discussions of discourse ethics.

Discourse ethics is intended to articulate a procedure for democratic conflict resolution or negotiation in "complex society" with a constant need for legitimation in various institutional arenas (Arato and Cohen 1982). But, it also seems appropriate as a model for discourse *within* an effort (i.e., *among potential members*) to build a movement that seeks to extend democratic participation in the state and social control over the economy and to generate new norms to govern the relationships among groups marked by social difference. In discourse ethics, the criteria -- by which participants are supposed to be guided in practical discourses -- for arriving at a valid consensus on social norms refer to the universal and necessary rules and communicative presuppositions that make it possible for participants in a practical discourse to arrive at a rationally motivated consensus (Arato and Cohen 1988; Cohen 1988). A rationally motivated consensus is one dependent entirely upon the force of the better argument, not power relations. The criteria are rather demanding and extensive [including the right of every speaker with the competence to speak and act to take part;; and, the right of each to initiate new topics, question every assertion, and express his/her desires, attitudes and needs (R. Alexey 1990: 163-177)] but it is not necessary to elaborate these here. More to our point is Habermas' (1990: 63-64). analysis of the nature of presupposed validity

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claims in communicative interaction:

> I call interactions 'communicative' when the participants coordinate their plans of action consensually, with the agreement reached at any point being evaluated in terms of the intersubjective recognitions of validity claims. In cases where agreement is reached through explicitly linguistic processes, the actors make three different claims to validity in their speech acts as they come to an agreement with one another about something. Those claims are claims to truth, claims to rightness, and claims to truthfulness, depending on whether the speaker refers to something in the objective world (as the totality of the existing state of affairs), to something in the shared social world (as the totality of the legitimately regulated interpersonal relationships of a social group), or to something in his own subjective world (as the totality of experiences to which one has privileged access). Further, I distinguish between communicative and strategic action. Whereas *in strategic action* one actor seeks to influence the behavior of another by means of threat or sanctions or the prospect of gratifications, in order to cause the interaction to continue as the first actor desires, *in communicative action* , one actor seeks to motivate another rationally by relying on the illocutionary binding/bonding effect of the offer contained in his speech act.
>
> *The fact that a speaker can rationally motivate a hearer to accept such an offer is due not to the validity of what he says but to the speaker's guarantee that he will, if necessary, make efforts to redeem the claim that the hearer has accepted.* It is this guarantee that effects the coordination between speaker and hearer. In the case of claims to truth or rightness, the speaker can redeem his guarantee discursively, that is, by adducing reasons; in the case of claims to truthfulness he does so through consistent behavior. (*One can convince someone that he means what he says only through his actions, not by giving reasons.*) As soon as the hearer accepts the guarantee offered by the speaker, obligations are assumed that have consequences for the interaction, obligations that are contained in the meaning of what was said. [My emphases.]

Briefly, Habermas is saying that claims to truth or rightness can be justified discursively in the course of communicative interaction by referring to the objective world (including the social world) and interpretations of it, and by providing reasons. Claims to truthfulness can only be validated after the discussion is over by consistent action that demonstrates the speaker's sincerity and truthfulness. What I wish to

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emphasize here, in a way that Habermas does not, is how dependent the acceptance of claims to truth and rightness are upon the acceptance of claims to truthfulness. If hearers in group B do not accept the speakers in group A's claims to truthfulness, for reasons based on rational distrust it is unlikely that B will accept A's discursively backed claims to truth or rightness. Reasons for rational distrust may include B's beliefs about A's self-interest or insincerity, or what B believes about A's lack of self-knowledge, or A's apparent inability to understand B's situation or perspective (Baier 1986). Given this distrust, it becomes unlikely that agreements about the objective world, or normative agreements affecting their relationship to one another or on political issues affecting both parties will be reached.

This situation would especially be the case when the distrust felt by members of one group is historically constituted by the experience of oppression by another group some of whose members are urging dialogue. As in the history of the working class movement, for example, a part of that oppressed group not only doubted the ability of the ruling class to conduct a dialogue, it had good, that is, rational reasons for assuming that each attempt on its part to enter into dialogue with the ruling class would only serve as an opportunity for the ruling class to strengthen its domination (Habermas, 1973). Similarly, Baier (1986) writes, women and blacks "cannot ignore the virtues of watchful distrust and of judicious untrustworthiness". Distrust and defensiveness on the part of members of oppressed groups are rational. Therefore, any speaker or group of speakers seeking to persuade members of oppressed groups of the truth of their interpretations of the world and of the need to join with them in acting upon the rightness of their political

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direction must assume and address the problem of their own questionable truthfulness as perceived by the persons of the oppressed groups they are trying to organize. This does not mean that the problem of trust must be solved in some transforming moment before discussions or action about anything else begins, nor does it mean that trust is either there or not, whole or nothing. But, it does mean that an interracial, majority white group's (like the U.C.C. students') efforts to challenge, persuade, and organize blacks must assume the problem of historically constituted distrust and deliberately and continuously attend to it.

To accomplish trust, the group's activities must be persuasive in three dimensions: it must *act* in consistency with the claims to sincerity it makes; it must demonstrate its respect for the people whose ideas and self-understanding it seeks to change; and it must demonstrate its ability to understand the situation and perspective of the people it seeks to organize. The U.C.C. students at Harpur College tried to be consistent in creating a space for the discussion of opposing philosophies of integration and separatism. They tried to be consistent, even militant, in how they pursued their campaign to urge the closing down of the Third World Corridor. They tried to demonstrate respect for the black and white students they sought to organize. They initiated and conducted discussions of issues among black and white students that would not otherwise have occurred. And, they tried to demonstrate their understanding of the situation and perspective of the people they tried to organize.

As Joanne K. put it decades later, "The thing I value most about the Center was that you were pushed to imagine and understand the experience of people from their

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perspective whose social experiences and backgrounds were different, and I learned how to do it. You have to keep learning how to do this. Also, it brought me into contact with black and Puerto Rican people with whom I would not have had any interaction." Nevertheless, it was in this dimension of "imagining the experience of others from their perspective" and theoretically incorporating a structural understanding of race that the U.C.C. Harpur students were weakest and not only because their efforts were restricted by the limitations of their youthful experience and understanding, and less than fully developed intellectual perspective. The failure was in the perspective of the U.C.C.

Despite their efforts, the group did not succeed and probably could not have succeeded in winning acceptance of their ideas. They not only faced historically constituted distrust which they might have been able to overcome in time. They also faced a movement motivated by the rational desire of a dishonored and oppressed group for liberation -- to define "our" needs and interests, assert our dignity, be true to ourselves and determine our own destiny -- that had been politically and culturally interpreted as a set of fundamental "needs" to be socially and politically separate.[6]

That dignity and social self-determination could not be achieved for all and much less for all blacks within a capitalist economy and state that required exploitation and inequality was beside the point. In the nationalist/separatist perspective, it was racist domination that imposed inferiority and stole dignity not capitalism, and the resistance to racism that provided meaning. This set of culturally and politically interpreted needs was adopted by black students and felt as their identity. Any challenge to the "need-interpretations" of the separatist nationalist movement was interpreted/felt as a challenge

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to the core of black identity and a renewed effort to oppress. In other words, the Harpur students confronted a political and cultural interpretation of past and current black experience that defined a call for integrated and class-oriented struggle as manipulation and anyone who supported such a call as inherently untrustworthy because they were whites and "Toms". In the absence of an integrated labor- based movement for class-oriented goals, the U.C.C. arguments about social structures other than racism (and, resistance to racism in particular forms, which alone constituted the integrity of black identity) -- the truths of class structure and the dynamics of capitalist economy, or the rightness of integrated education and struggle on class-oriented issues -- were seen at best as unbelievable words, and more often as inimical to black interests.

If this makes sense, then the inadequacy of U.C.C.'s perspective can be seen as two-fold. U.C.C.'s theoretical understanding did not appreciate the deep rationality of the desire for black liberation because it did not see that within capitalism there were *social structures* of power, conflict and domination other than class, in this instance, racial status. And, the U.C.C. did not adequately distinguish between pedagogical and strategic forms of political action. U.C.C. emphasized and valued the need to deal with difference, for politically instrumentalist and philosophical reasons. But, its inadequate structural analysis of the lived experience of race generated an insensitivity to the rational and cultural impulse for protection, to defeat racism and to assert dignity. Based partly upon its experience and primarily upon its incomplete analysis, U.C.C. saw only the results of separatism, as irrational or attached to vested interests or accommodating to the capitalist status quo, that is, as blocking what it regarded as a transparent need for

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integrated struggle for class goals. The result, in the Harpur struggle -- especially at the beginning -- was that the U.C.C. students often acted and spoke arrogantly and rigidly in how they struggled. Had they possessed a structural and dynamic analysis of racial status, they would have been more alert to the meanings behind the TWC and the irrational rejection of political economic analysis and integrated struggle that they perceived. Doubtless they would have started off differently.

In my interview with Joanne K., who chaired the group, she posed an alternative to how the Harpur students struggled which presupposes the rationality and legitimacy of the black students' motivations:

> The TWC were an outgrowth of people groping towards some understanding of identity and what it means to be a minority group in a predominantly white society. It was incredibly arrogant to continue to use the term Negro. The whole issue of the TWC exhibited a kind of arrogance. In the whole society, not just in that school, people were struggling to address these issues and because they didn't address it in line with the way we thought was the sensible and right solution, well then you can't live there.
>
> There is a way to raise issues about identity and race, and the lack of alternatives and forums in the educational community to bring people together so that there can be a sharing of ideas. I mean to go at it in a way to attack the way other people are trying to struggle rather than offer more positive alternatives is the height of arrogance. What is your problem? There was no process. Ultimately people may struggle in a way that you think is destructive and you may ultimately have to challenge the particular manifestations of that struggle but not without engaging in a process where you are trying to raise issues and find solutions.
>
> Given how ideologically restrictive the TWC were, number one you start out with a campaign on tuition and budget cuts. Part of it was class and part of it was race. The tuition issue was important because the universities were just white middle class bastions and what kind of education was that. It was parochial, and limiting and blah, blah, blah, and ...it was important to widen our education and to widen access for people of less income meant you raise those issues. That is a much better starting point. There were a lot

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> of people attracted to that. From there it is easier to begin to raise issues about whether, if you want this, and we think this is valid, how can we create on campus and in the classrooms what we need so it can come to fruition for everyone. You engage in that discussion with other people. Or you can approach the black studies programs and other programs to set up these possibilities jointly.
>
> We later tried to set this up, but once you have set yourself as the attackers and are seen as people's enemies, it's very hard to succeed after that. At the time I know that I believed that what we were doing was right.

I think the alternative posed by this former U.C.C. student represents a way of organizing that is based on recognizing the distinction between the rational impulse and its actualization in a defensive form.[7] The first actions of the Harpur group were not made with these distinctions in mind. To see the problem here we need to make a distinction between different kinds of political action. For organizers to accomplish trust among others *seen as potential colleagues in struggle*, and to persuade them of the theoretical correctness and normative rightness of their position, they must foreswear *strategic action* in which "one actor seeks to influence the behavior of another by means of threat or sanctions".[8] Threats, force, the promise of rewards and punishment, the enlistment of the power of the state may move people to act differently, and may even in the long run create new opportunities for interaction, based upon ideas that were once rejected but which become seen as more acceptable. That was certainly one purpose and hope in the struggle for desegregated schools in the south. In the short run, however, strategic action does not seek to change values or self-understanding. It merely seeks to move people externally, that is to change normative behavior in a context structured by power, punishment and reward. Here the distinction between strategic action and

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pedagogical action, is critical. Strategic action is action that is directed at "opponents".

Pedagogical action is directed at "potential colleagues". It seeks to persuade them to change their view of the world and their political direction, and to deepen their political and social self-understanding by accounting for the forces that shape their lives through a process that combines communicative action and other experience. Pedagogical action unavoidably theoretically presupposes the superiority of the understanding of organizers to the understanding of those who are being organized with respect to their organizing goals and means, e.g., in this instance, with respect to the structure of society, the nature of social struggle, the proper political direction, and even the necessary identity and self-understanding (the common grounds) of the people being organized. At the same time, in pedagogical action, organizers need to recognize both that their presupposed superiority is fictive and in need of on-going correction, and that, in the long run, the confirmation of their theory and how they organize depends upon the response of those they are seeking to organize (Habermas 1973).

Political movements initially confine pedagogical action to the members of groups whose situation of interest can be distinguished from the interests of likely opponents according to the theory of the movement organizers. Often, however, as at Harpur among the black and white students, it may be difficult to distinguish the members of the group -- including the indifferent, the skeptical, the pessimistic, and the parochial -- who might be willing to examine alternative ideas from opponents who may be held captive by ideology and individual or collective self-interest. This difficulty led the U.C.C. to pursue a program which held contradictory assumptions. On the one hand,

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at first, the U.C.C. students assumed that the black student support of the corridors was grounded in the separatist ideological homogeneity of the black students. The U.C.C. students saw the TWC as both the organizational basis and rallying point for the defense of separatist ideology and a palpable gate that separated black and white experience on campus. U.C.C. wanted to break down this barrier. In those senses, the black students who supported the TWC, i.e., all of them, were seen as opponents. On the other hand, the U.C.C. assumed that all the black students were potential colleagues in struggle. U.C.C. hoped to provoke participation in discussion of alternative ideas the result of which would be that black and white students would be persuaded to see the sense of the U.C.C. position.

The U.C.C. group's effort to enlist the power of the Board of Regents to enforce civil rights law achieved by the civil rights movement (which they did not announce on campus) and their unilaterally formulated call for the elimination of the TWC were forms of strategic action. U.C.C.'s unilateral call -- before it made the efforts Joanne K. discussed above --to eliminate the Corridors saw the corridors simply as an obstacle, not also as the crystallized shell of the black students', and a larger black movement's hunger for liberation. U.C.C. needed to see both. By not adequately distinguishing between opponents and potential colleagues among the black students, and by not adequately distinguishing among the impulses that governed the setting up and maintenance of the TWC, the U.C.C. group did not adequately distinguish between its own pedagogical and strategic forms of action. It may be that U.C.C.'s strategic actions against its enemy intensified distrust and contributed to mobilizing black students' loyalty behind the

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Corridors. In addition, by its strategic actions, the U.C.C. probably fostered social group closure processes that solidified the status of the few black students least willing to deal with ideas, and most willing to act nastily and even violently to defend the Corridors.

If they had started out pedagogically as Joanne describes above, could they have achieved different results? Maybe, a little, but, not much. The CCNY students started out that way but were no more successful in creating processes of integrated education than the students at Harpur. No more students joined their group than one might expect given their situation in the City close to the Brooklyn Center. But, here it is important to stress that the U.C.C. students at Harpur were persistent in their organizing activities in the realm of pedagogical action. Their theory may have produced close-minded, arrogance, and insensitivity to the lived experience of blacks students. But, their theory also propelled them, however blunderingly at first, into struggle with the black and white students. Their theory and philosophy (and the support they provided one another) moved beyond them beyond their own fear, defensiveness and insularity, and their acute distress at being labeled as racists and Toms. They did create public spaces for the discussion of integration that would not otherwise have occurred. At the end, their reluctant nerviness and stalwart efforts over time -- including their persistent individual and group discussions with black and white students, their willingness to expose themselves to violence, the demonstration that U.C.C. black and Puerto Rican adults supported them, and their no tuition campaign -- enabled the U.C.C. students to change the perception that they were anti-black. Many black and white students developed respect for them. Some of the U.C.C. students, whites included, developed relationships,

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not friendships, with a few black and white students who had initially opposed them and that went beyond argumentative exchange. Ultimately, they succeeded in winning support among a number of white students and a few black students for their no tuition campaign and for some of their other social and cultural efforts. Painfully, they created for themselves and other students an experience in integrated education. They learned more about race, about their own limitations and about other people both because of their theory and despite their theory. As Thomas recalled:

> What sustained me was that people in the group were trying to look out for me. Also, I didn't quit because I knew they [others] were wrong... The richness of difference was real, not just words... Experience for me was the most powerful teacher. My prior experience in camp and the Center, not any intellectual arguments alone, were powerful and persuasive.

Another Generation Created

At the end of the college student struggles, the U.C.C. Board's and executive director's decision to try to create another generation had been achieved. 14 of the 33 members (13 white and one black) of the College Groups subsequently chose to live in ENY (2 for only two years, 12 for five to 20 years) where they volunteered at the Center, began to raise their families and send their children to the community's public schools. Only two of these 14 had parents who had ever been active in the Center. While they lived in East New York, most were effective in providing leadership within the Center and in the community. They eventually assumed positions on the Board of Directors, led various fund-raising and program committees, assumed leadership positions in the summer camp, and took on major responsibilities for the newspaper and for social action

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campaigns in the community. Based upon their training, educational backgrounds, and organizational experience, and by their hard work and examples of lived commitment to interracial social living and struggle, they helped maintain the organization and persuade many non-white community residents to associate with the U.C.C.'s ideas and efforts.

ENDNOTES

1. The help of U.C.C. Board members and adult volunteers expressed an explicitly articulated value with U.C.C.: the importance of the relationship between youth and adults including the capacity of youth and adults, college students and their parents' generation to work together for common social goals. This included occasions when youth provided the leadership and the older generation supported them. This value was understood as a challenge to the traditionalist and paternalistic relation between youth and adults in which teaching and direction were a one-way street from parents to children. But it was also understood as a challenge to the ideology of the youth culture that was expressed in caricatured form by the motto, "Never trust anyone over 30", and to the New Left's failure to distinguish between authority and authoritarianism.

2. At the lunch break, Center staff supported the students' initiative but reminded them that the issue of race was never "trivial".

3. In fact, this is exactly what happened to black nationalism, and contributed, along with its crude racial determinism, to its total splintering, and combined with state repression, led to its destruction as a political movement. Marable (1984:162) writes that "The struggle between competing tendencies of black nationalism became increasingly fratricidal. Organizations collapsed beneath the weight of polemics..." Carson (1994:5) writes that "...black power advocates, assuming that ideological conversion and cultural training were necessary preconditions for effective racial struggle, arrogantly sought to 'raise' the black masses to a predetermined level of consciousness. Narrowly conceived, purist, or 'blacker than thou' ideological formulations that were intended to unify African Americans instead divided them."

4. When the Workingmen's Party, unionists, social reformers and educational leaders fought for the establishment of the Free Academy (later the College of the City of New York) in 1847, the opposition argued that a Free Academy would be "onerous to city finances [and} injurious to institutions of learning already established" especially Columbia College [Morning Courier and Enquirer, February 2, 1847, quoted in Rothbard (1982:32)]. In 1948, when plans to establish SUNY were being completed, "opponents were quick to argue that many private institutions would be forced to close in the face of

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competition from a state university" (SUNY Office of University Affairs 1985). The conflict over public and private purses between the supporters of public higher education and the supporters of private higher education has a long history. In recent decades, the supporters of public higher education have turned away from this issue, but the supporters of private higher education have not.

5. Fifteen years later, when I met a South African young man in his mid-20s, a member of the African National Congress in exile in the U.S., who had been a leader as a teenager in the Soweto uprisings, his emotional maturity, openness, and political and intellectual engagement reminded me of the Harpur students at the end of their struggle.

6. Even at the height of the separatist influence as a total ideology, most African Americans did not buy the whole package, and it was always far more dominant upon campuses than within more disparate black communities. African Americans over the age of 30 did not automatically surrender beliefs in integration they had developed over decades. Black workers continued to join trade unions, i.e., class vehicles for struggle; black parents continued to support and desire integrated schools for their children; and, of course, blacks supported integrated workplaces, even as many blacks sympathized with and adopted elements of the newly elaborated black ethnicity.

7. It is hard to resist reminding the reader that the same positions , the same arguments and the same ideas of race versus class, of particularist versus universalist goals are being argued today in many quarters as though they comprised a fresh and relevant analysis. More than anything, I think the experience of U.C.C. points to the need for developing a theoretical analysis that accounts for class and racial structuring (and other structures), and for a political strategy, based on this analysis, that begins with the presumption of the need to organize blacks and whites together without burying difference.

Proponents of 'radical democracy' voluntaristically urge the coming together of different groups based on a recognition of their common desire to struggle against domination. But, they provide no theoretical account of how their differences are produced, reproduced and connected and no philosophical ground for the critical processes that might enable different others to remain together in struggle. Every effort falls apart. There have been plenty of critical analyses of the way in which economistic Marxism neglected other structures of power and domination, including this dissertation. But, as far as I know there has never been a systematic historical, philosophical and political economic critique of the black nationalist/separatist position of this period which so much influenced the ideological forms of subsequent movements.

8. The following is my effort to draw out the implications of the above long quote from Habermas (1990).

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CHAPTER XIII

A SOCIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE PROBLEM OF THEORIZING RACE AS A STRUCTURED PROCESS

In this chapter, I reflect upon the concept of "race", a key element, in addition to "class", of U.C.C.'s theoretical and historical perspective. Despite U.C.C.'s continuous emphasis upon the racially governed attitudes and experience that produced conflict within the organization and with other organizations, U.C.C.'s theoretical paradigm did not incorporate a theory of race and racism as a *socially structured process* analytically and empirically distinct from, but related to economic, political and ethnic processes. In the late sixties and early seventies, both the advocates of the "institutional racism" argument [e.g., Carmichael (Ture) and Hamilton 1967] and the "internal colony" argument (e.g., Blauner 1972) were advancing rudimentary structural accounts of racism. Both perspectives emphasized the systemic nature of racism and white privilege; both insisted upon processes of racial oppression and resistance as the fundamental dynamic in U.S. society; and, both regarded race as the primary social axis along which political directions were and ought to be aligned.[1] But, U.C.C.'s fundamental disagreements with the philosophy of separatism and the theoretical gaps of the nationalist analyses prevented the organization's leaders from disentangling the conceptualization of racial structuring that these positions implied from their political directions. U.C.C. faulted both positions for their neglect of political economy and class analysis, including the class structuring of the African American population and the class basis for conflicting political interests among whites. The dominant institutional racism and internal colony

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perspectives (with the exception of some Left Nationalist advocates)ignored class struggle as a primary dynamic in American history.[2]

U.C.C.'s opposition to the political directions of pluralistic political separatism and secessionist black nationalism that it perceived to be the respective implications of the institutional racism and internal colony arguments was the logical product of its aim to build class-based and class-identified movement toward class-oriented goals that could address the mounting attack on the working class, construed in Marxian terms. And, U.C.C.'s philosophical valuing of the "richness of difference," cross-cultural interchange as a source of learning and growth, and the unitary nature of the human community required its rejection of a politics that defended separatism in social life and political action.

Without an understanding of race as a socially structuring process, however, U.C.C. was unable to understand the black movement as a status group revolt -- in both its civil rights and black power phases. Consequently, it could not admit consideration of status specific aims or cope with the new black ethnicity. I argue that Max Weber's conceptualization of status as an historically dynamic process of groups in power struggles for social honor, motivated most often, but not only by a desire to secure economic privilege, would have been a useful analytical complement to U.C.C.'s class analysis.

The Problem of Theorizing Race As A Structured Process

U.C.C.'s perspective could not conceptualize race as a structured process. By the term structured process I mean to capture the historical and spatial extensions of patterns

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of practice whose rules are embodied in practices and in the minds of individuals who accomplish the practices. According to Giddens (1984:17), "social systems as reproduced social practices do not have 'structures' but rather exhibit 'structural properties'... The most deeply embedded structural properties, implicated in the reproduction of societal totalities, I call structural principles. Those practices which have the greatest time-space extension within such totalities can be referred to as *institutions*." I use the term structured process in the sense that Giddens defines 'institution', to refer to the way in which race and racism have suffused and been shaped by central U.S. institutions such as the economy and polity, and to the ways in which race and racism have been patterned, reproduced or changed over time by people who have accommodated to and resisted these patterns.

U.C.C. did not have a concept of race as a structured process but its leadership did think about the relationships between race, class and ethnicity. In this section, I will discuss some of the ideas that were current in the 1930s and 1940s on the Left in order to indicate the kind of thinking that shaped the perspective of the U.C.C. leadership. I will briefly discuss William Z. Foster's ideas and then examine Oliver C. Cox's analysis. I then show how W.E.B. DuBois' concept of caste disagrees with Cox's concept and coincides with Max Weber's conception (who may have borrowed from DuBois) of caste and status. I examine Max Weber's analysis of status groups as an analytic concept that would have been useful for U.C.C. and can still be useful to resolve some of the current theoretical difficulties in sociology where race and racism are too frequently understood either exclusively in political economic terms (e.g., Reich 1981,1986; Bonacich

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1972,1976,1980; Lieberson 1980; Wilson 1978 and 1980) or conflated with ethnicity and culture (e.g., Glazer and Moynihan 1963; Parsons 1965; Alexander 1988; Turner 1988), or perceived as a social phenomenon of its own kind (e.g., Omi and Winant, 1986).

I choose William Z. Foster as an exemplar of Left thinking on race in the 1930s and 1940s for two reasons. First, and above all, Foster was a Communist *organizer* not a theorist, and his thinking is a good representation of the prevailing Left view of race among Left organizers. Second, it is generally acknowledged by labor historians that the American Communists did more to advance racial equality in the 1930s and early 1940s than any group other than African American workers themselves. The communists pressed the "Negro Question" far more continuously than noncommunist leftists such as the socialists, who were equally committed to solidaristic organizing. The reason for their courageous persistence was partly theoretical. Beginning in 1929, the Comintern defined U.S. Negroes as an oppressed nation. Lenin had stressed in his thinking on imperialism that capitalism created inequalities among nations as well as classes and Stalin had argued that a colonized people's anger at imperialist exploitation might be directed down revolutionary roads to intensify the global class struggle (Gerstle 1993). However, at the same time that the communist conception of blacks as a nation inspired their focus on the Negro Question, the "national" position was not emphasized in the organizing work that communists accomplished. In actual organizational work in the 1930s and 1940s, the communist emphasis was upon interracial organizing to build a unified working class movement (Record 1971; Browder 1936). Foster shared

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leadership of the U.S. Communist Party until 1934 and then replaced Earl Browder as executive secretary in 1944.

Foster saw racism as a 'divide and conquer' strategy consciously and deliberately initiated by ruling capitalists and adopted by the white working class against their interests. A typical form of this argument was made by Foster (1947:81) in 1929:

> "It has long been *the policy of the employers to draw a line between white and black workers, to set one group against the other in order to better exploit them, to cultivate the worst forms of race prejudice among the white.* They have deliberately and systematically discriminated against the Negroes, giving them the worst work, the lowest wages, and subjecting them to the most brutal repression.
>
> Were the A.F. of L. leaders imbued with even a semblance of real working class spirit they would take it upon themselves as a first and basic task to defeat the plans of the employers by organizing Negroes and by mobilizing the whole labor movement behind their elementary demands. But they utterly refuse to do this. On the contrary, *true to their role as agents of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the workers,* they fall in line with the program of the employers and join hands with them to oppress the Negroes. *They cultivate race chauvinism among the white,* they prohibit Negroes from joining unions, they co-operate with the employers to keep the Negroes at the poorest paid jobs. All this constitutes one of the most shameful pages in American labor history...
>
> The Negro workers are good fighters. This they have proved in innumerable strikes in the coal, steel, packing, building and other industries, despite systematic betrayal by white union leaders and the presence of an all too prevalent race chauvinism among the masses of white workers. They are a tremendous source of potential revolutionary strength and vigor. They have a double oppression as workers and as Negroes, to fill them with fighting spirit and resentment against capitalism. (My emphases.)[3]

For Foster, racism was not only a function of capitalism, it was the product of deliberate action by the capitalist class to set one group against the other in order to exploit them better. The unwillingness of the A.F. of L. 'misleaders' to organize Negroes

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reflected their role as agents of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the workers. Aside from the fact that this account portrayed white workers as imbued with "false consciousness", it deliberately neglected a long history (that Foster knew) of white working class resistance to interracial organizing as well as organized white working class initiatives to maintain and reinforce racism in the labor market. The Left believed that the 'stupid irrationality' of the white working class was corrigible through the educational force of ideological struggle and participation in actual cross-racial struggles for common interests. The problem of white working class racism was acknowledged as an organizing problem but typically ignored as a central analytical problem.[4]

Cox's systematic sociological effort to theorize the relationship of Caste, Class and Race (1948) was far more sophisticated. I choose Cox to examine for several reasons. First, Cox's book was published in 1948 and the U.C.C. leadership knew his work. I do not mean to suggest that the U.C.C.'s perspective derived from Cox. Rather, I think that both derived from the same Left intellectual milieu. Second, Cox's analysis was for a long time widely thought of as *the* Marxist analysis of race, and a classic sociological analysis mainly because "it is the most substantive study which attempts to utilize concepts such as class and exploitation in order to explain the role of 'race' and racism in capitalist societies" (Solomos 1986:.87). In saying that, I do not mean to suggest that other Marxist analyses of the period were not important, in particular, the work of C.L.R. James, and the extensive discussions about race in the mid-1940s in Political Affairs, the U.S.C.P. theoretical journal. Third, overall, Cox's work has two principal foci. Against the work of W. Lloyd Warner and many others, he argues that

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race relations cannot be understood in terms of caste. And, second, he argues that race relations and racial prejudice are neither inevitable nor eternal. They develop with capitalism, are perpetuated by capitalists, and can be resolved only by eliminating capitalism and moving toward a socialist society. In his arguments, Cox's work illustrates four unresolved problems that burdened Marxist analyses of race as well as the sociological literature of the period and reflected the problems of the U.C.C. analysis. These problems are: *the dismissal of categories of caste and status as useful complements to class analysis; the conflation of race and ethnicity; the reduction of race to class; and, the refusal to treat working class racism as a central analytical problem.*

Warner (1936:235) defined caste as a "theoretical arrangement of the people of the given group in an order in which the privileges, duties, obligations, opportunities are unequally distributed between the groups which are considered to be higher and lower", where cross-caste marriage is not sanctioned and where members cannot move between higher and lower groups. Warner (1936:237) recognized that the political behavior of the South, including the unequal distribution of school funds, the operation of the courts and the police, and the unequal distribution of privileges in all social institutions in the South all "reflect the same conscious or unconscious maintenance of control by the supraordinate white caste". But, his central argument in the article Cox cites, and the one Cox addresses, Warner contradicted his argument about caste as a means for controlling Negroes. Warner pointed out that the elaboration of economic, educational, and general social activities of the Negro caste since slavery had created a definite class structure

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among Negroes. He then imagined the possibility of further development to the extent that the Negro class structure becomes equivalent and equal to that of the white caste, a situation in which the castes would be parallel societies separated by the color line. He even cited W.E.B. DuBois who was at that moment supporting separate development of the races, although without mentioning that DuBois lost his job with the assimilationist/ integrationist NAACP for precisely that reason.

It is based on his opposition to Warner's main argument which Cox regards as preposterous that Cox opposes the conceptualization of Negro-white relations in the South as caste relations. The first long part of Cox's book is devoted to a discussion of caste in India, a discussion which Louis Dumont (1966,1980: 255), in his noted and lengthy study of the Indian caste system declared was "infinitely truer than that with which Warner was satisfied". Cox argued (1948,1970:489-508) that people like Warner and John Dollard had an inadequate understanding of caste because they selected one or two elements like the prohibition on intermarriage, or birth-ascribed status that forbids upward or downward movement, or the existence of a ritualized etiquette governing cross-racial interaction and based on these few elements conceptualized Negro-white relations as a caste system. Cox points out that endogamy, non-commensality, non-connubium, and other marks of social distinction are common characteristics of all situations of superiority or inferiority or super-ordination-subordination relationship. Even more important, for Cox was that the "race-caste assumption...has no way of confronting the real dynamics of race relations." It saw these relations as essentially a matter of social differentiation, not power and exploitation. It ignored the basic function

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of segregation which was to deny political and economic opportunity to Negroes in order to exploit their labor more effectively, not merely to keep the races apart. "It presumes that the white man is protecting his color and the Negro is equally interested in protecting his, so that with the ballot in the hands of Negroes and with the opportunity for cultural participation open to them as normal citizens, the black code which keeps the races segregated will still be the law of the South." It did not recognize the overwhelming aspiration among Negroes for equality of social opportunity, the absence of which is "so vital to the caste order that ...it is definitely incompatible with a caste system. (498)." For Cox,

> Castes, estates and social classes [unlike 'political-class' and 'ethnic relations' belong to or comprise status systems of socially superior and inferior persons. These systems are peaceful, and degrees of superiority are taken for granted according to the normal expectations of the system. Lower-status persons are not preoccupied with ways and means of demoting their superiors. When these systems are functioning at their best, social acts recognizing degrees of superiority in the status hierarchy are yielded with ...alacrity (318-319).

For Cox, none of this was true of race relations in the U.S. where Negroes were aware of their oppression, resisted when possible, and aspired to social equality and assimilation in accordance with the nation's democratic ideology. As Dumont (1966,1980:255) described it, Cox "makes the essential point: the Indian system is a coherent social system based on the principle of inequality [which is accepted by all] , while the American 'color bar' contradicts the egalitarian system within which it occurs and of which it is a kind of disease".

It is important to be clear about the nature of Cox's disagreement. Both Cox and

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Warner, and also, Dumont, conceptualized caste as a system in which deeply shared values and consensus rather than power and conflict are the bases for social ranking and separation. For both Warner and Cox, caste and 'social class' (as opposed to 'political class') are systems where degrees of superiority and inferiority are grounded in consensus, taken for granted and not challenged. Their disagreement was about whether caste as an analytical category applied to Negroes in the south where, as Cox insisted, power, exploitation and conflict were constitutive of race relations.

But, their notion of caste has been a contested one. Berreman (1972), for example, argued that Dumont's fundamental error was to mistake the idealized (ideological) justification of hierarchy based on purity-pollution premises in India with the actual functioning of its stratified social structure and system of social relations. Dumont's, and, by extension Cox's description of caste, according to Berreman, are ones that few low caste people would recognize or endorse; they would characterize their experience as closer to structured social inequality. Berreman argued that if one required of a caste system that its rationale and legitimacy be consensually accepted by its constituent groups, and that social tranquillity be a characteristic, then even Hindu India was without caste. "If one allows that a caste system is held together by power and the ability of people within it to predict fairly accurately one another's behavior while disagreeing on almost everything else", then caste applies to India, the Burakumin - Japanese relation, the Hutu-Tutsi relation in Rwanda [in 1972; See also Smith 1995), the Negro-white relation in the South as discussed by Cox, and many other systems of birth-ascribed stratification (Berreman 1972:18).

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I regard Cox's dismissal of caste as a useful analytic category for understanding the situation of Negroes in the South prior to WW II, based on his understanding that it did not refer to systems of power and conflict, as a theoretical error. As Berreman pointed out, power is as constitutive of caste as it is of any stratification system. By dismissing caste and status, Cox relinquished the complementary use of the separate categories of class and status which could fruitfully be used to examine race. Cox's dismissal required that he turn to analytical categories such as 'political class', or ethnicity, or understanding race as a stratification system *sui generis* in order to account for U.S. race relations, but his efforts in deploying class and ethnicity were similarly problematical.

Cox specified that societies are stratified by social class, political class and ethnicity, but only political class and ethnic relations constitute antagonistic regimes. Political classes are power groups organized for conflict. The two main political classes are the ruling class of capitalists and the workers both of whom are motivated by different socio-economic interests and are in conflict over the control of the state and the continuing existence of capitalism. Cox does not locate classes in the production process and he does not discuss exploitation in a Marxist sense as the appropriation of surplus value from workers. Although he recognized that political classes are not always class conscious, in the main, he defined them in terms of interests that will inevitably become conscious due to the operation of capitalism.

He also believed that societies are stratified by ethnic groups by which he meant groups living competitively in a relationship of superordination or subordination with

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respect to other peoples within a state or economic area. The two kinds of ethnic systems are distinguished by the culture of the ethnics, or according to physical features, i.e., race. Cultural or national ethnics and racial ethnics are both power groups and stand culturally or racially as potential or actual antagonists.

> The relationship between the political class regime and the ethnic regime is this: The aggressive political class aims at social disorder for the purpose of instituting a new order. Ethnics are peoples living in some state of antagonism, and their ambitions tend to vary with the situation. Some ethnics are intransigent; others seek or oppose assimilation; still others struggle for positions as ruling peoples. In political-class action, not only status groups but also ethnic groups may be split to take sides on the basis of their economic rather than their ethnic interests or status positions. On the contrary, ethnic antagonism may so suffuse other interests that political-class differences are constantly held in abeyance (ibid 318-319).

In the above passage, for Cox, status groups are not power groups. Rather, they are like Warner's social classes, based on the subjectively perceived allocation of prestige. While this passage clearly distinguishes between 'political-class' and ethnic/racial structures, Cox's main argument was directly contradictory, and pointed in another direction:

> But, the fact of crucial significance is that racial exploitation is merely one aspect of the problem of the proletarianization of labor, regardless of the color of the laborer. Hence racial antagonism is essentially political-class conflict. The capitalist exploiter, being opportunistic and practical, will utilize any convenience to keep his labor and other resources freely exploitable. He will devise and employ race prejudice when that becomes convenient (333).
>
> [Race relations]...are labor-capital-profits relationships; therefore, race relations are proletarian bourgeois relations and hence political-class relations (336).
>
> Although race relations and the struggle of the white proletariat with the bourgeoisie are parts of a single social phenomenon, race relations

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> involve a significant variation...the tendency of the bourgeoisie ...to proletarianize a whole people [i.e., Negroes] (344).

These latter three passages indicate the main thrust of Cox's argument, and exemplify his persistent reduction of race structure to class structure. There are two problems here. First, that racial exploitation is "merely one aspect of the proletarianization of labor" does not mean that the racial antagonism is reducible to or synonymous with "political-class relations." It is still necessary to explain what processes are involved other than proletarianization in order to account for the persistence of racial antagonism. Also, what Cox did not theorize, which Bonacich (1972) subsequently did , was that insofar as racial antagonism generates a split labor market with a lower wage rate for black workers, black and white workers are established as potential power groups with separate interests who see one another as antagonists. Second, by reducing race to class, Cox blocked the possibility of keeping separate class analysis and the analysis of racial structuring. It is this theoretical separation that makes possible an analysis of the dynamic relationship between class and political economy on the one hand and racial structuring and political economy on the other, including being able to examine the various economic and political conditions in which political class solidarity may override racial solidarity and vice versa . Further, this confused tangling of race and class obscures the recognition that while racist structures may disproportionately channel blacks into the working class and poverty, the shape of the class structure, and the existence of polar inequalities of income are functions of how capitalism operates. On the other hand, changes in capitalist economy

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and political constellations may make effective challenges to modify racist structures more possible. Of course, the nature and possibility of struggles and their impact upon the state and the economic structure are, in turn, affected by race relations.

Another problem in Cox's analysis is the distinction he makes between two kinds of ethnic regimes of antagonism: those distinguished by reference to physical characteristics as opposed to cultural characteristics. But, this distinction, so apparently amenable to common sense and much sociological literature is not sustainable upon examination . On the one hand, membership in a 'cultural' ethnic group is generally birth-ascribed, and super-ordinate ethnic groups tend to emphasize distinguishing physical differences among subordinate groups even when these physical differences are insignificant or non-existent. This was true of how American citizens saw the ante-bellum Irish immigrants and the Italians and Jewish immigrants at the turn of this past century, of how the Japanese see the Burakumin, and of how various castes saw one another in India. On the other hand, in any system of birth-ascribed status and stratification, where social groups are isolated from one another, distinctive status group *sub-cultures* develop. When members of lower status groups are excluded from participation in mainstream institutions and their social relations with superordinate groups are limited, they develop their own institutions, based, as Weber points out, upon distinct concepts of social honor. American blacks are not only a racial group, they also developed a distinct *ethnic sub-culture* in the course of hundreds of years of exclusion (See, e.g., Drake and Cayton 1945, 1993; Liebow 1969; A. Murray 1970 and 1976; Genovese 1972; Stack 1974).

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Overall, given what we know is the biological emptiness of the concept of race, it is probably time to rethink the distinction between race and ethnicity, despite the fact that like Cox, almost every current sociological textbook makes the distinction between racial groups marked by physical difference and ethnic groups defined in terms of distinct cultural practices. Weber's distinction between ethnic and status groups is probably more useful. For Weber, as I will discuss more fully below, ethnic groups marked by cultural difference are potential power groups whose relation to other ethnic groups is one of mutual repulsion and disdain (ethnocentrism and intolerance) but who exist on the same horizontal social plane. Status groups are also phenomena of power. Positively privileged status groups claim and successfully institutionalize on a societal scale, superordinate -subordinate relations (along a vertical plane) in order to differentially distribute social honor and secure political and economic monopolies that may or may not refer to physical differences. Cox cannot theorize this way because he has defined status and caste, like Warner, as phenomena that are apart from power and conflict.

Cox's strongest argument is in his detailed insistence that racial exploitation and race prejudice are explicitly historical phenomena that developed among Europeans "with the rise of capitalism and nationalism". Race prejudice, Cox writes, is "an attitudinal instrument of modern, human exploitation"

> The socioeconomic matrix of racial antagonism involved the commercialization of human labor in the West Indies, the East Indies and in America, the intense competition among businessmen of different western European cities for the capitalist exploitation of the resources of this area, the development of nationalism and the consolidation of European nations, and

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> the decline of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church with its mystical inhibitions to the free exploitation of economic resources (330).
>
> ...the slave trade was simply a way of recruiting labor for the purpose of exploiting the great natural resources of America...It was not an abstract, natural, immemorial feeling of mutual antipathy between groups, but rather a practical exploitative relationship with its socio-attitudinal facilitation...(332).
>
> The capitalist exploitation of the colored workers...consigns them to employments and treatment that is humanly degrading. In order to justify this treatment, the exploiters must argue that the workers are innately degraded and degenerate, consequently they merit their condition (324).

Basically, Cox's argument is that racial prejudice and race relations are functional for capitalism and capitalists because they permits the intensive and cheaper exploitation labor. As Miles (1980) points out, however, Cox's attribution of the *origins* of race prejudice to the efforts of white capitalists to ensure successful exploitation of a physically distinct population must be distinguished analytically from an argument about its *reproduction*. The origin of race prejudice does not explain why it persists, or its possible functions for groups other than capitalists. Aware of this problem, Cox in a footnote writes:

> In our description of the uses of race prejudice in this essay we are likely to give the impression that race prejudice is always 'manufactured' in full awareness by individuals or groups of entrepreneurs. This, however, is not the case. Race prejudice, from its inception , became part of the social heritage, and as such both exploiters and exploited for the most part are born heirs to it. It is possible that most of those who propagate and defend race prejudice are not conscious of its fundamental motivation (333).

In other words, the white working class may be racist because the behavior of white workers is 'naturally' determined by the social system. They are socialized into becoming racist. But, here Cox slides past two issues. For Cox, the "fundamental

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motivation", is to legitimate the exploitation of the labor of workers designated as racially inferior. But, if that is the 'fundamental' motivation, what other motivations are there and of how much significance for the white working class? In addition, even if racial prejudice as part of the dominant capitalist ideology has been part of the social heritage of the white working class, why were industrial workers, not only craft workers, inside and outside organized labor, so persistent through most of the century up to Cox's time, in blocking the admission of blacks into unions and blocking their access to jobs other than the most dangerous and lowest paying? Why was it so difficult to break them away from these prejudices?

The answer to these questions required theorizing other needs such as social honor and a sense of dignity, and other social structures such as status in order to account for the persistence of white working class racism. These were not questions that Cox asked as theoretical questions, for many of the same theoretical and historical reasons that U.C.C. neglected them. To ask the question about the deep and historically extensive racism of the white working class was to question the possibility of inter-racial, and therefore, effective class struggle for change. To question the working class' potential to fight for social transformation was to suggest the existence of other social structures, e.g., the institutionalized unequal distribution of social honor according to phenotypical difference i.e., racism, that shaped social practices, consciousness and solidarity as fundamentally as economic motives. This implied a challenge to economistic Marxism's identification of society and economy because it required admitting a complexity -- the racial structuring of experience and struggle -- that at

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different economic and political moments could be more politically powerful in producing solidarity than class. This was precisely the question that the U.C.C. representative quoted at the head of chapter IX could not admit.

All this meant going beyond an account of racism as only a function of capitalism and capitalist interest, and going beyond an account of racism as the rational expression of white working class economic interest within the constrictions imposed by capitalism.[5] What was needed was a conceptual perspective that could address the pervasive way in which race and racism, in different ways with different meanings, suffused the experience of all classes and social strata in the areas of the economy, the polity and everyday social interaction.[6]

Cox's book was published in 1948, around the same time as DuBois (quoted in chapter VI) was celebrating the positive achievements of the CIO for blacks. He assumed that class struggle would emerge as it had in the 1930s and as it had erupted in the strike-filled year, 1946. Cox ends his book by writing, "Negroes are auxiliary in the American proletarian struggle for power...", and ruling out the possibility of effective black struggle independent of class struggle, especially given the assimilationist goals of Negroes. Instead, he anticipates a relatively imminent "world proletarian struggle for democracy" in which "the problem of racial exploitation ...will most probably be settled" (582-583). Of course, that did not happen and Cox, along with many others was wrong. By assuming both the primacy of the political class struggle and the continuation of the labor struggles of the 1930s and 1940s, Cox scanted the analysis of racial structuring and the potential basis that racial structuring created, as Doxey Wilkerson (1946) and C.L.R.

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James (1948,1966) pointed out around the same time, for the development of the black struggle that emerged in the 1950s.[7]

Weber On Status

In this section I examine Max Weber's concept of 'status' in order to clarify what was missing from the U.C.C. analysis. Weber's concept of status would have been a useful complement to the U.C.C. class and political economic analysis because it incorporates the valid issues raised by the "institutional racism" and "internal colony" arguments without logically requiring a separatist political direction, or a turning away from the need for political economic analysis in order to understand status dynamics and status-oriented political struggle. Weber emphasizes status as a group phenomenon and as relationship of super-ordination-subordination in which power and struggle are constitutive. He conceptualizes status as a social structure that refers to one dimension of social stratification and power -- based upon the unequal distribution of social honor and social dishonor -- that is analytically, and often empirically distinct from political and class processes but related to them.

My argument is that Weber's conceptualization of status as an historically dynamic process of groups in power struggles for social honor best accounts for the persistence of racial structuring, and, in particular, the racism of the white working class. Struggles for status are motivated by a desire to secure economic and political monopoly and privilege. But they are also motivated by an equally fundamental and humanly persistent aspiration -- the desire to secure the psychological well-being that issues from public recognition of dignity and public allocation of social privilege. Weber argues that

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the dynamic and unequally structured distribution of social honor, i.e., status, is a necessary analytical complement to class and political analysis. Weber's ideal typical abstraction of status processes offers a way of explaining race and racism that (in conjunction with political economic analysis) captures the various dimensions of racial structuring -- labor market segmentation and competition, residential segregation, prejudice as a sense of group inferiority/superiority -- that do not rest only on economic interests. At the same time, because status is an abstraction that distances us from the specificity of race, it permits greater capacity for cross-cultural and trans-historical comparative analysis of the intertwined but changing relationship of status and class with an historically dynamic economy, and more firmly connects analysis to other aspects of sociological theory. Unlike race and ethnicity which are so frequently understood as non-processual categories, status as an explanatory concept calls explicit attention to the motivations behind our categorizations and provides us with a conceptual direction for understanding the processes by which the stratification of groups occurs.

W.E.B. DuBois' deployment of the concept of 'caste' (which for Weber is a form of status taken to the extreme) in order to organize his historical analysis at the conclusion of his great book on Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880 (1935) is precisely what Weber intends by caste. DuBois (1935: 694-702) wrote the following about the years immediately preceding 1880:

> Beyond this, caste has been revived in a modern civilized land. It was supposed to be a relic of barbarism and existent only in Asia. But it has grown up and has been carefully nurtured and put on a *legal basis with religious and moral sanctions* in the South. First it was presented and defended as "race" separation, but it was never mere race separation. It was

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always domination of blacks by white officials, white police and laws and ordinances made by white men. The schools were separate but the colored schools were controlled by white officials who decided how much or rather how little should be spent upon them: who decided what could be taught and what textbooks used and the sort of subservient teachers they wanted. In travel, separation compelled colored passengers to pay first-class fare for second- or third-class accommodations , and to endure on street cars and trains discrimination of all sorts. Ghettos were built up in nearly all southern cities...and in these Negroes must live, and in them white vice and crime might find shelter and Negro delinquency go unpoliced. Little attention was paid to lighting, sewerage and paving in these quarters.

Besides this, a determined psychology of caste was built up. In every possible way, it was impressed and advertised that the white was superior and the Negro an inferior race. This inferiority must be publicly acknowledged and submitted to. Titles of courtesy were denied colored men and women. Certain signs of servility and usages amounting to public and personal insult were insisted upon. The most educated and deserving black man was compelled in many public places to occupy a place beneath the lowest and least deserving of the whites. Public institutions, like parks and libraries, either denied all accommodation to the blacks or gave them inferior facilities...

With this went widespread and determined exploitation of black labor, and of course , above all taxation without representation...there was systematic disfranchisement of the Negro. He was kept from voting by force, by economic intimidation, by propaganda designed to lead him to believe that there was no salvation for him in political lines...Then came the series of disfranchisement laws discriminating against poverty and ignorance and aimed at the situation of the colored laborer..

It was the policy of the state to keep the Negro laborer poor, to confine him as far as possible to menial occupations , to make him a surplus labor reservoir and to force him into peonage and unpaid toil...

The political success of the doctrine of racial separation, which overthrew Reconstruction by uniting the planter and the poor white was far exceeded by its astonishing economic results...*The theory of labor unity failed to work* in the south...because the theory of race was supplemented by a carefully planned and slowly evolved method, which drove such a wedge between white and black workers that there probably are not today in the world two groups of workers with practically identical interests who hate and fear each other so deeply and persistently...

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> It must be remembered that the white laborers, while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by *a sort of public and psychological wage*. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were white. They were admitted freely with all classes of white people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools. The police were drawn from their ranks, and the courts dependent upon their votes , treated them with such leniency as to encourage lawlessness. Their vote selected public officials...while this had small effect upon the economic situation, it had great effect upon their personal treatment and the deference shown toward them...
>
> *The effect of caste on the moral integrity of the Negro race* in America has thus been widely disastrous; servility and fawning, gross flattery of white folk and lying to appease and cajole them; failure to achieve dignity and self-respect and moral self-assertion... These are not universal results or else the Negro long since would have dwindled and died in crime and disease. But they are so widespread as to bring inner conflict as baffling as the problems of interracial relations, and they hold back the moral grit and organized effort which are the only hope of survival.
>
> On this and in spite of this comes an extraordinary record of accomplishment, a record so contradictory of what one might easily expect that many people and even the Negroes themselves are deceived by it. The real question is not so much what the Negro has done in spite of caste, as what he might have accomplished with reasonable encouragement (My emphases).

I have quoted DuBois at length for several reasons. First, this book was published at the same time as the Warner article discussed above, yet DuBois' concept of caste is clearly very different from Warner's and from Cox's. For DuBois, the establishment of caste is not a matter of consensus, a tranquil process of social differentiation and hierarchy. It is the use of power to impose and comprehensively institutionalize an oppressive regime that affects, with respect to race as caste, the labor market and what positions in the occupational structure people may occupy, where people can live, where they attend school for what kind of education, whether they have any political voice, how

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they think about themselves, their inner conflicts and almost every other aspect of social interaction. Second, while for DuBois, caste refers to a type of social stratification, it is clearly an historical not a static phenomenon. For DuBois, as for Weber, caste is *a social structure imposed* (and potentially thrown over) *in time* by power. For Cox, caste was a static social form. It existed in actuality in the fully realized form in which it appeared in Hindu India, or it did not exist. For Cox, notions of "caste-like" rules of social interaction, or caste in a less than fully realized form were contradictions indicating that caste did not exist.

Third, for DuBois, while the primary motivations for imposing caste, that is, a relationship of super-ordination-subordination between whites as a group and Negroes as group, was to secure economic and political monopoly for dominant whites and to secure the cheap labor of blacks, DuBois did not reduce caste to class. He emphasized the differential distribution of social honor as a crucial factor in his historical account. DuBois's explanation of the failure of the "theory of working class unity" explicitly emphasized the "*public and psychological wage*" paid to white workers, their social honor as a group, as the source of their racism, not the economic benefits they derived. Simultaneously, the social dishonor imposed upon blacks resulted in the undermining of Negroes' sense of dignity and capacity for moral assertion. This "public and psychological wage" is the equivalent of Weber's concept of status grounded in the differential distribution of social honor and dishonor (See also, Roediger 1991)

Finally, I do not know if DuBois explicitly had Weber's concept of caste in mind when he wrote these passages, or, if DuBois' conceptualization of caste may have

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influenced Weber's. After a speech that DuBois made in 1904, "Caste: That Is the Root of Trouble", distorted extracts of which appeared in newspapers throughout the nation, Weber invited DuBois to submit an article to the journal he was editing (Aptheker 1982). But DuBois' deployment of 'caste' and the 'psychological and public wage', i.e., social honor, as analytic terms with which to characterize and frame his analysis of a specific historical process, appears to me to provide concrete instantiation and elaboration of what Weber intended.

In the following section, besides clarifying the inadequacy in the U.C.C. analysis, I will try to indicate how Weber's conceptualization of status permits a useful way to theorize racial structuring and simultaneously addresses a problem several sociologists have recently noted. For example, Bonilla-Silva (1996:45) writes, "The area of race and ethnic studies lacks a sound theoretical apparatus. To complicate matters, many analysts of racial matters have abandoned the serious theorization and reconceptualization of their central topic: racism".[8]

'Status', as Weber conceptualized it, is a useful concept for analyzing racial structuring for two reasons. First, it explicitly refers to social rather than allegedly biological distinctions, and specifically to the relationship of superordination-subordination. Sociologists since Franz Boas have argued for almost a century that race is a social construction referring to the process by which social meanings are attached to physical characteristics. Nevertheless, there remains an emphasis upon racial formation as though it were *sui generis*. As Berreman pointed out, the insistence upon the specificity of racial formation has a mystical quality as though racial structuring were

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unique and not comparable to societies stratified on any other basis. In fact, no society in the world ranks people on the basis of what any competent biologist would call race, meaning a distinct gene pool that is distinct from the genes shared by other group, because no such distinct gene pool exists (Rensberger 1981; Diamond 1994; Marks 1994; Goodman 1997). Second, as indicated above, Weber's conceptualization of status, precisely because it is more abstract than race, permits trans-historical and trans-cultural comparative analysis not only with other systems of birth-ascribed inequality, but also with social systems that hold other bases of status.

For Weber, there are at least three dimensions of social stratification --class, political party and status -- that crystallize as consequences of group struggles to acquire and monopolize three basic goods: material wealth and economic position, social honor, and political power. Each of these dimensions are "phenomena of the distribution of power within a community". By 'power', Weber means "the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" . Economic or political power may be a basis for acquiring social honor, but "social honor, or prestige, may ...be the basis of economic power" (1978: 926-27). Like Marx's conception of class, and unlike the consensually graded prestige groups of Warner and Cox, Weber's concepts refer to conflictually constituted relationships among actual groups of people over time. This point requires emphasis for those who are most familiar with Weber's summary discussion of status in "Class, Status and Party" (Gerth and Mills 1946) which is extracted from Weber's sociological encyclopedia, Economy and Society (1978) [hereafter, ES]. Despite

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Weber's explicit reference to status as originating in "usurpation", the formal nature of the presentations of the conceptual distinctions between class, status and party, extracted from larger historical essays, convey a frozen sense of stratification in which struggle and conflict are under-emphasized (Turner, 1988).[9]

Given how often and easily Weber's summary discussion in Economy and Society has been misunderstood, and given the various usages of the term 'status' in the sociological literature, it seems appropriate to distinguish Weber's use of the concept from the consensual and individualistic ways it has frequently been discussed in American sociology (Turner, 1988). The notion of status, for example, is sometimes referred to as a position in society such as daughter, student , carpenter, rabbi that establishes an identity in society that determines the individual's relationship to others, respectively, in a family, school, construction firm or congregation. In this usage, a set of expected behavior patterns, obligations and privileges, i.e., a role, is attached to a particular status[10]. A related way in which status has been used derives from a functionalist perspective. Davis and Moore (1945; and see Tumin's critique, 1953) account for the existence of a status hierarchy as the result of competition among individuals to occupy scarce, functionally significant positions of leadership and social responsibility attached to which are consensually agreed upon economic rewards, prestige and other privileges. It is from this perspective that the occupational status attainment research has been done in efforts to track the attributes that contribute to individual social mobility (Blau and Duncan 1967; Sewell and Hauser 1975; see Kerbo 1996 for a critique of these models from a class theoretical perspective). All of this

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research follows an individualized elaboration of Weber's concept of status similar to Lipset's (1968: 301-302) definition of status as "the positive or negative estimation of honor or prestige received by individuals" (quoted in Turner, 1988).

This individualized conception of status as socially consensual prestige attached to positions ranked on a continuous scale, mainly in relation to the occupational structure and amounts of education, combined with the notion that individuals move up or down in status based mainly on personal effort, is not the principal way in which Weber uses the term. Weber consistently uses the term 'status group'. Status refers to the *ranking of a group*. It is not a ranking based on incremental gradations. Rather, groups and their members possess positive or negative social honor. This status order emerges out of the historical process of groups in struggle for social honor in order to claim, protect and secure social honor, and to monopolize benefits and privileges. For Weber, status is not intended to be a formal, descriptive and static classification of individuals in a hierarchy of prestige.

Status refers to the position of a social group in the social order, the unequal distribution of social honor among groups, as opposed to class which refers to position in the economic order, the way in which goods and services are distributed. A status group is normally an 'amorphous' community (*gemeinschaft*) as opposed to a class which does not, in itself, constitute a community. Weber is emphatic about this distinction, saying that the treatment of 'class' conceptually as being equivalent to 'group' is a distortion. The distinction that Weber is making here is similar to the distinction made by Marx when he writes about 'class in itself', as opposed to 'class for itself'. Status groups are

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types of community, conscious of themselves, whereas, for Weber, classes refer to collectivities of individuals who typically share the same life chances to procure goods, gain a position in life and derive inner satisfactions. What life chances are accessible to individuals depends upon their power (or lack thereof) to command income in commodity and labor markets which in turn depends upon ownership of property and skill or education. Class situation, in the long run, affects status group membership, but membership in a status group, e.g., race, provides or limits access to education, training, residence or economic position.

Although individuals subjected to the same class situation may tend to respond similarly as individuals, "the emergence of an association or even of mere social action from a common class situation is by no means a universal phenomenon" [ES 929) Whether social action or associations consciously based on class emerge is "linked to general cultural conditions, especially to those of an intellectual sort,...to the extent of the contrasts that have already evolved, and ...to the transparency of the connections between the causes and the consequences of the class situation", that is to the recognition that the contrast of life chances is not "a given fact to be accepted" but results from the given distribution of property (ES 929).

Status and class are analytical concepts that refer to dimensions of struggle and stratification but they also can be observed in empirical, historical reality where the status and class orders may not perfectly coincide. Political power, social honor and economic wealth may each be valued for their own sake. Money power and political power are not necessarily bases of social honor. And, social honor, for example, the

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social honor of poor whites as whites in the South at the turn of the century and later did not imply wealth or political power. Exactly what governs the changing relationship between status and class needs to be examined in concrete situations but Weber offers a general analytical guide:

> When the basis of the acquisition and distribution of goods are relatively stable, stratification by status is favored. Every technological repercussion and economic transformation threatens stratification by status and pushes the class situation into the foreground. Epochs and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are regularly the periods of technical and economic transformations. And, every slowing down of the change in economic stratification leads, in due course to the growth of status structures and makes for a resuscitation of the important role of social honor (ES 938)

The important point for analysis in this passage which I take as a generalized historiographical admonition is its emphasis upon the need to see the class and status orders as distinct but at the same time to recognize their interconnection over time embedded in economic processes. As an economy slows down, for example, status group formations (e.g., in the form of institutionalized racial inequality) become less permeable. Successful analyses of social change join class and status analyses. At the same time, the political implication, if Weber is correct, is that successful struggles to eliminate status group inequality must broadly consider the economic context.

For Weber, 'status' means an "*effective claim to social esteem* in terms of positive or negative privileges that is typically founded on a style of life, some kind of formal education and/or hereditary or occupational prestige" (My emphasis). Status situation refers to "every typical component of the life of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of *honor*" (ES 932). It is expressed through

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marriage and socializing ('commensality'), rules regarding which children can legitimately inherit ('connubium'), what people wear and where they live and almost anything else that expresses and reinforces processes of social closure and the "monopolistic appropriation of privileged modes of acquisition or the abhorrence of certain kinds of acquisition". "A 'status group' means a plurality of persons who, within a larger group, successfully claim a special positive social esteem, and possibly also status monopolies. Status groups may come into being in the first instance by virtue of their own style of life, particularly the type of vocation ...in the second instance, through hereditary charisma, by virtue of successful claims to higher-ranking descent...[and] through monopolistic appropriation of political or hierocratic powers"(ES 306). "The decisive role of a style of life in status honor means that status groups are the specific bearers of all conventions" (ES 935-936), that is, they establish non-legal rules or customary ways of behaving as a way of distinguishing between themselves and others. Almost all status honor, in the beginning, "rests on usurpation", that is, on the coercive appropriation (e.g., conquest) and monopolization of social honor and privilege. After that, if there is a stable distribution of economic power and the stratification of the social order has been lived in, the monopolization of, or exclusion from positive or negative privilege may be legally established. (ES 933)

What requires emphasis here, and what seems too often overlooked because of Weber's wording, is how unlikely it is that any group would "claim" negative privilege or negative social esteem. Rather negative privileges and negative esteem are imposed by more powerful groups upon others thus subordinating them. In that sense, 'status' must

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be seen as a relational term and status groups are reciprocally constitutive. The economic and social privileges (i.e., occupations, living areas, brides and grooms, political positions) and social honor achieved through conquest and thereafter claimed, monopolized and enforced by the powerful (e.g., whites) *over time*, always entails and defines the restricted privileges and negative prestige imposed upon subordinate others (e.g., African Americans). Status groups and the effective social closures they establish or impose are the products of continuing, more or less violent battle among groups. Status conflicts may become violent because of what is at stake: "material monopolies provide the most effective motives for the exclusiveness of a status group; although in themselves, they are rarely sufficient, almost always they come into play" (ES 935). The victories of one group are the losses of another. It is a process in which the more powerful group attempts to impose acceptance and generate comprehensive agreement in a society for traditional rules of conduct including the distribution of social honor and economic monopolies that govern the interaction (super-ordination-subordination) of status groups in ways that favor the interests of the powerful. At the same time, status groups can become more or less permeable over time depending upon historical conditions and economic or political forms of power.

> Where the consequences [of positive or negative social honor, economic and legal privilege] have been realized to their full extent, the status group evolves into a closed caste. Status distinctions are then guaranteed not merely by conventions but also by laws and religious sanctions... In general, however, the status structure reaches such extreme form only where there are underlying differences which are held to be ethnic [or racial] (ES 933).

A status segregation grown into a caste differs in its structure from a

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> mere ethnic segregation: the caste structure transforms the horizontal and unconnected coexistence of ethnically segregated groups into a vertical social system of super- and subordination. Correctly formulated: a comprehensive association [or "societalization" (Grusky 1994:118)] integrates the ethnically divided communities into one political unit. They differ precisely in this way: ethnic co-existence, based on mutual repulsion and disdain allows each ethnic community to consider its own honor as the highest one; the caste structure brings about a social subordination and an acknowledgement of "more honor" in favor of the privileged caste and status groups (ES 934).

There are several points in this passage that require emphasis. First, caste is a form of status in which status distinctions become hardened. Status can become caste, but, equally, as evidenced by the black struggles of the 1950 and 1960s, status as caste can be cracked and loosened through struggle, and become a more permeable social structure. Second, it is interesting to note that Weber's characterization of how status distinctions may evolve into caste when they are guaranteed "not merely by conventions but also by law and religious sanctions" is echoed almost word for word by DuBois (above) when he refers to caste as having "a legal basis with religious and moral sanctions". Third, Weber's point that caste, or status structure involves *a comprehensive association or 'societalization'* that integrates the ethnically divided communities into one political unit refers to the process in which social distinctions of superordination-subordination become institutionalized as status or in the form of caste . Status, and the structured process of race/racism as one form of status, shapes and is shaped by social interaction in every social sphere. Finally, Weber's distinction between ethnic groups and caste, or status structuration, is a critical one because it points to a conceptualization of ethnicity and status as different dimensions of the life of the same group.

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The Implications For Struggle of the Cultural Fusion Of Ethnicity and Status

Ethnic groups, for Weber, are "human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs, or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration " (ES 389). This memory of common origin remains alive when, apart from a community of language and the ritual regulation of life determined by shared religious belief, there are also "conspicuous differences in physical appearance and perceptible differences in the conduct of everyday life" (ES 390). Examples of ethnic groups are Chicanos, Dominican-Americans, Chinese-Americans, African Americans, Italian-Americans. Differences in everyday life may include almost anything: clothing, music styles of housing, food and eating habits, and the division of labor between the sexes. Together they make up a style of life deemed proper. They supply the normative substance of the repulsion of one group from another. Normative repulsion is the ground for drawing and reinforcing borders that limit whom group members can marry and with whom they can socialize. Ethnic groups, in short, like status groups, are culture carriers.

> ...These things concern one's conception of what is correct and proper and above all what affects the individual's sense of honor and dignity...The conviction of the excellence of one's own customs and the inferiority of alien ones, a conviction which sustains the sense of ethnic honor is... *analogous to the sense of honor of distinctive status groups*...Behind all ethnic diversities there is somehow naturally the notion of the "chosen people", which is merely a counterpart of status differentiation translated into the place of horizontal co-existence. The idea of a chosen people derives its popularity from the fact that it can be claimed to an equal degree by any and every member of the mutually despising groups, [It is "a specific honor of the masses"] *in contrast to status differentiation which always rests on subordination* (ES 391, My emphases).

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In other words, in terms of 'our' sense of social honor and 'our' sense of other groups's inferiority, the borders around marriage and socializing, the normative quality of the style or conventions of everyday life, and the attitude of repulsion and disdain towards others, ethnic groups are practically identical to status groups. They differ significantly, however, insofar as ethnic groups, viewed societally, exist on the same horizontal social level whereas status groups entail the subordination of one group by another. Ethnicity may be a basis for political mobilization and ethnic groups may treat one another with mutual repulsion and disdain, e.g., recent immigrant groups in the 1920s. But, status groups exist based on a more widely shared and enforced societal acknowledgement about the distribution of social esteem along with associated privileges and restrictions. In the 1920s, from a societal perspective, both Jewish and Italian immigrants were characterized as a lower status groups although they were different ethnic groups. In other words, ethnicity and status (in a super-ordinate or subordinate position) may be different dimensions of the same group's social life (Blauner 1992; Waters 1993). To say that status differentiation entails a relationship of subordination means that in contrast to ethnicity, one 'group' has successfully usurped positive esteem and monopolized privileged modes of acquisition at the expense of others in the process of subordinating them and imposing upon them economic, educational, residential and other restrictions as well as social dishonor.

To say that ethnic groups and status groups are culture carriers, and that ethnicity and status may be different dimensions of the same group's social life is to make analytic distinctions about the life history of groups, their members and their relationships to

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other groups. In actuality, the history of groups and the lives of their members embody beliefs, norms, values and practices which express the fusion of ethnic and status elements. When the interaction of whites and blacks has been structured by status over time (or, for 100 years after the Civil War by its extended, ritualized and legalized form as caste), these status groups develop sub-cultural traditions: ways of life, identities, shared interpretations of the world to which they become committed and which incorporate on-going status opposition to one another. Status elements such as resistance and opposition to domination, or accommodation and deference in the face of domination, or a sense of dignity that rests upon the subordination of others may become part of a group's ethnic identity.

According to Weber, "the sense of dignity that characterizes positively privileged status groups is naturally related to their 'being' which does not transcend itself, that is, its is related to their 'beauty and excellence'. Their kingdom is of this world." Aldrich's (1988) discussion of the white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant elite sense of its own moral and aesthetic excellence and superiority illustrates this well. On the other hand, the sense of dignity of negatively privileged strata "refers to a future lying beyond the present, whether it is of this life or another...it must be nurtured by the belief in a providential mission and by a belief in a specific honor before God" (ES 934). Weber's comment points not only to the sense of 'chosenness' in the historical ethnicity of Jews, but also to a powerful element in African American ethnicity. Attached to this sense of mission on the part of groups who have experienced long and extensive domination, there also often develops a strong sense of the necessity of defensive solidarity (for physical survival)

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which may accompany (or replace) solidarity based on a shared mission upon which their sense of honor is based. It may then be typical for group members to revile those members who appear to trespass against solidarity as going against their ethnic dignity or against their sense of mission. The U.C.C. experience in the charette educational planning conference with blacks who inveighed against other blacks who supported integration as "oreos, uncle Toms, and house niggers" is one example.

What this implies is that the experience of interaction across racial lines in the United States since the 1960s has been not only an experience of crossing ethnic difference, but also a negotiation across status group differences that involves status opposition and contestation. As Cox (1948,1970: 569) put it, "An advance in the social status of a subordinate group involves a concession to it [on the part of the super-ordinate group], the result of which is a reciprocal redefinition of intergroup position. This concession to status may be voluntary or involuntary but it is always an admission that the "distanced" group merits the right to be included further in the "we" feeling of the dominant group." The Civil Rights Movement's demolition of caste in the South re-structured status group relations throughout the country, and the "Black Power Movement" continued the battle to end status group inequality, although with considerably less political success. What 'black power' did achieve, a point well made by Deburg (1992) in his uncritical celebration, was in the realm of culture, specifically but not only, in the efflourescent redefinition of black ethnicity that we can understand as a necessary concomitant of the redefinition of black status. Although this is not the place for extended discussion, I think that the point that ethnicity requires redefinition as status

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relations are being redefined also helps explain the assertive claims to ethnic dignity propounded by white groups in the 1970s as an effort to defend their social honor and either adjust to their new status position in relation to blacks, or to minimize the changes.

What Weber's discussion implies is that thinking about class and the development of a class-based movement in the U.S. required U.C.C. to think about race not only as a form of ethnicity but also as a hard (structured) form of status. It was (is) a societally hard (albeit more dynamic and more permeable since the 1960s) form because through the 1960s, in the South where most African Americans lived, race as caste governed the relationship between whites and blacks, and because of the long history in the North of racial structuring in labor markets, residence, schooling, everyday interaction, etc.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, from U.C.C.'s perspective, an effective strategy for social change had to pay close attention to the class aspects of race and the differences of ethnic identities (including blacks). U.C.C.'s theoretical paradigm, however, was empty with respect to historically constituted and on-going white-black status group struggles that were incorporated into, and constituted a key dimension of how people experienced their ethnic identities. It could not theoretically articulate race as a status group process with institutional continuity and power in the North that entailed social conflict across status differences. These status differences produced specific oppressions, needs, and grievance that were constitutive of racially opposed identities *within* a working class defined broadly in Marxian terms.

U.C.C. recognized the superior/inferior expectations and attitudes, the 'sense of group position' that characterized cross-racial interaction within the organization and in

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relation to outsiders (Blumer, 1958). These matters were the subject of frequent discussions and collective self-examination of attitudes and behaviors among members and the Board. However, in its theoretical understanding of race and racial groups, U.C.C. vacillated, not unlike Cox, between interpreting race as a form of class, or as a divide and conquer strategy like Foster, or seeing race as a form of ethnic difference, depending upon the context. Its organizing theory treated racial prejudice, sometimes as part of a generalized capitalist ideology, and sometimes as ideational leftovers of ethnic repulsion and disdain that were products of prior socialization. It assumed that the governing power of these prejudices could be reduced in people's minds and behaviors as people's experience across difference changed, and as they reflected with imagination, empathy and reason upon their new experience. U.C.C. recognized that racial prejudices could not be extirpated so long as they were constantly re-stimulated by societal events, and particularly so long as the white working class believed that the 'petty' benefits of white skin privilege outweighed the 'real' and large benefits that an integrated class struggle might win. U.C.C. could not alone change the experience of the white working class, but it assumed that it could change the experience of some people in the community. Its goal was not to change the world, it was to organize community-based movement in ENY that might spark movement in other communities which in turn might become part of a larger social movement 'to change the world'.

Nevertheless, its focus upon race, its militant struggles for integration, and its real understandings of aspects of the dynamics of racial interaction did not add up to an understanding that the status differences between whites and blacks within the working

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class and lower middle class possessed a hard and rooted basis in the labor markets, real estate markets and social economy of NYC and the U.S., and were deeply constitutive of racial/ethnic and gendered selves and their sense of dignity and social honor. White and black workers might share a common relationship to the means of production, but there was a lot more competition and conflict over economic interest and social honor that shaped people's lives in workplaces and communities, and generated culturally constituted and felt identities than concepts like the ownership/non-ownership of capital combined with internalized prejudices allowed. U.C.C. leaders and members were empirically aware of this, but since social honor and status as race were not part of their theoretical structure, they received inadequate attention. They struggled with these questions on personal, social and political levels but without the theoretical consistency these questions required. The implications of this theoretical vacancy for U.C.C. organizers were that their challenges to the formulation of a new black ethnicity that was expressed in nationalist language, were often experienced by blacks as an effort to reimpose their own status subordination. Ideological differences or theoretical differences in analysis across racial difference could not be discussed on an intellectual level because disagreement was perceived as status contestation. U.C.C. organizers were aware of this as a problem, but regarded it as an irrational rock that required persistent struggle to remove, or time to erode, but not a problem for its own theory. U.C.C.'s inability to engage the new claims of black ethnicity, especially in the second half of the 1970s when black nationalism as a political force in the community had disappeared, was partly a product of its inability to understand race as a form of status,

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i.e., as a relatively autonomous structure of power and conflict rooted in the unequal distribution of social honor.

ENDNOTES

1. See Steinberg, 1995: chapters 1-3, for an intellectual history of this moment.

2. One exception to this generalization about "internal colony" analyses was William Tabb's analysis of The Political Economy of The Black Ghetto, (1970). Tabb argued that blacks were like an internal colony that was controlled and exploited by the dominant white groups because they exported their labor to the white dominated economy. At the same time, blacks were disproportionately limited to low paying jobs and were disproportionately unemployed. While accepting many of Tabb's points as valid, Harris (1972) effectively argued that Tabb's internal colony was more metaphor than systematic analysis; that it explained no more than could be explained without the metaphor.

3. Whatever the crudeness of Foster's economistic interpretation of racism, he knew deep in his bones the problems of working class organizing and it is worth reminding ourselves that his organizing practice was more complex than his theory. At the same time, although racism as a phenomenon solely propagated by capitalists and their "lackeys" might be an insufficient account of how racism is maintained and by whom, that does not mean that there were not many punishing moments when capitalists deliberately employed racist tactics to divide and defeat working class struggles. Foster was a leading organizer of the 1919 steel strike in which 360,000 workers went on strike throughout the iron and steel industry. David Brody (1965) tells how the steel companies sought to break the strike by exploiting the divisions between skilled, mainly native born workers and unskilled, mainly immigrant and black workers. The immigrant workers held fast, surprising the companies and many of the labor leaders in the broad coalition of unions that ran the strike. But, the strike was defeated anyway when the steel companies brought in over 30,000 blacks to keep the plants going. Blacks working in the mills had been excluded from the skilled workers' unions even during the union organizing drives of the previous year and except in a few places were hostile toward the discriminatory unions. So were blacks outside the industry. This story and many others, and the lessons drawn that ethnic and racial divisions lead to defeat were told and re-told by Foster, other Left organizers and workers and assumed emblematic meaning in the organizing drives of the 1930s and afterwards as justification for the emphasis upon organizing interracially.

4. A more refined version of this approach is Michael Reich's (1986:304-311) account of the political economic effects of racism. Using the data for 48 metropolitan

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areas from the 1960 and 1970 censuses, Reich marks a strong correlation between the degree of racism in the area (as measured by the ration of black median family income to white median family income) and the level of inequality among whites (as measured by the percentage share of total white income received by the top one per cent of white families). The correlation held fast even controlling for the industrial and occupational structure of the SMSAs (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas); the region in which the SMSAs were located; the average income of the SMSAs; and the proportion of the black population. Reich specified two processes to account for this correlation. First, the total wages of white labor were reduced by racial antagonism because union growth and labor militancy were inhibited. And, second, the supply of public services available to low to middle income whites is reduced as a result of racial antagonism because it drives a wedge between black and low to middle income whites (including teachers) reducing their ability to join together in political movement. According to Reich, except for some skilled craft unions whose members benefit from racism, racism is in the economic interests of capitalists and other rich whites, and not in the *immediate* or long-term objective interests of most workers.

But, if all that is true, and "the simple economics of racism does not explain why many workers seem to be vehemently racist", why Reich asks, does it persist? Reich (p.310) says that "in non-economic ways, racism helps to legitimize inequality, alienation and powerlessness --legitimization that is necessary for the stability of the capitalist system as a whole." Writing in 1986, he noted that whites blame their high taxes upon welfare and other services for blacks, not upon military spending; and, that low income whites had blamed their low income on blacks who are willing to take away their jobs at lower wages, "thus concealing the fact that a substantial amount of income inequality is inevitable in capitalist society". This kind of reasoning "transfers the locus of whites' resentment towards blacks and away from capitalism" thus providing the legitimation that is necessary for the stability of the capitalist system." "As long as struggling collectively against capitalism does not seem feasible to most whites, we can expect that identifiable and vulnerable scapegoats will prove functional to the status quo." (p.311)

The problems with this reasoning that I wish to underscores are first, Reich does not distinguish between challenging capitalism and challenging the way in which capitalism does business which is, after all, what the struggle for a welfare state accomplished. Militant struggles for a fair share and for the reduction of inequality have been conducted throughout this century on the part of workers who 'did not think it was feasible' and were not seeking to eliminate capitalism.

Second, if racism is economically irrational for the white working class, and reform is sometimes believable, why does the white working class persist? Reich's answer implies a version of "false consciousness" theory not unlike that of Foster's, but without the deliberate and organized efforts of capitalists, in which case, who is doing it? He does, however, suggest that there are psychological benefits for working class whites

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whose opportunity to participate in the oppression of others compensates for their own misery. Perhaps, he wonders, there is solace for an unsatisfying life in the knowledge that one is not at the bottom of the heap. For Reich however, this kind of reasoning, although it is an essential complement to his argument, falls into the category of residuum or individual psychology. It is not theorized as related to the pursuit and differential and unequally structured distribution of social honor among groups, a social goal that Weber regards as fundamental as the acquisition of material wealth and political power.

5. In contrast to (other) Marxist sociologists, Bonacich recognizes the effective agency of the white working class in the perpetuation of racism. Bonacich (1972) accounts for ethnic antagonism (a term which for her includes racial antagonism) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a product of split labor markets, or markets in which there are at least two groups of differently priced labor who can do the same kinds of work. Capital prefers lower priced labor to assure its profits, and typically uses lower priced labor to break strikes, drive down wages, and displace higher priced labor. Higher priced labor, insecure of its jobs in capitalist economy and fearful of having its wages driven down by lower priced competition, does what it can to maintain its job monopolies and privileges. Where white labor possessed the economic and political resources, and where it was possible to keep the lower priced competition (e.g., the Chinese and Japanese in late 19th century California) out of the geographical territory, higher priced labor effected an "exclusionary" response as in the Chinese and Japanese exclusion legislation. Where it was not possible to keep lower priced labor out of the territory, either because the labor of lower priced groups was needed, or because the population was too large (e.g. blacks in the South and North) white labor mobilizes a "caste" response, monopolizing political, educational, training and job opportunities for its own kind. Bonacich employs these Weberian terms (exclusion and caste) because she seeks to demonstrate how Marxian and Weberian concepts can be used complementarily.

Despite its efforts, white labor is never entirely able to foreclose the black-white split labor markets. The black-white split labor market continues through the 1920s encouraging the employment of black "cheap labor" and generating substantial black-white working class conflict. White unions exclude blacks which in turn generates anti-unionist attitudes among blacks, which in turn intensifies white labor's racial prejudice. Bonacich (1976) argues that New Deal legislation (the NIRA in 1933, the NLRA in 1935, and the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938) dramatically alters the split labor market by making it illegal to use blacks as strike-breakers, denying the legitimacy of the company union, and taking away the advantage in paying blacks lower wages for longer hours. The short term effect of this legislation is that white labor becomes less hostile to blacks and more energetically seeks black support, and the black community becomes more supportive of labor, making coalition between blacks and whites possible. The long-term effect is that as unions organize and the cheap labor of blacks is no longer accessible to

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capital, capital relocates to cheap labor areas overseas and internally, and accelerates its efforts to automate. Ultimately black labor is by-passed by machines and other cheap labor groups (immigrants), making the black unemployment rate double that of whites and creating a large ghetto population who are not even in the labor force.

The problem with this very useful analysis is that while the dynamics of split labor markets may provide an adequate account of ethnic antagonism in a single or even multiple instances, they cannot alone account for the perpetuation over time of African American subordination. If it were only competition between higher priced and lower priced labor that produced the institutionalized subordination or exclusion of lower priced labor, why did this process not result in the perpetual subordination of other cheap labor groups, e.g. south, central and eastern European immigrants between 1880 and 1920?

There are two theoretical problems here. To say that ethnic and racial conflict are "political rather than primordial [and] that they have material roots in the system and relations of production" (1980:12), and are therefore affected by class dynamics and economic development are important and correct points. Race changes; black/white relations change as the system and relations of production change. Bonacich demonstrates this as well as anybody. But, those points do not imply that such "material" relations alone account for why or how the subordination of one group, African Americans, is maintained over time, while other cheap labor groups achieve some level of equality in relation to higher priced labor over two or three generations. In fact, in every situation since the Civil War, the existence of blacks as lower priced labor in a split labor market presupposes the already existing, and institutionalized, lower status of blacks. We need a concept of status.

The other theoretical problem is that Bonacich folds 'racial antagonism' into ethnic antagonism thus neglecting precisely the difference between status/caste and ethnicity that Weber emphasizes. She (1980:10) accepts that the relation between ethnic groups is often charged with mutual "feelings of disdain or repulsion" (another of Weber's phrases that she employs), but ignores the way in which race as status and caste signal institutionalized subordination/ superordination whereas in ethnic group relations, however mutually repulsive, neither group can effectively maintain the subordination of the other.

Both these theoretical problems exist in many discussions which attempt to account for racial antagonism based on job competition alone (e.g., see Lieberson 1980: 381-383). They are based on the notion that there are no goods or bases of power over which human groups contend other than economic ones. In her discussion of white labor's efforts to impose caste upon black labor, for example, Bonacich points to the economic monopolies that white labor seeks to capture and stresses that the political and educational monopolies they seek derive from economic motives. But, she neglects the

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content of unequally distributed social honor in status as caste, and the significance of the process of usurping positive and imposing negative prestige that Weber emphasizes. For Weber, social honor and the sense of dignity that derives from it is something human groups value for their own sake as well as for the political and economic power they make more accessible.

The criticism I make of Bonacich is parallel to the criticism made of William J. Wilson's neglect of race as a structure in his account of black subordination and the emergence of the black underclass. In The Declining Significance of Race, (1978) much of Wilson's discussion hinges on his use of Bonacich.

6. U.S. historian, Barbara Fields (1982:155-156), in developing an argument about race as ideology, and, in particular, the ideological meanings of race for the white working class, argues, "Of course in any society more complex than the primal horde, there cannot be a single ideology through which everyone apprehends the social world. In any event, what might appear from a distance to be a single ideology cannot hold the same meaning for everyone. If ideology is a vocabulary for interpreting social experience, and thus both shapes and is shaped by that experience, it follows that even the "same" ideology must convey different meanings to people having different social experiences...To suggest, for example, that classes of people whose position in, relation to, and perception of the world and society differ in every other fundamental have a common bedrock of ideological assumptions about black people is to betray the illusion that beliefs about race are a biological product rather than the creation of mean and women in society" .

7. Doxey Wilkerson was a black intellectual, writer and member of the U.S.C.P. who participated in the debates on the 'Negro Question' in the U.S.C.P. theoretical journal after WWII. C.L.R. James, among many other things was a West Indian Marxist historian, a Left critic of culture, an early Pan-Africanist, a member of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (from which he split, returned and eventually left) who lived in the U.S. from 1938 until he was expelled by the U.S. government in 1953. From 1966 throughout the seventies he alternated residence between England and the U.S. where he taught and lectured extensively.

In the late 1930s and 1940s, Wilkerson and James shared the same radical milieu as Cox where the 'Negro Question' denoted a specific set of theoretical and practical questions: What was self-determination and how was the right to self-determination to be exercised. Did black people in the United States constitute a national minority? Did black workers share the same interests as the white proletariat? How should the (white) labor movement respond to African-American demands for equality? Was meaningful equality even possible under capitalism? And, how should socialists relate to existing African American organizations and institutions? (McLemee, 1996, xvi)

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The importance of Wilkerson and James and others in that milieu was their deeply serious and sustained insistence upon trying to answer these questions with an analysis that combined political economy and a recognition of race as a structure that could not simply be subsumed by the proletarian struggle. There was no question of ignoring political economy, and no question of ignoring the special nature of the 'Negro Problem', no question of ignoring either the proletarian struggle or the struggle of the 'Negro masses'. Both struggles were important. The question was how they could be connected theoretically and practically. Wilkerson's anticipates the civil rights movement, James' anticipates a resurgence of black nationalism. But, both insist upon the fundamental need of the black struggle to be connected to the white working class for theoretical and practical reasons. The Negro Question could not be resolved under capitalism. At the same time, like Cox, both elide the problem of the racism of the white working class because they have no concept of 'status'.

The internal debates in the C.P. after WWII entailed a re-examination of many of the Party's positions, including its position on the 'Negro people' based on members' ritual need to distance themselves from Browder's 'revisionism' after he was expelled from leadership in 1944. In October, 1943, Browder, as executive secretary of the Party was saying,

> ...the crisis of history has taken a turn of such character that the Negro people in the United States have found it possible to make their historic decision [on national self-determination] once and for all. Their decision is for their complete integration into the American nation as a whole, and not for separation... (Political Affairs, v.24, n.8, August, 1945, 717)

After Browder's expulsion, he and his position on the Negro nation were regularly reviled in the Party's theoretical journal by writers who returned to defending the 1929 position on the Negro nation's right to self-determination as the 'orthodox' position. Many took the position that Negroes had not made the "historic decision" Browder had claimed. At the same time, there was an earnest, often complex and subtle theoretical effort to come to grips with what a Marxist position on the Negro 'nation' should be. Doxey Wilkerson was not prepared in 1946 to argue explicitly for dumping the idea of self-determination especially given the atmosphere of abhorrence that surrounded Browder and his positions. But, he called for a need for more 'basic research' before the Party simply settled on a return to the earlier line:

> "...there are political insights of major importance which flow from this understanding of the Negro question as a *national* question. It is this theoretical premise that leads Marxists to recognize the *special* character of the Negro question, and thus to avoid the Socialist Party's error of viewing the oppression of the Negro people as merely a part of the larger class struggle of our nation. It is on this conceptual basis that we view the whole

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Negro people (not merely the Negro proletariat) as natural allies of the working class (655)

Then, after the ritual slap at the 'contemptible' Browder, Wilkerson developed a position in some ways like Browder's:

"The very tenuous Negro population majority in the Black Belt a decade and a half ago has probably been dissipated by the known decrease in the number of Negro-majority counties...in 1940...Thus the most significant recent trends in the development of the Negro people appear to be away from rather than toward, the further maturation of the Negro nation in the Black Belt...The future growth curve of this Black Belt is downward and... the Negro people of that area will become increasingly integrated in to the broader liberation struggles of the entire Negro people throughout the country, all fighting for full democratic rights for Negro citizens in every section of the United States. It is toward dignity and equal status *as Americans* that the Negro people are moving...not along the line of a separate Negro republic...rather along the line of an increasingly organized and self-conscious *community of Negro Americans,* functioning as an integral part of the larger nation, and struggling with ever greater unity and power for the destruction of Jim Crow barriers of all kinds, for the attainment of full economic, political and social equality as *Americans"* Political Affairs, July, 1946, v.25, n.7, 658-660).

Wilkerson's (and that of a few other writers in the C.P. journal) insight, concreteness and prescience concerning the future of Negro struggle considerably surpasses that of Cox, or for that matter, Myrdal, neither of whom anticipated a black struggle independent of the struggle of the working class.

James was an early advocate of the idea of an independent black movement that would be socialist but not controlled by either trade unions or white-majority political party. In his essay, "The Revolutionary Answer To The Negro Question" (1948, 1996). James wrote:

"The proletariat...must lead the struggles of all the oppressed and all those who are persecuted by capitalism... [But] the independent Negro struggle has a vitality and a validity of its own; ...it has deep historic roots in the past of American and in present struggles...the independent Negro movement is able to intervene with terrific force upon the general social and political life of the nation, despite the fact that is waged under the banner of democratic rights and not led necessarily either by the organized labor movements or the Marxist party...it has got a great contribution to make to the development of the proletariat in the United states, and that it is in itself a

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constituent part of the struggle for socialism..(139).

What is the relation between this movement and the primary role of the proletariat -- particularly because so many Negroes, and most disciplined , hardened, trained, highly developed sections of the Negroes, are today in the organized labor struggles...the Negro movement is [not] in reality, merely a class question... [The Negro movement] can act as one of the ferments...which will bring on to the scene the real fundamental force against capitalism --the socialist proletariat ... The Negro people today look upon the CIO with a respect and consideration that they give to no other social or political force in the country [See DuBois, chapter IX above.] ... Therefore our consideration of the independent Negro movement does not lessen the significance of the proletarian ...leadership. It includes it. We are able to see that the mere existence of the CIO ...is a protection and a stimulus to the Negroes...[At the same time, as a result of the development of capitalism, Negroes] are in the very vanguard of the proletarian movement from the very nature of the proletarian struggle" (140-146).

In a 1944 letter, James had written:

"Briefly, the idea is this, that the Negro is "nationalist" to the heart and is perfectly right to be. His racism, his nationalism, are a necessary means of giving him strength, self-respect, and organization in order to fight for integration into American society. It is a perfect example of dialectical contradiction. Further, however, the Negroes represent a force in the future development of American society out of all proportion to their numbers. The repression has created such frustration that this, when socially motivated, will become one of the most powerful social forces in the country." (Quoted in McLemee, 1996 xxvi)

8. More than a decade ago, Randall Collins (1986:129) commented similarly, "The theory of ethnic groups has not been systematically developed; nor has the larger topic of the theory of status groups. But both are parts of the general theory of group formation and group dissolution, which is an intimate part of the organization of any economy."

9. This is not the only kind of misunderstanding possible. Jeffrey Alexander (1983: 120) writes that Weber's conception of status is "fundamentally reductionist" in part because Weber reduces status group to class when he writes, "Property as such is not always recognized as a status qualification, but in the long run it is, and with extraordinary regularity." Thus, Alexander argues, Weber designates status "as means for the further organization of class interests...instead of showing how status operationalizes and specifies broader normative factors, or utilizing status to demonstrate how classes move from merely economically defined abstract entities to active

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communities."

But, compare Alexander's quote from Weber, with Weber's reminder five sentences later that status honor need not be linked with a class situation and that "it normally stands in sharp opposition to the pretensions of sheer property" (ES 932). Also, compare Alexander's conclusion based on Weber's summary discussion with what Weber writes in "The Chinese Literati " (Gerth and Mills 1946: 146): "For twelve centuries social rank in China has been determined more by qualification for office than wealth. This qualification, in turn, has been determined by education, and especially by examination. China has made literary education the yardstick of social prestige in the most exclusive fashion..." . Weber's point about the regular recognition of property, "in the long run" [how long?] as 'a' qualification for status does not mean it is the only one or even a necessary one. In the essay on the Chinese literati, education is the qualification for status and "operationalizes and specifies broader normative factors."

Heredity is another qualification for status. For example, Weber writes, "The 'poor white trash', i.e., the propertyless and, in the absence of job opportunities, very often destitute white inhabitants of the southern states of the United States of America in the period of slavery, were the actual bearers of racial antipathy, which was quite foreign to the planters. This was so because the social honor of the "poor whites" was dependent upon the social *declassement* of the Negroes" (1978:391).

10. Originally developed by Parsons, Merton elaborated these concepts and they have been picked up by textbooks in sociology ever since. See Patterson (1987:89-90).

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CHAPTER XIV

PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING NEW THEORY AND PRACTICE ABOUT A CHANGING SOCIAL REALITY, 1972-80

Demographic and Political Changes in the Community

Between 1965 and 1975, the rapid racial transformation of East New York was almost completed in the southern end. The population change of the two NYC housing projects, Linden Houses and Boulevard Houses, both south of Linden Boulevard, where U.C.C. had initially been situated, illustrated the change. In 1966, 85% of the 5,892 people who lived in Linden houses were white, 15% were Black and 1% were Puerto Rican. Ten years later, in 1975, 13% were white, 71% were black and 12.8% were Puerto Rican. In Boulevard in 1965, of 4,445 people, 81% were white, 16% were black and 2% were Puerto Rican. In 1975, 28% were white, 58% were black and 11% were Puerto Rican. The transformation in Boulevard was slower because the proportion of white families headed by persons over 60 at Boulevard in 1965 (33%) far exceeded the proportion in Linden in 1966 (14%) and they were less mobile because their incomes were substantially lower. By 1980, most of the white elderly had also moved, many to apartments in nearby Starrett City, the NY State subsidized development south of Flatlands Avenue that opened up in 1975 with additional federal rent subsidies for the elderly. By then, whites were 2% of the population in Linden and 5% of Boulevard (NYCHA, "Special Tabulation of Tenant Characteristics, 1965, 1966, 1975, 1980).

These changes in the racial population in the housing projects corresponded to the

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racial transformation in the larger area where U.C.C. distributed its newspaper, and which it thought of as its primary organizing area. This area comprised 9,000 households (15,000 in the late 1970s) situated between Livonia and Flatlands Avenues, Pennsylvania Avenue and Cleveland Street, roughly 80 square blocks, including Boulevard and Linden Projects). In 1970, non-Hispanic whites were 40%, non-Hispanic blacks were 33% and Hispanics were 22% of the population of 29,988. (I have estimated this breakdown because in 1970, the Census did not separate out the Hispanic whites and blacks from the remainder of the white and black populations as it did in 1980.) By 1980, in the same area, the population had declined to 27,086. Then, non-Hispanic whites were 3% of the population, blacks were 76%, and Hispanics were 20% These racial changes also involved changes in the unemployment rate. Between 1970 and 1980 unemployment more than tripled from 4% to 13%. The proportion of persons in the projects living below poverty level, on the other hand, remained around 22% in 1970 and 1980 (U.S. Census, "General Characteristics of the Population By Census Tracts", 1970, 1980; "Labor Force Characteristics of the Population", 1970, 1980).

In addition to the racial and economic changes, which entailed cultural and ideological changes as well, there were also changes in the structuring of women's lives. In 1970, in the Center's organizing area, females made up 53% of the population and males, 47%. By 1980, the ratio of females to males had become 56% to 44%. Over the same period, the percentage of females in the labor force increased from 27% in 1970 to 38% in 1980 while male participation declined from 47% in 1970 to 45% in 1980 (U.S. Census, "Labor Force Characteristics of the Population", 1970, 1980).

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In 1966 in Linden, "broken families" (the term used by NYCHA) made up 5% of all families compared to 1975 when the proportion of "one parent families with children under 18" (the new term) was 20% and 1980 when the proportion was 36%. At Boulevard Houses the figures were similar although the changes less dramatic because the proportion of the elderly in that project was higher. At Boulevard, the proportion of single parent families almost quadrupled from 8% in 1965 to 16% in 1975 to 28% in 1980. These figures also roughly correspond with changes in the Center's main organizing area where the proportion of single parent families was 31% in 1980 (NYCHA, "Special Tabulation of Tenant Characteristics", 1965, 1966, 1975, 1980; U.S. Census, "General Characteristics of the Population", 1970, 1980).

Given the traditionally far greater proportion of women who make up the volunteer force for community work, the combination of the increase in women's labor force participation and the increase in the proportion of single parent families (with considerable overlap of individuals) meant a significant diminution of collective community time available for community organization. For U.C.C. this was diminished further by East New York's specific geographic situation at the end of two bus lines and one subway line and near the end of another. ENY was far from the center of jobs in Manhattan or downtown Brooklyn, with its large shopping center and where the state and county courts, the NYC Board of Education, the NYC Transit Authority offices and other government building were concentrated. The relatively long commuting time of the 96% of all workers in the U.C.C. organizing area who either drove to work or used public transportation (often a bus and a subway) made scarce time at home on weekday

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evenings scarcer (U.S. Census, "Social Characteristics of the Population", 1980).

For married women with children who worked, even those with cooperative husbands, and for women who headed families and also worked, there was barely enough time on weekday evenings to attend to the kids and their homework and prepare meals. Cleaning, shopping, laundry and other chores, dating, visiting friends and relatives, and occasional attendance at church devoured precious time on weekends. Only the well organized had time remaining which the ambitious often used to enroll in college or training courses. Many factors contributed to the uneven results of U.C.C.'s strenuous (and sometimes successful) efforts. However varied these factors were, it is possible that the community's loss of women's voluntary time, combined with the economic distress burdening working class families in the 1970s, were sufficient to dissolve the possibility of re-creating U.C.C.'s ideal of membership participation. Nevertheless, this ideal continued to lurk in the minds of U.C.C.'s leaders and many of its members.

Yet, U.C.C. leaders and participants were conceptually unaware of what the consequences of this loss of women's time meant. On the one hand, they were aware that more women were in the labor force and that most of their black women volunteers with children were single women. Almost all the women volunteers in their twenties and thirties, single, married, with or without children, were employed. Even the women of the generation that had founded the Center were now employed at paid jobs. But, throughout the period, the leaders and members could not specify the loss of women's time as a *structural* problem and therefore a problem of *organizing strategy* and their

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conception of their organization. For them, the new situation only meant they had to work harder to win some of women's scarce time by providing more baby-sitters, more rides to meetings and to home, more reminders about meetings and tasks (phone calls-mailings/phone calls-mailings), and they had to be more involved in the concrete problems of people's lives -- if they were permitted.

Other demographic changes in the community as well as political changes combined to reduce the recruitment pool even further. The much lower incomes of a significant portion of the new residents required their full attention to problems of immediate survival not to joining the community center. Further, many new residents held on to older affiliations for a time before they committed themselves to organizations in their new community.

In addition, the political incorporation of blacks into the system of "city trenches" sluiced scarce potential leadership away from independent organization. The idea of "city trenches" refers to the urban political system that stressed ethnicity, race and territoriality, rather than class, separates policy areas, and emphasized the distribution of goods and services while excluding questions of production and workplace relations (Katznelson 1981). Although the new arenas of citizen-mandated participation --the community school board in a decentralized education system, and the community planning board -- were and would remain ineffective in tackling any of the community's main problems, these arenas would provide avenues for upward mobility and prestige for potential leaders and the politically ambitious who wanted to make their marks. Still fresh in the early 1970s and blinking more possibility to the politically uninitiated than

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they could ever deliver, the community school board and planning board seemed to offer new accessibility to power for the solutions to local problems. Similarly, the Democratic Party political clubs became arenas for black political participation but now this participation was tied to the established political party system and to the issues and solutions the Democratic Party deemed admissible.

The attitude of many residents was: why turn to the community center or independent political struggle when the state -- represented by our own people -- and its power to resolve problems seemed to be more immediately accessible. And, within strict limits they were right. The Community Planning Board could facilitate (if enough pressure were brought to bear or someone had the right connections) the City's cleanup of a single vacant lot that had been used as a dump, but it could nothing about the proliferation of vacant lots throughout the community that were used as dumps. It could facilitate the re-routing of a bus line but it could do nothing about the cut backs in bus service to the community during the fiscal crisis which required, at least a city-wide struggle, if not one that went beyond the City's borders.

In the 1960s and 1970s, U.C.C. members and leaders were aware of many other changes in the social economy of the NYC metropolitan area. They had lived the departure of the white middle class and working class to suburbia, Queens and white Brooklyn. They had begun to see the attendant solidification of divergent political interest between white, middle income suburbs and minority, lower income urban areas, especially related to taxes and social expenditures. They had lived ENY's racial and economic transformation into a low income, black and Hispanic ghetto with all the

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problems of schools, crime, addiction, and police brutality, unemployment, unwedded teen pregnancy, deteriorated housing, and government neglect associated with low income, inner city, minority areas. By 1980, they had lived through the five year impact of the austerity resolution of NYC's fiscal crisis that made the economic survival and family life of residents more difficult, stressful and time-consuming.

With the theory U.C.C. possessed, it felt and tracked closely throughout the 1970s the mounting national attacks upon the idea, as U.C.C. defended it, that society was responsible for its people through government as its instrumentality. U.C.C. leaders and members saw and opposed the systematic attack upon the welfare state, or, as they put it, the attack upon the ideological orientation and social achievements of "the people's coalition" led by an organized working class that had been institutionalized during the New Deal. They noted the current absence of of any significant Left or labor-organized opposition to the austerity resolution of the fiscal crisis with a dismay and sometimes resentment that was based upon their inability to integrate into their theoretical perspective the diminution of the political power of organized labor and its incorporation into the political system of the City, as well as other changes City's economy and political culture (see chapter IX).

On The Need For Theoretical Reflection

All these social, political and economic changes experienced by U.C.C.'s members and leaders had deep implications for U.C.C.'s ideas about racial integration and class-based, class-oriented struggle. But, despite their plentiful empirical evidence, and many accurate political economic analyses, U.C.C. could not designate any aspect of

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its experience as the product of structural changes. They were unable to allow their actual experience into a realm where the organizing problems they faced could be understood as posing challenges to their theory of social change, their organizing theory, their organizing strategy, and to their fundamental conception of the U.C.C. as a working class and lower middle class organization run by volunteers for whom it provided a way of life. For those elements of capitalist political economy, race relations, and women's activities that seemed to remain the same, U.C.C.'s class analyses and its commitment to integration, class-oriented struggle and to the idea that government was responsible for all citizens, provided leaders and members with enough of the insight into their political experience that they thought they needed.

Unsuccessful organizing efforts, however recurrent, were rationalized mainly in two ways. U.C.C. participants whose work failed to produce on-going campaigns, or recruit new volunteers and members were understood to have erred because of their individual lack of human sensitivity, or their mechanistic approaches, or their crude judgements, or their rigidity in their application of the 'right' ideas, or their insufficient insight, or their unexamined disagreements with "the ideas of the Center", i.e., "lack of commitment". Or, U.C.C. pointed out that the leaderships of various public and private groups from city-wide organized labor to the leaders of local school boards, planning boards, day care centers, parents associations and block and tenant organizations had vested interests in protecting their own narrow leadership, and/or were tied to existing political structures, and/or were trapped by dominant ideology.

Nor were these explanations entirely wrong. First, in any community

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organization that deploys "non-experts", i.e., volunteers, or "relatively" inexperienced paid staff as leaders in community organizing efforts, there must always be an abundance of insensitivity, mechanical understanding and rigid application of ideas, or incomplete commitment. Those are aspects of the given with which every community organization and every leadership with a pedagogical and democratic orientation must contend. In fact, U.C.C.'s pedagogical leadership defined its job as raising the ideas and experience of participants to a conscious level in relation to theory, values and goals, and creating new experience that expressed those values and goals, so that participants could continue to develop their abilities and understanding. And second, it is always an aspect of the given ground of Left community organizing, that the leaderships of other organizations are committed to protecting their leadership, that almost all are tied to existing political structures, that almost all are ideologically committed to the society's dominant ideas. U.C.C. understood that part of its job as an independent, ideologically oppositional organization was to point out the political and ideological limitations of those organizations and leaderships to community residents so that residents, eventually, would less easily be misled and accept U.C.C.'s direction.

But, because these two kinds of explanations refer to aspects of ideological, oppositional community organizing that are always a part of its reality, they can rarely serve either as sufficient accounts of organizational failure over time, or as accounts of why an organization is successful at one historical moment and not another. Furthermore, as leaders and members accumulate experience and deepen their understanding over time they should become, all things being equal, more effective as

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organizers. If the theoretically designated potential constituency of the organization (unaffiliated community residents) continues to accept other leaderships, resists U.C.C. leadership or is unreachable by either, then another kind of explanation is needed. Then, what was needed was an analysis that accounted for U.C.C.'s inability to recruit participants more than temporarily, that is, for more than just a single campaign or a program. What was needed was a recognition and explanation of the signal difficulty U.C.C. faced in the 1970s of locating and developing residents who not only would volunteer in a campaign, but would also then desire to become members willing to would take responsibility for the organization. And, this explanation had to reach beyond the inadequacies of individual U.C.C. members and staff, and beyond reference to the corruption, vested interests, political ties, mis-leading ideas or ideological accommodations of leaderships of other community or city-wide organizations.

What was needed was a new theoretical analysis and organizing strategy that incorporated a structural understanding of the changing role of women, the new African American ethnicity, a changing class structure as well as other structural changes in the social, political and economic reality of the community, the City and the larger society . For an organizing group like U.C.C., what was also needed was an effort to stretch beyond the faded evocativeness of appeals to the class dimension of identity, the 'common goals of Negroes, Puerto Ricans and whites', or the somewhat stronger appeal to the identities of parents and democratic citizens, in order to appeal to new dimensions of identities, e.g., as blacks, or as women, or as Viet Nam war veterans that connected to the specific experience and cherished self-conceptions of ENY's working class residents.

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The task of organizing was to enable people to see the connection between one aspect of individual identity and another, one structured dimension of interest and another, and to connect these to a broader social theoretical and philosophical understanding. But for that to be accomplished, U.C.C. had to recognize differently structured interests and engage the emerging identities but it did not.

Of course, as a small organization committed to organizing, U.C.C. could not develop new theory. It was without the intellectual resources of people, time, and information. But, it was not without the experience and knowledge to develop a strong, not merely glimmering, recognition that its own experience augured new structural problems and that this experience required deeper theoretical analysis. No such recognition of this need evolved.

Instead of admitting the need for new ideas and new theory, their response to the political and social reaction they perceived on a national and municipal level, and to the consequences of reaction for the community, was to reassert vigorously their ideas, their values, and their political analyses, and to renew their organizing efforts and expand their services. Nor was vigorous reassertion and renewed effort without impact or value. Leaders and members produced enough success in local campaigns, enough meaningful internal and community program, and enough reasonable analysis of the national and metropolitan situation to persuade Center participants that their targets were correct, their aim was accurate, and their approach to organizing were successful...enough.

The Wonders of Internal Program And Its Ambiguous Theoretical and Practical Consequences

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U.C.C. maintained its social and political commitment to integrated schools and housing, and to the need for an integrated movement for social change throughout the 1970s (and 1980s). This commitment was expressed and reinforced by U.C.C.'s emphasis upon the richness of difference in its internal programs, by the regular reports of its newspaper on integrated schools and housing, by its efforts to push other, larger groups, e.g. the Brooklyn Council of Churches and the NAACP, with a professed commitment to integration, to take action, and in its specific references to race and integration in testimonies before state agencies (such at the Board of Education, the Board of Estimate, and temporary commissions appointed to examine specific related issues). But, after the major efforts of the College Groups and the decision of the NY State Board of Regents to outlaw the deliberate setting up of segregated facilities in NY State schools and colleges, U.C.C. was unable to construct any local organizing efforts or join any larger city- or state-wide effort addressed to the goal of integration. There were cities in the U.S. and even communities in NYC in which struggles for integrated education and housing flared as extensions in time of the judicial and ideological momentum produced by the civil rights movement. But, as a political mobilizing or organizing issue in the community, City, or nation, "integration" was dead, although U.C.C. would not surrender the issue.

At that historical moment -- the political defeat of integration -- it is hard to overemphasize the impact of U.C.C.'s internal programs upon leaders and members for girding their commitment to integration and restraining their theoretical questioning. As organizers and providers of services with an ideological orientation, the Center's staff

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and members were required to act with commitment on a daily basis, a requirement that left some, but not much time or many resources to reflect on the need for new theory. But, it was not just a matter of time and resources. The same activities (services, social life, campaigns, internal programs) that sustained member's ideological orientation and social ties pressured them toward the restrictions of reiteration: the harder we work, the more we value our products; the more we value our products, the harder we ought to work to produce more of the same.

In many ways, the Center's internal programs in the 1970s were as varied and extensive as they had ever been. U.C.C. opened its day care center for 180 pre-school and school-age children in 1973 thus connecting the organization more closely to a new population of adults. It increased the number of events in its Center-wide annualized social programs and intensified its social group programs which were attended by more participants than since their eviction from housing. The U.C.C. Annual Street Fair began in 1973 and its variety of ethnic bands, singers, dancers and foods attracted 2,500-3,000 people every year in the 1970s. There were popular basketball leagues for teenage boys (almost entirely black) coached by black men volunteers that emphasized teamwork, the playing of even the mediocre players, and discouraged 'trash talk', tantrums and sore losing; a Children's and Puppet Theater Group that performed on Saturday mornings in public school buildings throughout the community for several years; a 25 member Folk Dance Performing Group that featured inter-racial dancers of Latin American, African European, Asian and American dances that performed in the community and in other New York City venues; a sewing club; a Trick or Treat for UNICEF Program that

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expanded by the end of the 1970s to include skit performances before elementary school children in the public school and 600 costumed public school children who collected money on Halloween, and many other activities. Further, although the substantial majority of participants in the adult social group programs were white, except for the senior citizens who were mainly black, the Center's internal programs were always racially mixed. At larger events, often one-third to 40% of the participants were black and Puerto Rican, and the proportion of minorities was higher at the largest events. Members busied themselves organizing programs and campaigns, and in the second half of the seventies, the Center was often filled with volunteers, including many new black and Hispanic volunteers, on Saturday mornings and some weekday evenings. Despite all the problems U.C.C. faced in its efforts to organize social action or to recruit new members to assume responsibility for its program, it was easy for U.C.C. members to convince themselves they were growing.

I cite three examples of the type of experience generated by the U.C.C. context--an incident in the camp program, an argument between the white director and black assistant director, and one of several annual rituals -- to indicate how these worked to reinforce commitment.

In 1980, in one of the three-week sessions, one-third of the summer camp population was white (a fraction that would diminish rapidly in subsequent years). It was a session in which the campers evinced considerable resistance to the camp's ideas about integration in the self-segregated patterns of interaction they created within their group. This resistance was not unusual. Indeed, as the ideological remnants of the civil rights

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movement dissolved over the seventies, the resistance of the campers -- affected by the atmospheres of their families, schools and communities -- to reaching out to youth different from them had increased. In earlier years, this resistance would begin to diminish by the middle of the summer. Partly this resulted from the children's accumulated experience with one another cleaning their cabins, hiking, playing sports, folk dancing, doing work projects, etc. But, it also resulted from the summer-long discussions in meetings of camper groups and the entire camp led by counselors and administration on conflicts of race and ethnicity (as well as differences of gender and disability) that arose. Racial name-calling, poking fun at physical features with racial meanings, fights, threats and avoidance, disdain for ethnic foods or dances, the development of racial and ethnic cliques in groups, and other expressions of racial conflict were discussed. The camp leadership emphasized that the ideas, values and attitudes expressed in these conflicts exemplified and reinforced the prejudices and discrimination of the larger society with often oppressive and dangerous consequences -- in language appropriate to different ages levels. The camp urged that, instead, it was possible for campers to create another, more democratic and enriching kind of experience in camp and in the world. Simultaneously, the camp tried to expose the campers to a range of ethnic foods, dramatics, dance, living newspapers, arts and crafts and research projects that emphasized differences of culture and history and the rewards of learning across difference.

Despite these efforts, in the middle of the summer in 1980, a few of the older boys and girls groups had maintained their racially self-segregating patterns of

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interaction. One morning, as the camp sat down for breakfast, the 12 year old boys group sat again with the whites at one end of the table and the blacks at the other. With the resistances of the whole camp in mind, the camp director stood in the middle of the dining room and announced, "If you all want to live in a segregated world, you can have it. You are now all required to sit at different tables. Instead of sitting with your groups. all the blacks, campers and staff, will now sit at these tables, all the whites at these tables and all the Puerto Ricans at these tables. Move." As the director stepped aside and most of the campers and staff obediently rose to change their seats, several of the teen campers with a long experience in camp, indignantly declared their refusal to eat breakfast in a segregated dining room. They urged everyone to join them at the camp meeting place on the logs and everyone did, including, with a little pressure from other campers, those campers and staff who would have preferred to eat their breakfasts. While the director stayed in his cabin, the campers and staff spent the next two hours -- with the older campers (14 to 16 years old) providing most of the leadership -- urgently discussing the meanings of a segregated world and a segregated camp and what they could do in camp to change its atmosphere. When the meeting ended, the campers drew up signs, picketed the dining room demanding an end to segregation, and petitioned the director to change his edict, which, after some discussion, he did. The incident changed the patterns of racial interaction in camp for the remainder of the summer and boosted the morale of campers and staff for the change in the camp atmosphere which they saw as their achievement.

For the older campers, for staff, especially those who were volunteers in U.C.C.

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during the year, and for the administration, the occasional appearance of similar incidents, unplanned and always a little surprising, provided sustaining fuel for their ideas about what could be accomplished with leadership and a commitment to integration. In addition, the camp program required continuing work on the part of a substantial fraction of Center members. These included the year-round paid Center staff, the volunteers who were employed as staff during the summers, the U.C.C. volunteers who arrived at camp to help out on weekends or when they had vacation time, and the volunteers who on Spring weekends prepared the Camp for the summers and put it to bed for the Winter on Fall weekends, and volunteers who enrolled their children. The more they worked -- investing their time and energy -- the more they talked to one another about the value of what they did, the more they believed their investment was important. The more they explicitly tried to change the ways in which racial/ethnic prejudice and discrimination shaped the everyday attitudes, self-conceptions and behaviors of children and teenagers, and the harder it was, the more Center volunteers and staff thought it was valuable.

In fact, within the camp setting, dramatic changes in the ideas and actions of young people and adults sometimes did occur. As what U.C.C. participants read or heard about rarely referred to anything like their own experience in this area, they believed they had access to a level of struggle and education over race and ethnicity for integration (and other dimensions of identity and behavior) that they needed to hold fast. They told one another that their experience provided them with as much insight as anyone about how deeply held by whites and blacks were the dominant ideas about race,

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but also that commitment and hard work could produce change.

In other words, the demands of the internal program required representing their ideas; their enactment of their ideas produced some changes in children and adults; and, these changes became their regularly cited evidence that integration was possible if only people, that is, leadership were committed. Of course, this was not analysis. Analysis required asking questions about which social forces in the larger society needed to develop out of which social structures in order to create the committed leadership that U.C.C. thought was necessary. In the U.C.C. universe, not only did hard work and commitment leave little time for analysis, but also often, they became central analytic concepts in the voluntaristic sense that they were used to explain how change could occur on a broader scale as well.

A second example illustrating the interracial meanings that continued to be created within the organization occurred between the camp director and the assistant director. The white director was a 39 year old Jewish man who had worked at U.C.C. for 13 years in various capacities. Ada W., the assistant director was a 39 year old African American woman who had worked at U.C.C. for eight years mainly as the program director in charge of the day care center's after school program. She had grown up in a family of eight children outside a small South Carolina town where her parents were farmers, and she, her father's favorite. She arrived in NYC at 18 in the tracks of older brothers and sisters and worked as a domestic until she married a Jamaican man who eventually became a cutter in the garment industry. They had three children in a marriage that soon became unhappy, a marriage she later suspected, he offered in

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exchange for citizenship. In the second half of her 20s in the late sixties she enrolled in the SEEK program at CCNY where she acquired her bachelor's degree. She also began to participate as an organizationally unaffiliated parent in the public school struggles in East New York, especially because the schools in her poorest section of the community were awful for black children. She enrolled her oldest in the Open Schools program in which he was bussed to a mainly white school in Queens across the nearby borough border. As she attended community meetings and the public school battles heated up, she began, very guardedly to be related to the U.C.C. despite the harassing and sometimes effectively intimidating insults slung at blacks for "kissing whitey's ass" if they supported integrated schools, by those who used black nationalism/separatism in the late sixties in crass and self-serving ways. During this period too, the difficulties in her marriage intensified and she separated from her husband retaining custody of her three children, the eldest of whom was eleven. Later, she began working on a master's degree in education which she completed while working as the assistant director of our day care center.

In 1992, Ada W. recollected,

> I was attracted to the U.C.C. because of the way they presented themselves to the community. I remember the first Charette meeting I attended. They were talking about building a school. One of the U.C.C. people asked, "how would the school be integrated". That was important to me. The whole concept of integration was something in 1968 that people were talking about, even though there was also that element that was urging us not to be involved with integration. To me it made sense that if society can be changed, people were going to have to work together to do it. That idea, of working together across differences, black people and white people working to make a better life for us -- that's the thing that attracted me. And, since I had never been exposed or had an opportunity to work with white

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people on an equal level, it seemed as though that was what people at the Center were saying and I hoped that it was possible.

I also reasoned that if children were going to be forced to deal with whites in school and on the same level, I needed to be exposed to them as well. The first time I had got involved in anything was because of my children. My son was one of the first to be involved in Headstart. I got involved because I though education was important and I wanted to know what my kids were doing...People talked about how the schools in the neighborhood were not the best schools and if you sent the children to white schools the kids would get a better education. And, I was prepared to send my kids but I also wanted to understand what they would be feeling, and if I wasn't involved in it, how would I understand what they would feel when they cam home and said things -- I had no experience working with whites on the same level. ...it seemed to me that the North was more open, on the surface to integration than the South. Why not try it here.

...I came from the South with a very strong sense of being black and not letting white people get or put you down. My mother, I remember very vividly, replied to a white man who had called her 'auntie', 'I didn't know your father had a sister like me.' And, this was the kind of thing she in particular would do and tell us not to allow [white] people to do to us. She would tell us when we went to work for white people -- I worked as a domestic in their homes and as a field hand -- if they were going to feed us dinner, it was to be inside. We were not to sit on the back porch and eat. Or, we were not allowed to buy hot dogs in the back of a restaurant because we were not allowed to go in the front to spend our money. Dad (who had gone to college) would be more involved in reading to us, telling us stories about our past and who we are...The first encyclopedia [our high school] got was a set the [white] high school had thrown out and which my father rescued for our school...From those points of view, growing up among white people and having to get along with white people, and my mom always being on edge, always thinking something was going to happen to us, and would ask us what would happen when we went to work for someone. When a white person did not treat us fairly we would not go back to work for them.

I came up to New York in 1958 before the civil rights movement really got going so it didn't affect us that much. The only thing that affected us a lot was when the Supreme Court made the decision to desegregate the schools. There was a lot of excitement and happiness and discussion about it. Some white people I would work for would say things like, 'You don't want to go to school with white people do you? You just want your schools to be better'. Because we would get discarded books from the high school

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and see the children's names in them.

After becoming a member [for several years] and then a worker in the U.C.C., I felt respected for who I am and what I had to give. Many times I was one of the few Blacks speaking at meetings or with U.C.C., at different places. I never felt in the Center that I was a token or being tolerated. I always felt that there was a value placed on my ideas and me. I also believed that what we were doing was right...In the early and mid-70s, the two ideas most important to us were that government was responsible for people and, wherever possible, pressure should be put on government to do what it was supposed to do. The other one is that integration was the way to go -- if you were going to change what is, then people had to get together to change it. It was important that black people, white people and Hispanic people be involved in changing the world together because we were the ones who were going to live in it.

Also, people had to see that black people could present ideas and could be there with an interracial group. When people expect you to get up at a school board meeting after a discussion in a staff meeting, and expect that you can handle yourself -- you've discussed the issues ...[and] we were expected to address the issues...or with a congressperson or state representative. There wasn't anybody putting words in my mouth. We knew the direction we wanted to go in. I think that was a way of showing respect and that we were valued... I knew that people would stare at us, or that people in the neighborhood would say things like "oreo cookie" or...'she must be doing more than going to meetings'.

But I understood that my children and I were getting something, that we were putting something in and that we were getting something from the organization so it made sense for me to continue. My kids got exposed to cultural things that I would not and could not have been able to provide for them. They were a part of the social fabric of the Center. They went on trips, they had discussions where they were expected to express their opinions, where it was understood that they may have opinions about things. They were treated with a great deal of respect; they were parts of plays, dancing, they had friends... and so did I or thought I had . There were always things to do, people to be with, no time to be lonely. We were exposed to a lot through the Center that we could not have been exposed to otherwise.

In 1990, Martin E. remembered,

"In the late 70s, Ada and I had socialized together and worked in the Center for several years although we worked in different parts of the

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organization -- she in the day care center and I doing community organizing. We knew and liked one another, shared a general set of political values and had shared confidences about our marital difficulties. But we were not good friends for all the reasons that make it difficult for men and women of different races and backgrounds, with somewhat different interests, who are not sexually involved with one another, or working close together to become close.

In the middle of a morning meeting of the camp administration in the second or third summer I was director and she the assistant director, Ada and I became embroiled in an angry argument over a problem in camp (I don't remember what) in her area of responsibility which I believe she was inadequately pursuing. In the course of the argument, I snidely urged her to "stop playing games" and deal with the problem. Shortly afterwards, she asked to meet with me about our argument and told me she was seriously thinking about quitting. As we stood behind the ball field backstop knowing that in half an hour the staff and children would come pouring out of the dining room as breakfast ended, she talked, I listened.

To her, the idea of a black woman "playing games" with a white man was too reminiscent of how black women in the South were forced to manipulate their oblique ways around white men in order to achieve whatever limited goals they could. She did not want to be in a position where anything she did could be perceived that way, and she refused to be in a situation where anybody, especially a white man, patronized her so contemptuously. She would quit before permitting it to happen again, in fact, at that moment, she was prepared to pack up and leave camp.

I thought as I stood listening to Ada, at first impatiently and obligatorily, 'oh no, do I have to hear this defensive bullshit? Don't we ever get passed these accusations of prejudice?', and then with my admiration growing about her willingness to talk about this, I realized that the point was not what I intended but what she heard and felt. We had said to one another over and over: you never can get entirely beyond race, and, you need to deal with what people hear not what you intend. But, momentarily, I was furious and sick of it. And, then my experience and ideas clocked in. Of course, I had used the same phrase "playing games" before, to friends and enemies , including white men and women. Granted it was a mean and disrespectful term to use with one's friends and colleagues. It was even possible that the fact that she was black and a woman and in an administratively subordinate position leveraged my wielding that club of a phrase. But, what Ada felt and heard -- and as she spoke I ceased to doubt that she heard and felt what she described -- meant that her effort in her situation (both historical and

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organizational) to challenge me required a powerful sense of herself. She was forthrightly engaging a conflict which possibly entailed the loss of her job, displaying a level of moral daring which I doubted whether I possessed.

Her courage, intelligence, moral and political commitment, her desire to do a job well and be valued and respected for it came through as clearly as anything of that sort I had ever heard. The fact is that I felt respected and valued as a white man for the implicit presumption in her effort that I could respond in a reasonable, fair, sensitive and just way. I have no idea what I said or did at that time, but whatever it was, it expressed what I was thinking and my desire to hold on to this person.

I think of that moment as a turning point in our relationship, and we built upon it, fractured piece by fractured piece, in how we worked out other subsequent, often angry and distrustful disagreements, as well as how we cooperated and supported on another at work, in our political struggles, and in our social lives. We worked together for 10 years after that, as colleagues and close friends. Our closeness hinged upon our acceptance of the fact that although the distances and distrust between us could be traversed with rationality and concern, they would be ever-present. Part of my sense of who I was and her sense of who she was became our willingness and ability to negotiate this distance with a minimum of furtiveness and bullshit about race, with a willingness to say when we thought the other's racial bias clouded my or her sight of things. And, knowing that we could do this with one another made it possible to share and struggle with others across the same distances and differences. [In 1992, Ada W. read Martin E.'s account, although they had not discussed the incident since the time it happened in 1979 or 1980, and confirmed the accuracy of the facts and agreed with the interpretation.]

This second example is a type of interchange which occurred at different times over different matters with different people over the course of their history in the U.C.C. Ada's and Martin's shared intellectual framework, shared experience, and mutual reliance in conflictual community social action and internal programmatic struggles made it possible to talk about these problems and think about how to resolve them. But, they were pressured to resolve the conflict, not walk away and avoid one another, because

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they had a job to do and they had to do it together. In this instance they were paid employees in charge of a summer camp, but analogous interchanges occurred among volunteers -- tied by philosophical and political commitments, emotional loyalties, and communal dependence -- on a program committee, or planning for a dinner dance, or on a campaign or in the day care center, or in the formulation of a position on an issue in the community. On the one hand, despite their years of shared experience and perspective, there were moments when they were angrily ready to believe that their efforts to cross racial difference with honesty and remain together in the same struggle could not be accomplished. On the other, the successful resolution of those conflicts, in a context of shared ideas and mutually supportive effort to make an internal program work, maintained a shared life in which they felt part of one another's lives. The more often it happened in their own lives, the more easily they could navigate it. The more they knew they could do it, the more they believed that others could and that integration as a way of living across difference was possible on a larger scale. Within the Center's program, the successful resolution of intense conflicts based on the Center's ideas tied people further to one another and to the ideas.[1]

A third example is the annual ritual "Celebration of Struggle" at the day care center, that was like many other traditions, created in the organization. It was preceded by a week of performances of stories, songs, and poetry of various cultures and various struggles for freedom throughout the world, with a focus upon the diverse backgrounds of the children and the staff. On the last day, the children performed and sang songs of freedom and struggle of different nationalities, as well as songs of the civil rights

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movement and the U.S. labor movement struggles before annual audiences of at least 200 proud and adoring parents, a few local politicians and friends of the organization. At the end of the performances and singing, the children lit candles and children and parents stood and recited a pledge "to fight hunger, disease, war, fear, ignorance and despair whether in East New York or beyond in the future".

There were many such annual events although not all equally moving: New Year's Eve parties with 100 people, International Dinners with 350 people, Dinner Dances with 150, Easter-Passover dinners with 75 people, Memorial Day Work Weekends with 90 men, women and children, July 4th picnics with 75 people, Labor Day weekends at camp with 100 men, women and children, Volunteers' Parties with 150 people, Thanksgiving Dinners with 75 people, even 30 brave and bundled Christmas-Channukah carollers who trekked one chilly night each year around the housing projects until the early 1980s when too many rocks were thrown at them. Each of these events were interracial and included people of various economic strata and different religions, and most of these larger gatherings included children.[2] Their ability to express their ideas through the creation of experience and in circumstances that brought large numbers of people together buoyed the spirits and beliefs of leaders and members. And, each of these rituals (strung together over time by unceasing committee meetings, community meetings, petition campaigns, demonstrations, work weekends, concerts, small group recreational activities, and continuing preparations and recruitment for each tiny and large event) reminded them of who they were and how much they had accomplished. These wonderful internal programs seemed to show to members that they could together, with tremendously hard

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work, create a social reality different from the opposing political and social direction of the country.

At the same time, U.C.C.'s proof that integration was possible, curiously distorted and diminished leaders' and members' conceptualization of the structural reality of race and encouraged a voluntaristic emphasis in their theory of practice. For what did U.C.C.'s proof consist of: that African Americans and whites and Hispanics *could learn* to share a social, and political life together, could understand one another and enrich one another's lives, with considerable difficulty to be sure -- *if they wanted to.* Indeed, most of the people I interviewed, including those who left in disagreement, testified that U.C.C. was the place where they learned how to talk, listen and address conflict across the racial divide based on ideas. Further, in certain circumstances, young people and adults could be stimulated *to want* to learn how to live that way.

Those were surely important things to know; and, surely they were constitutive elements in the grounding of any politics of integration. Further, will, hard work, and commitment were analytic categories in U.C.C.'s theory of organizing for social change. The key was to create the desire. But, if the desire did not exist and was resisted in the larger society, in particular and frequently, by the white working class despite its "objective interests", what could it be said that U.C.C.'s evidence proved? Only that with desire and hard work, given a Left leadership who knew what it was doing, and various other conditions, it was possible to create an integrated social life, integrated programs and integrated social struggle on a small scale, at least for a time. These programs provided access for U.C.C. members to one another and allowed them to be connected

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to real people in a real community. I do not wish in any way to diminish these very rich achievements. At the same time , the success of these internal programs discouraged recognition of the need for new theory.

Willfulness On The Defensive: Keeping a Commitment to Integration

Scouring the newspapers daily for good news about their position on integration, U.C.C. participants unearthed precious gems through the middle of the 1970s. The Link reported on successful city-wide school integration in Louisville (12/75), the integration of Canarsie and East Flatbush schools (1/76), the Supreme Court's approval of the construction of low income housing in white suburbs to relieve racial segregation in cities(5/76), a new U.S. Civil Rights Commission report on a study of 1,300 school districts that concluded that school integration works when political leaders are committed to it (11/76) , the HUD Secretary's announcement that communities which refused to accept federally subsidized low income housing would lose their block grants (7/77), and the efforts of parents of Andrew Jackson High School students in nearby Jamaica, Queens, a predominantly black community, for an integrated high school, (9/77).

Mainly, however, U.C.C. found political movement away from integration on a national, state-wide and local level. The Link derided the Supreme Court's decision against metropolitan integration in Detroit as "a giant step backward" (6/74). The court had based its decision upon the tradition of local autonomy with regard to public schools and cited lack of evidence of discrimination by suburban towns. As usual, the newspaper pointed out that when the society's patterns of housing and community were racially

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segregated, local control meant control by one racial group and the exclusion of minorities. Local control was not sacrosanct; metropolitan treatment of metropolitan problems was commonplace. Given the anti-busing climate, the court was choosing one public school tradition --local control-- over the tradition of the common school which welcomed all students. In its analysis of the resistance to school integration in "Battle in Boston" (10/74), the newspaper blamed political leaders like President Ford for encouraging the anti-integrationists. A few months later U.C.C. opposed the NY State Regents decision that school districts making "serious efforts" to integrate their schools need not be required to establish a special ratio of Negro to white to Puerto Rican students ("Regents Revive Jim Crow", 2/75). The newspaper reported that this Regents policy marked the abandonment of integration as a social and educational goal and a further step in the use of race to divide Negroes, whites and Puerto Ricans.

In "Race, Politics and Leadership" (7/76), The Link wrote that "the issue of race haunts the [presidential] election campaign. The conflict between the goal of a democratic society which should foster racial equality and integration but practices discrimination and segregation is not openly discussed by the candidates. But it comes out anyway in how they deal with busing in education and 'ethnic purity'." According to The Link, Ford and Reagan were openly reactionary. By introducing anti-busing legislation, Ford wanted to reverse the policy of desegregation, and Reagan's conservative strength was pushing Ford to the right. Carter was vague but his reference to a concept of 'ethnic purity' implied approval of neighborhoods segregated by race and class. Over and over again through the seventies, The Link would declare to the readers

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U.C.C. hoped it had among the 15,000 ENY households where volunteers distributed the monthly newspaper that:

> The idea of segregation is poison for people who need each other to fight for jobs, to fight for schools which educate children to value each other's culture and history, to fight for a world without apartheid and oppression. We need a different idea -- the idea not of segregation -- but of solidarity in struggle -- the solidarity of people who must work for a living and want to live a full life as neighbors and partners.
>
> If we can master such an idea, we will have the big tool to create a political party able to analyze problems and willing to debate issues clearly. In the struggles to clarify ideas, analyze problems and openly debate issues, we will find the leadership we need("Race, Politics and Leadership", 7/76).

A year after the election, in the article about the black parents who objected to the racial segregation of Andrew Jackson High School, The Link pointed out how easily the high school could be integrated by exchanging students with a nearby school in Nassau County. Unfortunately, "in the last election, every politician in the country ran in opposition to integration. All claimed that Nassau county residents earned the right to buy segregated living. [But] nobody has that right. It is a poisonous idea that anyone has the right to exclude others on the basis of race or religion...Unfortunately Jackson parents are alone except for the support of the NAACP." ("Parents Fight For Integrated Schools, 9/77)

In December, 1977, The Link printed an article that angrily summarized what U.C.C. believed to be its experience of what happened to the struggle for integrated schools in NYC. The article starts out by reminding readers of the statistical analysis that showed that integrated schools, planned for on a metropolitan level, was still possible; and, that integration did not fail in NYC, it was killed by elected officials and

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the NYC Board of Education:

> Two groups of so-called community leaders danced at the funeral when integration was declared 'dead'. Negro and Puerto Rican political leaders discovered the advantage of maintaining segregated schools and obtaining patronage through decentralization and community control. White liberal leaders were happy to get on the bandwagon. Now they wouldn't have to change anything about the way they lived and acted but could still be on the side of "civil rights". The Ford Foundation [and government agencies] paid for the funeral in order to guarantee quiet ghettoes in future summers. Their supposed support for community control and decentralization as alternatives to the struggle for integration paid off. There has been no real change in our society, and the ghettoes are quiet.
>
> The struggle for integrated schools means that fundamental areas of our society will have to change. Schools will have a hard time steering *working class and working class poor youth* toward unskilled jobs and unemployment if they are side by side with *middle class youth* headed for college and the professions.
>
> White liberal 'civic leaders' and Negro and Puerto Rican 'community leaders' accepted segregation in exchange for the chance for a few principalships, some bi-lingual teaching positions, a few thousand para-professional jobs and some status as clubhouse hacks. As a result of that deal, a few more Negroes and Puerto Ricans will 'make it' and we have no organized struggle for full employment, adequate housing or better schools.
>
> *The integration movement in New York City may be dead, but integrated education is still possible for our children -- if we want it.* Our own district 19 is a good example. District 19's public school population is 53.8% Negro, 38% Hispanic and 8.2% other (mainly white). As long as we remain confined to our own school district, the possibilities for racial integration are limited. But, ENY is bordered by three school districts whose school populations are 80% white. Canarsie, Woodhaven and Howard Beach are less than 15 minutes away. Even a limited amount of cross-busing would enable the children of those communities and ENY to attend integrated schools.
>
> The purpose of education is to prepare children to live in society. *The question is whether they will accept that society as it is or will they struggle to make it something better.* Right now the schools prepare children to accept a society with permanent unemployment, racial separation and the use of war as a way of resolving international conflict. *Do the people of this*

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community or this city want our children to accept that kind of society?

We want our children to learn different values and ways to struggle for a different future. We don't want our children to adjust to their place in a society which segregates people by race and class. We don't want them to accept that there aren't enough jobs and people must cut each other's throat to get a day's work. We don't want them to learn that the word 'brother ' only applies to people of the same color or religion.

... An integrated education is based on the idea that the cultures of the working class and racial and ethnic minorities have important values not only for them, but for all of us. An integrated education teaches us that our 'brother' is the one who will struggle together with us so that nobody goes hungry and rots without a future.

...We know that it is possible and we are prepared to struggle for it. The U.C.C. Education Committee invites you to work with other parents and concerned community residents for integrated education for all our children [My emphases.]

None of the themes in this article were new but that in itself warrants attention. If almost all other community-based groups in NYC had surrendered the idea of integrated schools, U.C.C. had not. Throughout the 1970s, it held up the integration banner in a working class, African American and Latino community and presumed or hoped that a sizable chunk of the community supported its fusion of integrationism and a class perspective.

Among other things, The Link article expresses U.C.C.'s sense of its own political isolation. From U.C.C.'s perspective, (one that echoes its conclusions at the end of the battle over the Educational Complex) the dissolution of the *struggle* for integrated schools was born, not with the white or government resistance which it saw as a given, but with the emergence of black nationalism, the retreat by white liberals, and the machinations of private and public elites. The consequences of this concatenation, as

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U.C.C. perceived it, blocked the possibility of an interracial people's struggles, not only over schools, but also in relation to opposing the attacks on the welfare state and the harsh resolution of the NYC fiscal crisis. The white liberals and the black pluralist and nationalist leadership offered no support. They searched but found no other Left group working on a community level in NYC who roughly shared their emphasis upon combining a class perspective with a struggle for integration. But, if the movement for integrated schools was dead, it was nothing but voluntaristic willfulness that impelled U.C.C. 's resurrectionary hope that "integrated education is still possible--if we want it".

Reflections On The Ambiguous Theoretical and Practical Consequences of Ideological Organizing

U.C.C.'s conclusion was politically empty with regard to the analysis that preceded it, a hint that it faced a theoretical problem. It was a hint easily ignored, at least in part because, as an organizing group, U.C.C. was practiced in denying the limits of the given. As an organizing group, its orientation was to emphasize how the willful agency of groups composed of imperfect individuals could shape and change social structures, not to analyze how structures dampen agency.

I have already mentioned three factors that contributed to U.C.C.'s theoretical stiffening, i.e., its inability/unwillingness to recognize the need for new theory. The first was that since theory and practice are never perfectly convergent, organizers must fill explanatory gaps regarding successful and unsuccessful campaigns/programs with ad hoc concepts such as insight, prudence, empathy, commitment and will, flexibility, understanding or the insufficient amounts of any of these. As U.C.C.'s practice faced

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more difficulties, and especially the deep "anomaly" of failing to recruit new members, its leaders and members deployed these ad hoc concepts more frequently. They did not think about dumping or modifying their theory. The second factor was the absence of acceptable alternative theory. In its struggles over the Educational Complex, the Third World Corridors, and for no tuition, U.C.C. 's opposition to black nationalism on both philosophical grounds and because nationalism possessed no class analysis provoked an embattled U.C.C. to adhere even more strictly to the class analysis and organizing orientation it possessed. Instead of recognizing the need for complementary analyses of class and racial structures, its internal understanding took the form of setting the racialist and class analyses into opposition. The third was that its successful internal social programs and services and the social ties they generated appeared to provide evidence of the relevance and value of the organization's work and, therefore, the theory for which it stood.

Here I want to point out some of the deeper ambiguities in the consequences of U.C.C.'s theory and practice. U.C.C. was a self-consciously ideological organization. By 'ideology' I refer to the particular blend of theory and philosophy that grounds and directs practice. U.C.C.'s 'attitude towards ideology' (Fisher and Kling, 1990) may be contrasted with neo-populist organizing theory which sees the traditional values of common people as the repository of democratic wisdom [e.g., Boyte 1980, 1989; Boyte, Booth and Max 1986; Kahn 1982; and see also Fisher's (1984) and Delgado's (1986) criticism] , and the "free [social] spaces" (Boyte and Evans 1986) they inhabit or create as the primary basis for social change. U.C.C.'s theory of organizing presumed that working people held deep

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and complex commitments to values and ideas, many of which tied them to the dominant culture and ideology and divided them from one another, and some of which possessed liberatory potential that could be built upon for democratic change. The 'people' were neither empty vessels awaiting the correct ideology, nor pure and simple repositories of democratic traditions, values and wisdom. They were often ferociously committed to wrong ideas. Transformative democratic social movement could never simply emerge from objective circumstances without leaders and organizers, i.e. in Gramsci's term, "organic intellectuals". What was needed were consciously ideological leadership and organization willing to engage in ideological conflict which connected people's grievances to an analysis which built upon, but took people beyond the parochial ideas and constituencies with which they immediately identified.[3] In the absence of ideological conflict, people would never move beyond their system of received beliefs, their 'commonsensical' identification with what is.

Following Gramsci, Rude (1980) makes a similar point. He argues that all successful transformative social movements include a two part ideology: a popular ideology rooted in people's traditions and a derived ideology, i.e., the theoretical ideas of intellectuals, organizers and leaders. Writing about the development of popular ideology in England, France and in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Rude (1980:35) writes that, "...it must be emphasized, whether the resultant mixture [of 'inherent' ideology (or traditional beliefs) and 'derived' ideology (advocated by intellectuals)] took on a militant and revolutionary or a conservative and counter-revolutionary form depended less on the nature of the recipients or of the 'inherent' beliefs from which they started than on the

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nature of the 'derived' beliefs compounded by the circumstance then prevailing and what E.P. Thompson calls the 'sharp jostle of experience'."

The Center's theory of practice, therefore, entailed the necessity of sharp and sustained ideological conflict and required the continuous advocacy of its ideas. But, this presented a problem. In Marxist theory, the ultimate judge of the validity of the theory is the constituency whom one is trying to organize, and whether they can be moved to accept the theory as a way of illuminating their life situation and the (potential) social crisis they face, and as giving rational direction to their course of action. Ideas become material forces when they are seized by the masses, but if they are not accepted, what then? In the Center's version of Marxism, because its theory of organizing recognized that its constituency was identified with hegemonic ideas and institutions, its constituency's resistance to enlightenment, that is, its resistance to accepting the Center's ideology, could not count as evidence of the incorrectness of the theoretically derived ideology. Where then could new theory or even the recognition of the need for new theory come from? Either an organization like U.C.C. must develop new theory based on its own experience and resources, which it could not do. Or, it must be open to the theoretical work of others outside the organization that organization members introduce for discussion. There were general two obstacles to this process that were inherent in U.C.C.'s practice.

To understand the first obstacle, I borrow from Habermas' (1973:25-40) critique of Lukacs (1971) 1922 essay, "Towards a Methodology of the Problem of Organization". Habermas calls Lukacs' essay "the most consistent formulation of a theory of the Party

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which solves the problem of the mediation of theory and praxis solely with a view to the imperatives of the conduct of political struggle."

Habermas says that it is important to distinguish three functions in the relationship of theory and practice, each one of which must be validated in terms of different criteria. These functions are: 1) the formation and extension of critical theorems which can stand up to the criteria of scientific discourse; 2) the organization of processes of enlightenment in which the theorems are applied and can be tested by the initiation of processes of reflection carried on within the groups towards which the processes have been directed; and, 3) the selection of appropriate strategies, the solution of tactical questions, and the conduct of political struggle. With respect to the first function, the aim is true statements; with the second, authentic insights; with the third prudent decisions. His general conclusion is that any organization which tries to master all three of these tasks according to the same principle will not be able to fulfill any of them correctly.

For Lukacs (1971), for whom "the organization is the form of the mediation between theory and praxis", it was immaterial that the truth of a theory could be tested independently of whether it was useful for action. Theoretical statements were to be selected from the point of view of organizational questions. Lukacs (1971) had argued that because in the realm of pure theory the most diverse views and directions could exist side by side and be peaceably discussed within a single organization, it was necessary to move quickly to test theory in relation to the needs of strategic action. Otherwise, the combination of pure theory, "abstract opinion", and the possibility of indecision

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regarding the validity of hypotheses tended to produce space for opportunism. The result was that Lukacs' conceptualization subjected the needs of theory to the requirements of strategic action.

Second, for Lukacs, the enlightenment of the proletariat, just like the needs of theory, was subordinated to the purposes of the Party and its leadership. Even though Lukacs, like Marx, sees the task of the Party to consist in motivating the workers to attain "self knowledge...as the knowledge of their objective situation at a certain stage of historical development" -- with the aid of a correct theory -- his conception of enlightenment does not consist simply of rendering the unconscious conscious. For Lukacs, as for Lenin, the proletariat was powerfully ensnared in the forms of thinking and feeling of capitalism and could not be relied upon as a measure of the validity of the theory. The job of the Party was to embody class consciousness and act representatively of the masses --even when those masses disagreed. The Party was to represent the highest form of proletarian action, the absolute precondition for which was infallible theoretical insight. The theory, *as already possessed and interpreted by the leadership*, became an unassailable objective authority. The result was that the needs of enlightenment, like the needs of theory, were thereby subjected to the needs of strategy and of the Party leadership.

I do not want to stretch the parallels between Lukacs' perspective and the dynamics in U.C.C. too far. U.C.C. did not claim to be a revolutionary organization. It definitely did not believe, as Lukacs believed in 1922, that a revolutionary situation existed and therefore, that the needs of organizational discipline were absolutely

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paramount. Nor was U.C.C. leadership ever so presumptuous as to claim infallibility in how it represented the needs of the working class, of history or of the community. The material abundance, social complexity and political options in the United States 1955 - 1980 were not and never understood to be comparable to eastern Europe in 1922, on the verge, as Lukacs not unreasonably saw it, of revolution.

But there are structurally similar elements. U.C.C. saw itself as representing a progressive historical direction. It also saw its constituency as tied to the dominant ideology and arrangements of capitalist society. Feeling politically overwhelmed in a country with political reaction cresting, isolated and without the support of a larger Left, U.C.C. operated with a sense of urgency about the organization and its need to survive. Given the premises of its theory of organizing, and its defensive and self-protective response to the political situation, U.C.C. leaders' impulsion to see ideas and theory instrumentally, that is, in terms of what they contributed to the organization and immediate action (an orientation in all political and much non-political) organization stiffened. Ideas from outside without immediate utility were ignored or dismissed.

The second general obstacle to the recognition of the need for new theory in ideological organizing is at the intersection of theory and the organizers' identity. Organizers seek to enlighten individuals and collectivities and empower them based on their new understandings by aiding the development of their capacities for individual and collective struggle. All ideological organizers must presuppose, however fictively, the rightness of their theory and practice. They must believe they know something important that others do not know about people, the society and how to change it. One of the

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organizer's ultimate goals is to create other organizers: to raise the level of his/her constituency's knowledge and capacities to a level of equality with the organizer. As that process requires time, and most people drop out considerably before the process is over, there is no escaping this presupposition of structured inequality of skill and understanding, even if the organizer is not self-conscious about it or would prefer it did not exist. In the course of things, as they accumulate experience and especially if it is possible to interpret their efforts as successful, ideological organizers, especially those in leadership, function as and begin to think of themselves as probes or agents of their theory and practice. To the extent that they see themselves as what they theorize and practice, they begin to see challenges to theory as challenges to self and position. As they are reluctant to surrender their proudly held identities, involving as it might, the crumbling of their status or position and the basis of their relationships, the possible stalling of practice and swerving of the direction of their lives, they resist seeing the need for new theory or acting upon recognitions they do perceive.

A consequence of this process, especially in organizations like U.C.C. that pride themselves on their constant discussion of ideas, the distinctions among the different levels of discussion and criticism of practice is often blurry. In the distribution of criticism at different levels at U.C.C., most criticism was framed in relation to the ideological meanings of individual decisions within the organization's programs, campaigns and social life. Sometimes criticism was made of tactics in evaluations subsequent to practice. Rarely was criticism made of strategy. And, the organization's theory was never seriously reexamined.

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These general problems of organizing increase or diminish in significance depending upon external conditions. Their ideology -- their theory of society, social change and organizing, and their philosophy -- may have provided meaning, motivation, direction and energy for U.C.C. leaders and members. But, at the same time, in a context of political defensiveness and isolation, without the buoying efforts of larger social movement and in the absence of alternative theory, the general theoretical problems of organizing loomed. Without specific social and organizational devices within the organization to make theoretical reflection possible, their theory of ideological organizing discouraged theoretical self-reflection.[4] Nevertheless, if we assume that militant ideological organizing and fanaticism are not the same process, then ideological organizing need not be foredoomed to the irrationalist absence of analytical reflection. In fact, there were other factors, specific to U.C.C.'s history and to its necessarily defensive reaction to the national onslaught against its central ideas. Here I want to mention only four.

Mansbridge (1982) makes the point that the constant contact in small face-to-face democracies makes friendship easier but diminishes the incentive for conflict because more aspects of oneself are exposed and because one's valued social relations and place in the organization are at risk. At U.C.C., emotional attachments to one another and leadership in the forms of friendship, love, gratitude, teaching and learning, mutual acceptance and enjoyment, continuous social interaction in a community that provided meaning , purpose and moral support discouraged mutual criticism for fear of the social consequence. These consequences ranged from the loss of favor in the eyes of respected

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leaders and the loss of prestige in the organization that might follow; the loss of friends and mutual enjoyment, the loss of on-going recognition and appreciation for one's contributions. Looming in the distance for intellectually dissatisfied participants was the possibility that the pursuit of their criticism within the organization might ultimately lead to the loss of relationships and daily purpose that the organization provided.

U.C.C. thematized this difficulty and emphasized the importance of conflict and struggle inside and outside the organization. In fact, there was a lot of discussion and argument about ideas in U.C.C. The constant thematization of the importance of accepting conflict and struggle and the constant practice of it made conflict more tolerable but it did not dissolve the problem. Most people continued to have difficulty at various levels. Others who were more successful in their efforts to act upon this value, mainly carried it out horizontally or downwards.

Second, challenging the leadership was also made more difficult in the case of U.C.C. because of specific organizational norms. Despite the fact that U.C.C. leaders and members professed to value conflict and struggle, and U.C.C. professed a rejection of the 'infallibility of leadership', U.C.C. articulated organizational norms entailing a concept of "organizational responsibility" that required the centralization of information upwards and explicitly forbade the possibility of democratic factionalism, including ad hoc informal groupings on particular issues. In relation to significant organizational problems, individuals were urged and, indeed, almost always turned upward not horizontally to one another. On the one hand, the general acceptance of this structural discipline made larger organizational accomplishments possible because leadership

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possessed the information it needed to address quickly problems of morale, individual problems, simmering disagreement, social action and its own social services. On the other hand, members accepted that developing collective opinions apart from top leadership and deploying small group agreement to challenge leadership was disruptively factionalist and irresponsible. As a result, there was almost no space for groupings in the Center to examine and develop their disagreements with the top leadership and generate conflict upwards. In relation to their disagreements with the leadership, individuals were on their own. The result was that board members, other members and even staff were thoroughly inexperienced in discovering, elaborating, and defending, in their own terms and with others who shared their sense of things, their disagreements with the leadership. When they did raise their disagreements as individuals, top leadership alone could decide whether to address the matter as an individual or broader problem.

In this situation, the needs of theory, which includes the need to recognize the need for new theory, could not be met. The needs of new theory included, as Habermas points out, the space to explore and develop new ideas free from the constraints of immediately translating new ideas into action, based, that is, on scientific, not strategic criteria. This required time and space for small groupings to examine ideas being developed in broader arenas, to develop ideas and to explore their relevance apart from the leadership and if necessary to challenge the leadership. No such space for groups existed. To the extent that individuals did risk challenges to leadership -- and they did -- it was easier for leadership to handle. As leadership in any organization tends to be

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committed, among other things, to the maintenance of its own leadership, and, as ideological leadership identifies itself with its ideological possessions, U.C.C. leadership tended to discourage the systematic elaboration of challenging ideas. Consequently, members dissatisfied with U.C.C.'s ideology either left the organization, or remained and thought about other ideas but had no opportunity to develop them with others (e.g., in democratic factions or study groups which might have some disagreement with the main leadership), or ceased to attend to their glimmering recognition of the need for new theory.

Third, beginning around 1974 and lasting until 1979 when the executive director died, a chronic conflict developed between the executive director and the board president who had previously worked closely with one another for 15 years. These two were the most important leaders in the U.C.C. and commanded the respect of almost everyone in the organization. The reaction of board members, members and staff was two-fold. Bewildered, they consoled and gossiped with one another and occasionally carped or wondered about the conflict, the basis of which they did not ever fully understand. But, given the norms of the organization, their lack of experience in turning to one another to address significant organizational problems, and their feelings of gratitude (for providing opportunity for learning, growing and developing skills and competence) towards their leaders, they could not articulate or act upon their common need to plan with one another in order to challenge and control their leadership. This was evidence of a clear limit to how the internal democracy of the organization had developed. Some individuals could not tolerate the tensions and quit the organization or drifted away.

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The other reaction was that the leaders and members became more rigid about the ideas they were willing to profess and less flexible about considering new ones. In the atmosphere of internal conflict, neither of the two leaders could risk the pursuit of new initiatives because both wanted to be seen as possessing the 'true' Center direction. Although most members and staff did not 'take sides', everyone sought to interpret, justify, and criticize the actions of leaders and one another in terms of the ideas they already possessed, that is, the 'true' Center ideas. The recognition of a need for new theory was thus further discouraged.

The fourth factor steeling willfulness was U.C.C.'s sense of political isolation and of its need to hunker down and defend itself against what was happening in NYC and on a national level. Had U.C.C. accepted the conclusions of its own analysis about the end of integration as a political issue, it would have meant accepting an end to a constitutive dimension of U.C.C.'s identity and the identity of individuals within it. Integration as a form of social and political life was, they insisted to one another again and again, who they were, what differentiated them from others, including others on the Left, and what they thought was their unique contribution and made them valuable. So, leaders and members stubbornly continued to resist the 'death' of the movement for integration, even when it came to feel like unwavering loyalty for the sake of stalwartness, a badge of identification rather than the pursuit of a politically possible program.

Their resistance was based upon their philosophy, their will and insistence upon the political relevance of their experience. It was based, not upon new reflections about race, political and the post-industrial metropolitan area, but upon the harboring of old

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theory and a morality. Upon such ground, sanctimony and defensiveness blossomed.

ENDNOTES

1. Simmel (1955: 13-15, 45-47) discusses this function of conflict. Also see Coser (1956: chapters 2 and 4).

2. In Suicide and in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Durkheim reminds us that religion was not simply a body of doctrines; it was a society that prescribed behaviors, offered continual moral support, and enacted and confirmed its meaning through the interaction of its members. Gatherings of the entire group that were moments of intense experience solidified participants' social bonds and their meanings.

3. Fisher and Kling (1987) make this argument in what is the sharpest and best critique that I have read of the neo-Alinskyan, neo-populist theory of organizing that began to emerge in the late 1970s. Fisher and Kling focus explicitly on the neo-populist "attitude towards ideology", i.e., its rejection of explicitly ideological organizing. See also the critical essays by Kling, Plotkin and Posner in Kling and Posner (1990). For a vivid confrontation between the two points of view, see Posner's exchange with Boyte in Tikkun, v.2, n.3, 68-74.

4. Re: this point, Roslyn Bologh says that the organization had no theory of theoretical development, no theory of theory.

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CHAPTER XV

'NEGRO' VERSUS 'BLACK': U.C.C. CONFRONTS THE NEW BLACK ETHNICITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

For U.C.C., racial integration implied the integration of children and adults of various economic strata including the 'middle class', the working class and the 'working class poor' (a term which for U.C.C. subsumed the employed poor, the unemployed receiving public assistance, and the population later referred to as the "underclass"). They hoped to bring people of different racial groups and class strata together in common movement *based on the idea* that the sub-cultures of the working class and racial and ethnic minorities held important values for the society as a whole, not just for each particular group. They also hoped that common movement for integrated schools would mean the discovery and creation of additional common interests.

One of the 'working class values', to which U.C.C. referred was the social recognition of the dignity of labor, the contribution of workers to the society, and the valuing of the cooperation and interdependence as opposed to irresponsible individualism. In the absence of any working class movement, or anyone who politically asserted his/her working class cultural identity, U.C.C. encountered no disagreement. Its notions of working class values simply were unheard.

But, the problem was very different with regard to ethnic subcultures and identity, and particularly in relation to the newly elaborated black ethnicity. U.C.C. claimed to value the subcultures of racial and ethnic minorities, especially the contributions which each group -- through its labor, music, literature, thought and traditions -- had made to

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the life of the whole society including the historical struggles for freedom that U.C.C. perceived as constitutive of these subcultures and ethnic identities. This claim to value diverse cultures was not intended as the uncritical acceptance of every dimension of each subculture with all its particularities. Ethnic sub-cultures were complex, internally contradictory, and always changing. Each ethnic culture was understood to be bound up in some dimensions to parochial and ethnocentric norms that blocked interchange and learning across cultures. These parochial sub-cultural norms and values prevented the formation of democratic and class-oriented identity and struggle and prevented the creation of a richer, inclusive and universalistic, democratic culture accessible to all. U.C.C.'s multi-culturalism did not mean only listening, salutation and tolerance. What U.C.C. valued was the critical interchange -- recognition, appreciation, mutual incorporation of new values, and criticism -- among individuals and groups of different sub-cultures towards the goal of creating new democratic identities and culture, not yet crystallized, not yet entirely formulated. U.C.C.'s position was not unreasonable but, throughout the 1970s, it was unable to apply it to the new black ethnicity.

The best example of this is U.C.C.'s refusal to substitute the term "black" for "Negro", in its publications, written statements, and everyday talk, despite the fact that U.C.C. speakers were jeered and often criticized for using "Negro" in community meetings. This was a significant political issue, charged with symbolic value, not simply a terminological question. In that period, the black nationalist movement had made the substitution of the term "black" for the term "Negro" a telling emblem of the new ethnicity and a new political direction. Prompted by a woman who preferred the term

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"black" and wanted to know why U.C.C. continued to use the term "Negro", The Link explained:

> Many Negroes in the late 60's who were discouraged by the slow pace of integration turned towards black separatism. Once a term used to demean Negroes, "Black" was declared beautiful and of symbolic value "because we chose it for ourselves". Whites and Negroes who continued to fight for integration were labelled racist or Uncle Tom.
>
> The separatist philosophy failed. It never did more than win a few middle class jobs for Negroes, and it never enlisted the support of the vast majority of Negroes. In fact, the struggle for integration was weakened by the withdrawal of many old fighters. The real needs of working class and lower middle class Negroes and whites for housing, jobs and education required and still require an integrated struggle...
>
> The U.C.C. never quit the struggle for integration and we have refused to strike the word Negro from our vocabulary. We are struggling for a society in which people can live together with mutual respect while recognizing and learning from our difference. To bury the term Negro is to deny the rich and diverse 400 year old history of Negroes in the U.S...
>
> Others have thought similarly. In 1927, W.E.B. DuBois, a Negro and one of the greatest scholars and freedom fighters this country has ever produced wrote an articles in the magazine The Crisis. The article entitled, "The Name Negro" was a reply to a teenager who could not understand why Dr. DuBois used the word.
>
> DuBois wrote: "'Suppose we could change the name. suppose we arose tomorrow and lo! instead of being "Negroes", all the world called us 'Cheiropolidi', -- do you really think this would make a vast and monumental difference to you and me...
>
> "Your real work, my dear young man does not lie with names. It is not a matter of changing them or forgetting them...
>
> "Get this straight and get it straight even if it pierces your soul: a Negro by any other name would be just as black and just as white: just as ashamed of himself and just as shamed by others as today. It is not the name -- it's the Thing that counts." ("What's In A Name", 10/76)

By 1976, the article encapsulated U.C.C.'s frozen attitude toward the new black

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ethnicity and the internal contradictions of its position. The most glaring contradiction, of course, was that if one accepted DuBois' argument that it is not the name, but "the Thing" that counts (a dubious argument because how we name things influences our attitude towards them), then why insist upon using the term Negro, unless names matter. In fact, the first part of the article argues that names do matter because they stand for political directions: "black" stands for separatism, "Negro" stands for integrationism. There is no doubt that these associations of words and political directions were adequately descriptive of the mix of positions in the black movement of the late sixties and early seventies. For Carmichael (Ture) and Hamilton(1992) in 1967, integration meant anglo-conformity, the denial of black identity, and the separation of middle class 'Negroes' from the 'black' masses. At the Gary Convention in March, 1972, attended by 3,000 official delegates and 12,000 persons altogether, which Marable (1984) calls the zenith of nationalist control of the black movement, the delegates declared themselves in favor of black-controlled community schools and in opposition to court-ordered busing for school desegregation purposes.

But, as Marable points out, nationalist hegemony was one thing, agreement was another. The prompt collapse of the nationalist ideological hegemony in the black movement was as much a product of competing tendencies among nationalists who engaged in a series of "fratricidal" theoretical debates and organizational ruptures and the deep and multiple disagreements with the nationalist positions of large sections of a diversely positioned black leadership, as it was the product of outright government repression. Only 2,000 delegates including only a few black elected officials attended

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the second convention of the National Black Political Assembly in 1974, and only 1,000 persons attended the third convention in 1976.

U.C.C.'s claim that the separatist or nationalist positions were not accepted by the vast majority of Negroes was certainly valid. But, if so, how account for the apparent and rapid acceptance by most blacks in ENY of the term 'black' by the middle seventies? This needed to be explained and the explanation was quite simple, although not one that U.C.C. heeded. It was that many blacks in the community, even the large proportion who subscribed to an integrationist philosophy, also accepted the term 'black'. They accepted it because it signalled a new assertiveness, a specific claim to status honor on the part of a heretofore stigmatized group, and a claim to ethnic dignity equal to other groups. A letter from a community resident printed in The Link ("Communications", 11/76) a few months later replied to the article quoted above:

> I'm sure you did not answer that woman's genuine question as to why the Center still uses the term "Negro".
>
> To drag the name of W.E.B. DuBois into such a ridiculous answer was a bit much.
>
> The so-called answer falls in the category of "white is right". When will whites stop telling blacks what's good or right for them? Negro is a left-over term from the plantation and we refuse to go back there. We are no longer "knee-grows".
>
> We prefer to be called blacks and that preference should be respected by those who say they "want an integrated society". We want an integrated society also, but one which affords all parties concerned the dignity to define themselves and their lives.
>
> What's in a name. That's not for the Center to decide. It's an old theme and it simply won't work in 1976. Even W.E.B. DuBois would have changed with the times. Think about it.

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Despite U.C.C.'s recognition on a level of theory that ethnic sub-cultures were always in process, and despite its claim to valuing difference, here was a difference of ethnicity and identity it rejected. By rejecting it, U.C.C. seriously constricted its ability to organize among African Americans in ENY. It rejected this difference because it could not analytically disconnect this newly asserted ethnic dignity from the separatist and nationalist political direction that provided its momentum and fertilized its cultural expression after the civil rights movement ended. For U.C.C., the term "black", as well as other elements in the new black ethnicity stood for opposition to integration and class struggle even after the connection between 'black' and the nationalist political direction had become attenuated.

Affirmative Action and Understanding Race As A Social Structure

The theoretical source of U.C.C.'s debilitating rigidity was its inability to see race as a structured process shaped by political economic processes, expressed in part through class inequality, but distinguishable analytically and empirically from class. Race was not only a function of class processes. It was a structure of status in which groups with power, i.e., whites, institutionalized their monopolistic claims to superior jobs, residence, political power, schools and social honor and imposed negative social honor upon blacks while excluding them from access to privileged economic, political and social positions. U.C.C. had no concept of institutionalized status groups, or race as a hard, social structure, i.e., of "institutionalized racism". For U.C.C. leaders, racism was either the political and legal enforcement of a regime of subordination by one racial group of another based on the idea that the subordinated group was biologically inferior, or the

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conscious and organized advocacy for that kind of regime. South Africa and Nazi Germany were racist; the United States after 1965 was not, because civil and political rights had been won and, of crucial importance, interracial struggles for change were legal and possible.

Instead, U.C.C. saw existing patterns of prejudice and discrimination either as a function of capitalist interests or as patterns of irrationality within the lower middle and working classes. But, this latter orientation, which derived from an earlier generation of sociologists and psychologists, tended to be individualistically oriented. It neglected the ways in which residential segregation by race, for example, was shaped not only by ethnic and class factors, but also by established patterns of discrimination in the real estate market, e.g., who gets shown which apartments and houses, how people are welcomed or violently rejected in new communities (Massey and Denton 1993). It neglected the racial segmentation of the labor market, also shaped in part by ethnic and class factors, but, in addition by specific, regularized racial exclusion especially by craft and industrial unions, and by business, and the perpetuation of inferior education. U.C.C.'s perspective could understand the historical rationality of capitalists who encouraged racism to maintain working class divisions that blocked successful challenges to capitalism. But, from its Marxian perspective in which social divisions within the working class were irrationalities to be overcome, it could not understand the historical 'rationality' of large sections of a white working class that fought hard to protect their economic interests in higher paying, more skilled jobs, and their additional job security in a capitalist economy that required a reserve army of unemployed. Nor did

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U.C.C. sufficiently appreciate how widespr ead -- although not universal in the history of the US. labor movement -- was the cultural embeddedness of white working class claims to social honor; or how deeply constitutive of white working class identity and its sense of dignity were status conventions that explained and reinforced their economic and political station in relation to blacks. (See DuBois 1935; Fields 1982, Roediger 1991, Saxton 1971 and 1990).

U.C.C.'s lack of understanding of race as structure is exemplified by the contrast between its strenuous efforts to hire blacks and Latinos and promote black and Latino volunteers to organizational leadership and its rationale for its position on affirmative action. In the 1950s before the civil rights movement burgeoned, the NY State Employment Service often sent blacks seeking employment in day camp and community center settings to the U.C.C. because the agency knew that U.C.C. would hire them. For, U.C.C.., hiring black staff when most of the Center participants were white was a way of more fully integrating the life of the agency; challenging the prejudices of white children and adults by demonstrating the competence, responsibility and humanity of blacks; using the conflicts across racial difference that regularly arose to teach about race; modelling the possibility that whites and blacks could work together; and enriching the program based on the knowledge, experience and perspective that blacks staff could bring. This was also a way of demonstrating to volunteers and participants in the U.C.C. programs the commitment of the organization to integration.

In addition to these reasons for hiring blacks, when the community's racial character changed and there were far more black children and adults in the program, it

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also became important to hire blacks to demonstrate to black children who accepted too many limits upon their own possibilities that they, also, could grow up and assume responsible positions in society. By the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, as more social service agencies became willing to hire blacks, U.C.C.'s (located in ENY and far from the Manhattan -based employment agencies) efforts to find black staff became as strenuous as its efforts to recruit white children to enroll in its sleepaway camp which by the end of the 1970s was predominantly black.

The reasons for emphasizing the black volunteer leadership in the organization were similar in the 1950s and 1970s even though the community had changed. U.C.C. conceived itself and wanted to represent itself as an integrated organization. Volunteers, white and black were invited to become members of the Board of Directors or chairpersons of committees if they were willing to take on the responsibilities of the positions. Competence was not an issue because anyone who had not done the job before was incompetent, but anyone who wanted to learn could. U.C.C.'s only public statement about affirmative action was published in its newspaper after two years of austerity municipal budgets and exemplifies its tendency toward economistic Marxism. U.C.C. wrote this article and addressed it to an African American and Hispanic community in 1977 upon whom it depended for volunteer and financial support. Its nervy willingness to expose itself and publicize its position on an issue about which it could exert no influence, with the foreknowledge that it would be greeted with considerable disagreement, is a measure of U.C.C.'s commitment to its theoretical analysis and philosophical commitment, and its sustained willingness to fight for its

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positions.

> The term [affirmative action] refers to special efforts to increase the number of minority -- mainly Negro and Puerto Rican -- employees, supervisors and students. These efforts may take the form of specific quotas, separate admissions categories or 'targets'.
>
> Despite its positive sounding title, the 'affirmative action' programs don't do anything about providing more jobs for anyone in a time when we have an unemployment rate of at least 7% (more likely 10-12% if discouraged workers were counted). Historically, the Negro has been the last hired and first fired and overall suffers an unemployment rate almost double that of white workers. But, affirmative action programs don't solve the problem of Negro unemployment. They provide a few thousand token jobs, mainly for middle class professionals -- not work for the more than 1.5 million unemployed Negroes.
>
> The problem of Negro unemployment can't be solved by itself. It is part of the problem of a society which hasn't been able to create jobs for all its members since WW II. That is the flaw in affirmative action. In an economy which has fewer not more jobs, any program which doesn't produce full employment isn't very 'affirmative'.
>
> Affirmative action programs merely substitute one unemployed person for another. They strengthen the view that white and Negro workers are enemies. In reality, white and Negro workers, employed and unemployed, confront the same enemy...business which is interested only in profits.
>
> The U.S. has the wealth to end unemployment and poverty. There is sufficient wealth to create a society in which everyone can earn an adequate income and live with dignity and decency. But that can't happen through affirmative action programs. And it can't be done if Negro and white workers look at one another as enemies...competing with one another for the same rapidly disappearing jobs.
>
> We don't need affirmative action. We need action to end unemployment and poverty. If the private sector can't provide enough jobs for everyone able to work in this country, then the government will have to take over the job. And, that will happen only if people are prepared to work together, instead of against each other. ("Who Benefits From Affirmative Action", November, 1977)

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There are a number of important issues that need to be emphasized about this article. I leave aside that U.C.C.'s facts are wrong. Affirmative action subsequently meant jobs and promotions for hundreds of thousands of working class and lower middle class blacks not just for black professionalsm in government and in business. U.C.C. was certainly right that the problem of Negro unemployment was, in part, a problem of capitalist economy including its inability except during the boom arcs of business cycles to provide jobs for everyone, or its need for a reserve army of labor. It is true that affirmative action substitutes one unemployed person for another. These were insights of U.C.C.'s Marxism that were entirely neglected by proponents of affirmative action at that time.

In U.C.C.'s perspective, there was only one structure, one system that generates poverty, unemployment, inequality and exploitation. That was the class structuring process of capitalist economy. In capitalism, according to the article, all workers, Negroes and whites, share common interests and a common enemy. Therefore, anything, such as affirmative action, which sets blacks and whites in opposition to one over jobs another will undermine their common recognition of mutual interest and the need to struggle together.

The problem was that social reality had more than just a class dimension. U.C.C. ignored the historical structuring process that led to and maintained the racially unequal distribution of poverty, unemployment, exploitation, and life chances in general. The idea that affirmative action would set black and white workers in opposition presupposed that such opposition did not already exist, or that racist unions had not already driven a

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wedge between black and white workers, or that racial division was epiphenomenal and easily overcome. U.C.C.'s position ignored the historical reality of dual labor markets and occupations according to race in which white and black workers were already set in opposition to one another with blacks in subordinate and negatively privileged positions. It ignored the reality that it was precisely because of the success of the organized and unorganized white working class in craft and industrial unions in maintaining this structured relationship that many white workers saw as their interest and their right the monopolization of their jobs and privilege even at the expense of blacks. It ignored the historical process in which white workers systematically pushed black workers out of economic niches they had developed in Southern and Northern cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In short, the U.C.C. position ignored white working class racism as a central analytical, historical and political problem.[1]

U.C.C. could identify fully with the universalist goals of the civil rights movement for equality and integration, because those were values it believed in. But it could not reach beyond its often valid criticism of the dead-end, self-serving, and politically isolating directions of black nationalism that sometimes concocted history ("'Negro' is a plantation term, black is one we invented"), that mainly ignored or rejected political economy and class analysis (even putting aside as fringe elements those who advocated seccessionist fantasies of separate control over separate territories), or that rhapsodized about "determining our own destiny" in an interdependent world with huge concentrations of political and economic power.

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Black Ethnicity Lives; Black Nationalism Without a Political Economic Analysis is Politically Moribund

U.C.C. could not see the valid emphasis in black power's analysis upon the solidity of race, i.e., racism, as a social institution. Unable to see race as a social structure, i.e., as a designation of institutionalized status groupings, U.C.C. could not see that the effort to throw off status inferiority as it was expressed in politics, economics and education, also required --given the blending of status and ethnic conventions in the history of African Americans-- the assertion of new forms of black ethnicity and identity as aspects of a new claim to social honor and ethnic dignity. U.C.C. could see the ideological political differences between the civil rights movement for integration and the black power movement. But, it could not recognize the social continuity in the struggle against status inequality and for cultural dignity that was implicit in both movements. It could not recognize affirmative action, in the absence of white workers' participation in a struggle for full employment, as an issue in the struggle to attack status inequality in relation to the occupational structure. Without a concept of status, that is, of race as social structure, U.C.C. could only sweep into one pan without distinctions affirmative action and all the new ethnic terminology, the passing fads and the traditions like Kwanzaa that caught on, and dump them analytically as oppositional to integration, and class-based, class-oriented movement.

In fact, however, even at the high point of working class elan and movement in the U.S., the 1930s working class movement had been knitted together by ethnic ties, not only class interests and consciousness. In addition, although, ethnic identities could be

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narrow and exclusive, they could also, depending upon how and in what context they were defined, make possible cross-cultural interchange and struggle. Indeed, that process was U.C.C.'s notion. But, in the 1970s, it could not see that the developing black ethnicity and many of the diversely construed and changing black identities, especially in working class communities, were not inherently in opposition to working class-oriented and based organization or to a concept of integration.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, most of the diverse positions subsumed under the categories of black power and black nationalism declared themselves in opposition to integration, class analysis or the effort to create class-oriented coalition and movement, and most shunned political economic analysis. What was the point, they argued, of struggling for class coalitions if the white working class rejected such coalition? Better to struggle for schools that we controlled in which our children could learn than to fight for integrated schools that whites didn't want and that made it seem as though our children couldn't learn unless seated in classrooms with whites. By 1976, however, although black nationalism was moribund as a political movement in ENY, almost as politically dead as integration in NYC, black ethnicity and ethnic political pluralism was very much alive. Without the pervasive class-oriented politics of NYC as an industrial city, there was no way of moving people to include class as an aspect of their consciously held political identity without recognizing and engaging the meanings of the new black ethnicity and the identities it generated. By not doing so, U.C.C. foreclosed its ability to organize many blacks for whom their new defiantly worn black ethnic identity felt like honor hard won. U.C.C. thus reduced its recruitment pool of potential constituents even

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further.

At the same time, it is worth remembering that the inability of black power or black nationalism to see political economy or class left even those proponents who had not been entirely incorporated into the regularized channels of the state ideologically and politically defenseless in relation to the disaster to black communities that was the austerity resolution to the NYC fiscal crisis. Nor could black nationalism or black power analyze the concerted attack upon the welfare state throughout the seventies. Thus, in his afterword to a new edition of Black Power, Charles Hamilton (1992:208-209) wrote, "...Black Power advocates...were frankly naive in assuming that their political movement would be inevitably an economically liberal one...they assumed that the liberal position was obvious and correct and would be continuing precisely because their mass constituencies still needed so much in the way of vast governmental support." Such support had come during the 1930s depression, in the form of assistance to returning G.I.s after World War II and in the Great Society Programs of 1960s. "Many Black Power advocates..saw their own intervention as simply a more effective means of pushing a liberal-progressive agenda...This assumption that Black Power automatically meant liberal-progressive politics was an assumption that had no basis in historical reality."

The problem, however, as Hamilton demonstrates more by what he omits than by what he says, was not simply that Black Power's politics was ideologically diverse, i.e., some assumed a liberal agenda while others were committed to black capitalism. Neither Hamilton in 1992 nor Black Power in the 1960s and early 1970s (with some

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exceptions who were by no means in the mainstream of the black movement) had a political economic analysis. It was clear then that the proximate cause of the Great Society legislation was the civil rights movement and urban insurgency. But, the political economic conditions of possibility of the Great Society were based upon U.S. economic and military global dominance after World War II, and the expanding U.S. economy in the 1950s and 1960s. Further, the political framework of the welfare state that the Great Society was elaborating upon, had been established in response to the labor struggles of the 1930s and 1940s, and the political constellation holding the welfare state framework

in place depended upon the power of organized labor and the continuing threat of labor-capital conflict. Black Power recognized none of these political economic factors or its dependence upon them. By the time of the NYC fiscal crisis and the national stagflation of the 1970s, both black power and black nationalism were analytically and politically disarmed.[2]

ENDNOTES

1. U.C.C.'s position on affirmative action was not developed much more than this newspaper article, but nevertheless was more complex than the discussion in the newspaper indicates. For example, Amy Gutman (1996: 118-138) makes the important distinction between affirmative action and preferential hiring. Affirmative action entails taking special steps to "ensure that members of disadvantaged groups are not subject to discrimination in hiring", including "exercising discretion in searching for, identifying, and assessing qualified candidates" in which sometimes "color can be counted as a qualification" as, for example, in a teaching position in a public high school. (122-126). She argues that this kind of affirmative action does not violate any principle of non-discrimination. Preferential hiring, which Gutman also believes may be valid in many circumstance, but not all, takes into account something other than the ability of

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individual candidates to do a particular job well. According to Gutman's definitions, U.C.C. would have supported 'affirmative action'. It believed, for example, in making special efforts to ensure that teaching staffs in public schools were integrated for the same reasons it sought to insure its own integrated staff. Its reaction is primarily to fighting for preferential hiring at a time of high unemployment when it believed the fight should be to end to unemployment.

2. Clayborne Carson (1994: 4-5) writes:
"Black leaders [of black power and black nationalism] could more easily deliver intangible gains because such gains did not involve fixed-sum values and thus could be achieved without decreasing the amount possessed by non-blacks. In contrast, tangible goals such as jobs, housing services, and representation on decision-making bodies, could not be increased rapidly for African Americans without decreasing the amount available for other groups...

> "As a result, the black consciousness movements of the 1960s and 1970s achieved psychological and cultural transformation without making much impact on the living conditions of poor and working class blacks. The black masses acquired an ideological vocabulary to express their anger and frustration but still lacked the political awareness necessary for effective collective action...
>
> "Black power advocates, such as Stokely Carmichael and H.Rap Brown, and Black Panther leaders popularized Malcolm's brand of rhetorical militancy, but they had little success in building politically effective mass movements. Black power militancy produced lasting ideological and cultural contributions but also fomented destructive ideological and cultural conflicts within the black militant community."

Carson concludes by declaring that the real legacy of the modern African-American freedom struggle is not only ideas about political strategies and racial destiny but also about ways of organizing communities, i.e., there needs to be more emphasis upon organizing practice than upon ideology.

If this kind of analysis among black and white intellectuals and organizers were not so common, it might be less disheartening. First, what Carson seems not to consider is whether the language black power advocates provided the 'black masses" so that they could express their anger and frustration was not precisely the language which led to a political dead end. Black nationalist ideology did not have then , and Carson does not consider the need now (in this piece) for a political economic analysis. Second, Carson's emphasis upon practice over ideology implies practice without consciousness of ideology because all practice presupposes theory, values and political directions, i.e., ideology. Third, Carson's concept of "organic intellectuals" who build on the emergent ideas of

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grassroots struggles is simply another version of "neo-populist" ideology. It ignores the frequently parochial, contradictory, undemocratic and misguided common sense of the grass roots; it assumes that the common people are the repository of all good philosophy and political sense; and it neglects precisely what Gramsci's analysis explicitly stated or implied: the need to critique the ideas of the "masses" and enter into conflict with them in order to move them to a higher order of collective self-understanding and political direction. Finally, by neglecting the critical point that blacks as a 'community' are far more structurally diverse in terms of where they live, their positions in the national class structure, their relationship to the state, and their culture than they were 30 years ago, Carson never has to address the question about what the relationship between "black organizing" and "white organizing is".

I take Carson as representative of much current black and white thinking on these matters.

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CHAPTER XVI

OTHER DIMENSIONS OF IDENTITY: CITIZENSHIP, PARENTHOOD AND THE SCHOOL BOARD CAMPAIGNS

Nevertheless, U.C.C.'s experience demonstrated that not all blacks saw a political principle in the language of the new black ethnicity or reacted the same way to U.C.C.'s continued use of the term "Negro". The surveys that persistently indicated black support for integration and integrated schools were dismissed too easily at the time by white liberals,white radicals and blacks with nationalist orientations all of whom were overly impressed by the explosive publicity about black nationalist groups. In East New York, a mainly working class black and Hispanic community, with real, multi-dimensional human beings, people identified not only as 'black', but also as 'black and Hispanic parents', or 'black and Hispanic citizens', with a heavy emphasis upon 'parent' and 'citizen', who wanted their democratic rights and the best for their children. They were not black nationalists. Measured by the numbers of black volunteers who participated in its campaigns and programs (even if they did not remain as members), and measured by the monies the organization collected on its house-to-house campaigns, U.C.C.'s presumption of community support from a large part of its organizing area was not at all misplaced.

Whoever the stalwarts were, including the black stalwarts of the integration struggles, the new U.C.C. volunteers were ordinary working class, black women for whom some of U.C.C.'s ideas had clicked in the context of their experience with U.C.C. They lived in a concrete community and worked on specific issues and activities.

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Because they were never entirely anonymous in building hallways, streets, supermarket aisles or at their children's schools, most were eventually exposed to the flak of their neighbors', friends' or local authorities' disagreements with the U.C.C. In particular, the reactions of friends, family and neighbors whose sense of ethnic dignity required acceptance of the new terms and customs; the sustained albeit diminishing hostility of the remaining black nationalists; or, the simple, sneering references to "those white people" (whose doings were mysterious, or "must be getting something" or were "communistic"), was hard to take. Without a thick skin, or a clear understanding of how they could defend U.C.C.'s positions, or a strong ideological agreement with U.C.C.'s campaigns, or the same needs for services, support and opportunities to develop their leadership capacity, many new women volunteers were tripped up and stepped quickly back and away from the organization. In general also, black men stayed way. [1]

U.C.C. had many black volunteers in the 1970s, many black participants in specific campaigns and social programs, and many black supporters glad to have U.C.C.'s services available to their families and friends. But, U.C.C. was unable to generate the influx of hoped for and needed new black or Hispanic members who stayed. Several black women joined, but only a few of these would claim the organization as their own during the 1970s. In 1979, when the executive director died, U.C.C. stopped using the term "Negro" and began to use the term black, but without analysis, and mainly to be able to step past the provocation that their use of "Negro" had become.

The School Board Campaigns [2]

That ethnicity is an important dimension of identity, a ground of communal

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solidarity and frequently, therefore, an effective social basis for political action has been observed often enough (See and Wilson 1988). Indeed, among African Americans in ENY in the mid-70s, whose ethnicity blended with their experience of class, territory, and sub-cultural resistance to designations of status inferiority, the new black ethnicity, had become -- as a consequence of black nationalist discourse -- tightly bound to a few, specific political meanings. Nevertheless, what needs remembering and what U.C.C.'s experience demonstrates is how variable among individuals the link was between black ethnicity and specific political meanings, the changeability of these political meanings, and how important were other dimensions of identity -- e.g., parent, democratic citizen, community resident.

The fact that U.C.C. could not figure out how to deal with the new black ethnicity produced unyielding tensions between the organization and many people in the community. On the other hand, the existence of these tensions did not mean that U.C.C. was unable to organize some of these same people and others in successful campaigns that involved African American and Latino residents. The School Board election campaign in 1977 (and later in 1980, and 1983) and its "open meetings" campaign in early 1978 were good examples of U.C.C.'s ability to involve residents, tensions and all, even when residents did not accept all aspects of the U.C.C. point of view. And, U.C.C.'s successful campaigns were additional "proof" for the organization that it did not need to rethink its theory.

U.C.C. representatives began attending Community School Board (C.S.B.) meetings regularly around 1974 and attended almost every public meeting and public

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hearing for the next ten years. These Board meetings were not well-attended, unless a particularly hot issue troubled the parents of a particular school. But, except for the community meetings called by U.C.C., the monthly C.S.B. public meetings and hearings were the only public forums in which community residents could discuss issues bearing upon the public schools in a district with more than 25,000 pupils and 160,000 people where the reading and math scores of four-fifths of the schools annually ranked in the bottom third of the City's public schools. The U.C.C. used these C.S.B. meetings to criticize the Board on a wide variety of issues: its zoning plans, its decisions about accrued funds, its refusal to articulate standards for the hiring and dismissal of superintendents, its implementation of bi-lingual education, etc. The two issues that U.C.C. most emphasized were the Board's unwillingness to provide information about its decisions to the community -- the community's "right to know"-- and, especially after the NYC fiscal crisis broke, the Board's unwillingness to provide leadership to parents or to other school boards in a political fight for public school funding.

The number of voters in school board elections had declined in the seven years of the boards' existence with the growing belief that the boards could not affect the quality of education in New York's schools. By 1977, the only significant changes that had taken place in NYC public schools in 10 years had been crushingly imposed by the enormous cutbacks in the education budget. Throughout the City, most of the school boards had not opposed, indeed, had cooperated, in the process of imposing the budget cuts in education. The result was that instead of rousing public and parent participation in school affairs, the school boards had been part of a process of dampening it, contrary

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to the hopes of those who had urged their creation.

Many school board members, and most school board leadership, as in East New York, were tied to Democratic Party clubs. The C.S.B.s served as a political pre-school, a name-making, vote-mustering testing ground for political aspirants with larger ambitions. For example, in ENY, Ed Griffith had been a District 19 school board member before being elected to the State Assembly where he later became Assistant Speaker; Priscilla Wooten was a school board member and subsequently was elected to the NY City Council; Francis Abbracciamento was school board president for two terms while she was co-leader of the local John F. Kennedy Democratic Party club. In ENY also, in the 1975-77 term, the school board president, Michael Long was a member and later head of the State Conservative Party; Vito Batista, who was elected to the NY State Assembly as a Republican and ran for Mayor on the Parents and Taxpayers ticket, was a member, as was his secretary; and two other Democratic Party politicos were members. With only one black and one Puerto Rican on the C.S.B., the 1975-77 C.S.B was the last ENY school board in which most of the members were still white in a district with an overwhelming majority of black and Hispanic voters and school children.

In 1976, U.C.C. began to think about running candidates for the C.S.B., despite its initial opposition to the establishment of the boards, and despite its belief that there was not much that the C.S.B. could do about the quality of education in the district beyond hiring the superintendent and the principals. Curricula and standards were mandated by the State Department of Education and the NYC Board of Education. Teachers were licensed by the City. Budgets were allocated according to Board of

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Education formulae. The C.S.B. could do nothing by itself to increase its funding beyond entering the competition with other school boards for State, federal and foundation grants for special programs. It could do nothing about the racial or economic segregation of the schools. Decisions about funding and integration were made at higher structural and political levels. What the C.S.B. could do, and what from U.C.C.'s point of view it did not do, was make a serious effort to involve parents, to discuss publicly the central problems of the district, to attempt to provide direction for a political course, and to lead the effort to organize a budget struggle against the fiscal crisis cutbacks.

Having one or two people on the school board might have some impact upon what it did, and at least would provide U.C.C. information from the inside that U.C.C. could use to criticize the school board and organize parents. As in many other low income communities, the parents associations were so uniformly weak, except for one in Starrett City and one in the southern end of ENY, that a membership meeting of 20 parents was a huge turn-out. In addition, the leaderships of the parents associations were beholden to principals and the C.S.B. In November, 1975, after a series of heavy para-professional cut-backs, 14 of 28 parents association presidents were employed in local schools. The parents associations were almost never adversarial in relation to their principals or the C.S.B.

As community organizers know, the election process itself can serve two purposes even if U.C.C. failed to win a seat for its candidates. It structures an arena over several months in which there are multiple forums -- in this instance, candidates nights at various schools, house meetings, and The Link -- to present ideas and programs to the

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community. This structured arena (i.e., the campaign) also provides multiple opportunities to educate campaign volunteers about educational issues, and the nitty-gritty of an election campaign. These opportunities include: petitioning to get on the ballot, organizing house meetings, registering voters, distributing literature, soliciting contributions, organizing parties and sales to raise money, holding meetings to analyze and develop philosophy, program and tactics, pressuring other people to do things, maintaining financial records, getting out the vote, watching the election booths, watching the ballot count, and evaluating the effort's successes and flops after the election is over.

But, it is not only a matter of opportunities for teaching and learning. One of the difficulties of doing organizing is finding ways to glue people to organization long enough -- not just for a meeting or two -- so that they can really learn some skills, expand their social and political understanding, test a new idea, and develop relationships to people connected to the organization. An election campaign facilitates the possibilities of organizing in two ways. First, it has a shapely dramatic quality with a limited time period. There is a beginning -- selecting candidates, defining a program, discussing the issues, and petitioning to get candidates on the ballot; a middle filled with various events -- fund-raisers, candidate presentations, house meetings -- and, a climax -- election day and the vote count. A school board election begins in December and end in May. Everybody knows it will be over in a few months, win or lose. Second, everybody who lives in the U.S. understands and accepts the legitimacy of electoral processes. Explanations are not required. Many people have a sense that if they agree to participate,

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they have a responsibility to carry it through to the end; and, they believe that if their candidate wins, they will benefit albeit not necessarily directly. There is also a competitive game quality to the campaign that everyone understands and that contributes to the fun of it. So, many more people tend to remain until the end of the campaign, making themselves available for organizers to try to hook their minds. It is very different from efforts to organize on community issues outside the electoral process where there may be long time spaces during which it feels like no progress is occurring. And, the election campaign, itself, educates participants about important aspects of democratic citizenship, including government and rules, especially for most of the people that U.C.C. recruited who never had any previous experience in an election campaign except as voters. Organizers hope that the intensity of experience and learning that occurs in the campaign process will carry over after the election with new volunteers who will want to remain related to the organization that fights for the campaign's ideas after it is over.

The U.C.C. Education Committee began its campaign in November by phoning, visiting and contacting by mail everyone they knew who had expressed some interest in educational issues. The initial meetings were attended by three or four parents in addition to the U.C.C. staff members and the volunteer chairperson of the Committee. Most people who attended the first meetings did not return. Some people came asking for help for their own child and did not want to participate in a community struggle. A few did not think it was possible to change anything and a few rejected the U.C.C. concept of integrated education. By the middle of January, as one friend informed

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another and as people became interested in the Center's ideas about integrated education, 12 people attended meetings on a regular basis. At the Center's suggestion and with the promise of U.C.C. help and direction, the members of the committee decided to form the Concerned Parents For Better Education in ENY (CPBE) and run a slate of candidates for the C.S.B.[3]

They wrote and approved a set of by-laws, discussed and settled upon a platform, agreed upon a committee structure, elected a leadership. Of the three elected officers, the chairperson was an African American man who was a manager for a novelty manufacturer, the treasurer (also the chairperson of the fund-raising committee) was a married black woman from Panama with two children who worked as a clerk, and the secretary was a married Puerto Rican woman with three children who was a housewife. The white man who chaired the community education committee was an engineer and one of two college graduates. The chairperson of the nominations and elections committee was a married black woman with three children who clerked for the federal government and who became the only one of the four candidates who was elected. The other three candidates were a single black woman with seven children (mainly grown) who worked as a domestic, an Indian man who lived with his wife and two children in Boulevard houses, who had been a seismologist in India and now worked for the City, and a married white woman with two grown children and a teenager who was a bookkeeper-receptionist. Of the remaining five members of CPBE one was unemployed, three clerked in a bank or in government, and one was a college student. Among the 13 volunteers, there were three whites, one Puerto Rican, and nine African Americans; three

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men and ten women. The U.C.C. staff member who began working directly with CPBE in February was a newly-hired black man with black nationalist beliefs. The white man who was the staff organizer in charge had worked with U.C.C. for 10 years. Besides the staff who worked with CPBE, there were only four U.C.C. members -- two of the candidates (a black women and a white woman), the chairperson of the community education committee, and a college student volunteer who co-ordinated the petition campaign. The inter-racial character of their slate and their leadership was discussed and decided upon by the CPBE members, as was the decision to send interracial teams to do the petitioning, canvassing and voter registration wherever possible.[4]

By the time the campaign was over, the CPBE had 18 dues-paying members and nine more in regular attendance. Most of the additional dues-paying members were African American and some were Puerto Rican. Twenty-one of these 27 had never before volunteered with U.C.C.; five were U.C.C. members. In addition, the Concerned Parents had been able to recruit another 25 people to organize meetings in their apartments, distribute literature on several occasions and canvas the apartments in their buildings with a CPBE representative. Another 80-100 people, most of whom were U.C.C. volunteers, helped with petitioning, voter registration and turning out the vote. The only whites in the campaign were U.C.C. members. CPBE registered 500 voters, arranged 18 small group meetings in apartments throughout the area, and the candidates attended 12-15 "Candidates Nights" with Parents Associations and other community groups. They were the only candidates who were willing to present a program which they shared as a slate, a radical step in ENY school politics. All the incumbents and

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other candidates ran on a platforms of "experience" without specifying their experience or goals, or were "for the children", or "had lived in ENY for many years", or "had children in the public schools."

Within the CPBE there was no disagreement with U.C.C.'s advocacy of the need for the C.S.B. to provide leadership in a struggle for full funding for the public schools in opposition to the severe budgetary cutbacks in public education. Nor was there disagreement with U.C.C.'s idea that the C.S.B. should use its meetings to welcome the discussion of educational ideas and use its position to help involve parents in educational struggles for the schools. The main tensions within CPBE and between some of its members (including the newly hired staff member) and U.C.C. was over matters related to integration and how to conduct a community struggle that expressed ideas of integrated education.

U.C.C.'s concept of integrated education assumed that "young children could learn to think about and solve the problems they care about; that their world extended far beyond their surrounding community; that the culture and historical experience of the working class and minority groups possess values which are of significance to the total society; and that children ought to develop a positive sense of identity with their racial, ethnic and class backgrounds... [and] to recognize and value the contributions of ...[other] groups, not just their own... With integrated education, there is a conscious effort to teach children how to deal with the real problems and conflicts of their lives...racial discrimination, gross economic inequities, war and environmental destruction...[This meant] learning how to use ideas as tools for examining problems,

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finding solutions and making choices." In addition, U.C.C. argued that "in order to provide the richest possible educational experience, it was best for the children of different racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds to attend schools together. As an organization, therefore, the Center supported a city-wide and metropolitan busing plan for integration."

The first controversies within CPBE occurred in discussions of these ideas in a series of meetings before the petitioning period for nominations. All the members agreed with integration as a goal for how schools should be. Many had problems that focused on three issues. They believed that integration was a controversial position that conflicted with the point of view of most people in the community as well as with those in power. The idea would turn people away. They agreed that education should help children to learn to think critically about the central problems of their world. But, they were pessimistic about ever achieving that kind of education for their children in District 19. They wanted the schools to focus instead upon the basics including reading, writing, computation and vocational skills. Third, several members were firm in their opposition to busing. They accepted the black nationalist interpretation that busing was based on the idea that black children could not learn unless they sat next to white children. They also remembered the abuse poured on 10 black children from Brownsville who had been bused into a Canarsie school several years before.

These were among the first organized discussions about philosophical and sociological ideas related to education that most of the CPBE members had ever participated in. Whatever the disagreements, the opportunities to discuss their ideas with

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others was sometimes thrilling. Eventually, the CPBE members agreed that there was no point in running candidates unless they represented goals for education that really made sense to them regardless of how the community might initially react. They agreed to a platform that highlighted integrated education as the center of their program and named their slate the Integrated Education Slate, but they did not include references to busing in their campaign literature. Several members, especially the CPBE chairperson maintained their disagreement with busing throughout the campaign; others remained ambivalent. After a time and considerable discussion, several other members, especially the candidates began to see the connection between busing and the philosophy of education they were espousing.

The trepidation of the chairperson and others about the possible reaction of "the community" to CPBE's announcement that they favored integrated education, and the ambivalence of some of the members also took other forms. When CPBE rented a storefront around the corner from U.C.C., instead of making a sign announcing themselves for integrated education, their banner read "Equal and Just Education", a popular slogan which at that time, was more consonant with the position of the advocates of community control than of U.C.C.'s integrationism. That incident occasioned another discussion that focused upon the educational function of the campaign and community struggles in general. In a competition to win votes it was hard to remember that the goal was not only to win the election, it was also to win people's minds even when that meant losing some people's votes. It was especially perplexing for some of the CPBE members who agreed with the idea of integrated education but could not relinquish their looming

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hunch that their campaign should be for educational equality because integration was impossible to achieve. As the campaign progressed, CPBE members and their candidates became more accustomed to advocating and defending forthrightly the ideas they had agreed upon. Many residents disagreed. Others supported them and the CPBE won a seat on the C.S.B. for one of their candidates with votes from residents who thought their ideas made sense, or who were acquainted with the candidates, or who wanted "to get whitey off the Board". They also managed to recruit a lot of volunteer help from community residents.

In District 19, the ENY district, voter participation in the school board elections declined from 14.4% of those eligible in 1975 to 11.3% in 1977. In NYC as a whole, less than six per cent of those eligible voted. Within the limited geographical area in which the CPBE actually campaigned, voter participation increased from 9.7% of those eligible in 1975 to 13.3% in 1977. The Integrated Education Slate, supported by the Concerned Parents For Better Education in ENY, won 485 first place votes out of a total of 5,802, enough to elect one of its nominees to the nine member school board. Almost all the votes for its three losing candidates were, as each dropped out during the vote count, assigned to other members of their slate. (Voters choose nine members in order of preference whom they number: one, two, three, etc.. When their first choice drops out, the ballot is assigned to their second choice. When their second choice drops out, the ballot is assigned to their third choice, and so on.) This signified that most of the people who voted for them voted for the entire slate and its platform, not merely for the one or two individuals they knew.

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U.C.C. ran slates of candidates in the next two C.S.B. elections also, each time declaring itself as the integrated education slate, and each time electing only the candidate who had been elected in 1977. As community organizing campaigns they were artfully accomplished measured by the criteria of democratic community organizing. They always recruited many volunteers, always involved many discussions about ideas, always involved volunteers in making decisions about programs and tactics. One expression of the artfulness of the 1983 campaign was that in the evaluation meeting to which all the volunteers were invited several weeks after the results were announced, 40 of the new volunteers attended to discuss the meaning of the campaign and the need to stay involved. But, like the first two campaigns, after six months, the volunteer force of the campaign had vanished, the Education Committee had dwindled to five members, and a new corps of volunteers had to be recruited. The election drama propelled people temporarily, but participation was too hard to sustain given the rigors of family, work and community life. The things that called most deeply to residents were elsewhere than educational struggles.

A Quick Battle and Quick Victory on Open Meetings

The U.C.C. initiated its "open meetings" campaign in November, 1977 because the C.S.B. meetings were designed to prevent community residents from learning anything about how or why the members arrived at any of their decisions. The actual practice of the C.S.B.s belied the elaborate dreamings of the decentralization advocates who hoped local control would mean the education of the community through additional parental involvement. Although the C.S.B. was required to mail out its agenda for

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monthly meetings including the resolutions on the agenda, no information relevant to the resolutions on the agenda were ever available until the actual meeting. If a meeting were about a zoning, or construction, or budget plans, residents would be handed the 20 to 50 page plans as they entered the meeting and would be without any time to critically review them, even if they could decipher them without some expert assistance. A public hearing was legally mandated on many issues including the budget. Then the C.S.B. would schedule the hearing and meeting on the same night. Residents would be invited to speak during the hearing. When they were finished, the hearing would be adjourned and the public meeting of the Board would begin, during which the Board voted upon the resolutions that were the subject of the hearing. No members of the Board ever discussed their positions or why they voted how they did. The fact that their votes took place immediately after the hearing signified that nothing community residents said during the hearing was incorporated into their decisions. In fact, the C.S.B. members had made their decisions in their "informal meetings" which the public was not permitted to attend.

The closed, "informal discussion meetings" were illegal. On January 3, 1978, the NYS Appellate Division's Second Judicial Department decided that according to the NY State open meetings law, "public business is the people's business and the people have a right to know (New York Times, 1/4/78)." Public agencies like City Councils and School Boards could not exclude people on any matters except those concerning specific personnel, security and real estate. This meant that meetings on budgets, zoning, standards, extra-curricular activities, after school centers, maintenance and educational

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programming to name a few critical topics -- all responsibilities of the C.S.B. -- were supposed to be open to the public. In District 19, as in many other school districts in the City, the meetings were closed. The existence of the law ultimately made it relatively easy for U.C.C. to recruit people to its campaign and to force the C.S.B. to open its meetings. But, even without the law, the idea that the law expresses -- the public's "right to know" -- is so clear, ingrained and long-standing in the psyche of U.S. citizens, possessing 200 years of constitutional history, that it requires little explanation or persuasion for its easy acceptance.

The task for the U.C.C. organizers was to show why this was an important issue for the community, i.e., to show why their access to knowledge bore upon a subject they cared about -- their children's education -- in relation to a clear enemy -- the C.S.B. -- and then to create the drama that would stoke indignation and defiance. As one of the issues that U.C.C. regularly raised in school board meetings was the unwillingness of the C.S.B. to inform the community about its decisions, the New York Times article on the Appellate Court's decision was a gift to U.C.C. organizers for the start of a campaign . The recalcitrant C.S.B. refused to budge when U.C.C. Education Committee members distributed the article to the Board and the audience at the January, 1978 public meeting, even though The Link had published an article about the "secret meetings" of the C.S.B. (December, 1977)

At that point, U.C.C. called the local television stations and informed them of its plan to invade the next "discussion meeting". One of the reporters thought good footage could be gleaned if the camera captured U.C.C.'s action. When the five members of the

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U.C.C. committee, the reporter and the camera-person arrived at the door to the Community Superintendent's office where the next informal meeting was taking place, it was barred by a sweet-natured, hulking janitor whom U.C.C. representatives knew. Committee members hesitated at that moment, reluctant to push past the janitor and expose him to a subsequent berating. But, the camera man and reporter had no such qualms; they wanted their footage and may even have been aggravated by having schlepped to the far reaches of Brooklyn to get it. They barged into the room, followed closely by the U.C.C. members. The footage on the six o'clock and 11 o'clock news the next night was of a rational, earnest U.C.C. representative in the Community Superintendent's office saying, "These meetings are illegal. We think the community has a right to know what budget decisions are being made about their children's education"; and, another figure, the school board president, imperiously vowing that the C.S.B. meetings would be open to the public "over my dead body."

At the next U.C.C. Education Committee meeting there were 20 people, several of whom had been engaged by their viewing the telecasts, and at the February informal meeting of the C.S.B., 60 U.C.C. volunteers and staff volunteers tried to break in. With a U.C.C. member on the school board, the C.S.B. could not organize a meeting without U.C.C. knowing where and when it would be. Their invasion force was only stopped by 10 squad cars from the 75th precinct who had been called by the C.S.B. for protection.. The police were prepared to arrest half the group until they all waved the New York Times article and a copy of a letter sent to a U.C.C. staff member from Robert Freeman, Executive Director of Committee on Public Access To Records, NY State Department of

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State, (1/31/78) explaining the Open Meetings law from the NY State Department of State with which all the demonstrators had been armed. The police called off the C.S.B. meeting and the Center group returned to the U.C.C. office to cheer.

The next month, the School Board had a new policy : no more illegal closed meetings, (at a public meeting, on 2/28/78, the C.S.B. "upon advice of Counsel" resolved to "reaffirm" its commitment to open meetings) a victory that U.C.C. celebrated in The Link. ("Community Wins Battle With School Board: Victory in 'Open Meetings' Fight", February, 1978) After a flurry of letters over several months the NYC Board of Education announced to all the Community School Boards the new policy that informal meetings must be open to the public. Several months later, the Education Committee had again dwindled to five members. A staff member or volunteer attended the informal meetings of the C.S.B. as observers. Aside from the U.C.C. representatives, and members of the C.S.B., no one else ever attended these informal meetings for the next two years. During that period, the Board majority made its decisions over the phone or at informal gatherings in private places.

Incited to indignation by the School Board President 's behavior on the TV news, one unmarried, African American woman in her early thirties, who worked as a word processor for the NYC Transit Authority, and who had a pre-teen daughter, had roared into the next Education Committee meeting wanting to help. Subsequently, she became a member of the Education Committee, sent her daughter to the summer camp, attended social activities and , after two years, joined the Board of Directors and assumed chairmanship of the Committee. Having grown up in Boulevard Houses, she possessed

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the rare convenience of living only a block from her mother and father, with whom she could park her daughter in order to attend evening meetings. She was one of very few who began volunteering with U.C.C. at that time and remained. U.C.C. could organize and mobilize people in relation to particular campaigns in the latter part of the 1970s, but it was rarely successful in making campaign participants into persons for whom U.C.C. was theirs, a vehicle for their social and political lives.

ENDNOTES

1. There are several overlapping reasons that black men stayed away. First, they stayed away for the same reasons that white men in the 1950s resisted becoming volunteers in the Center. The sphere of the community was seen as the sphere of women's work compared to the sphere of the workplace which was seen as men's territory. Second, for the most part, the white men who became volunteers in the Center in the 1950s were dragged in by their wives who insisted that the program was good for their children. The fact that most of the black women who became U.C.C. volunteers in the 1970s were unmarried meant that they could not recruit the men who were the fathers of their children. Third, the explicitly equalitarian atmosphere in the Center with regard to gender made the place difficult for all white and black men. It meant that men often had to take direction and leadership from women and the problems this relationship entailed were frequently discussed. Women's leadership, women's intelligence, the ability of women to assume responsibility was explicitly valued on a level equal to that of men. Almost all men, white or black, were consciously required to think about this issue in the U.C.C. practice. Men who felt their dignity and freedom depended upon the subordination of women did not stay around long.

Fourth, the ideology of black nationalism had, as Rhonda Williams (1997:136-156) has pointed out, a hyperbolic element of *machismo*. Black nationalism asserted the need to recover the black manhood that white oppressors had stolen. A concomitant of this assertion was the theme that the 'strong black women' who had been such important figures in African American history had to step back and assume their proper place as subordinates to men. Instead of valuing strong black women as an aspect of black struggle and African American ethnicity, black nationalism regarded this element of African-American sub-culture as pathological.

Fifth, the U.C.C. thought of itself as a place where "everyone could tell everyone

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else what to do". This meant that not only that black and white women told men what to do, but also that white men told other men and women what to do. For black men to step into this atmosphere at this historical moment was both structurally and ideologically problematical.

Sixth, the war in Viet Nam took a lot of working class men out of commission for years or permanently through deaths and injuries, drug addiction, alcoholism, homelessness or other forms of dysfunction. U.C.C.'s inability to see the need to try to organize Viet Nam war veterans as veterans wasnot merely the blind insularity of post-anti-war advocates. It was a theoretical and practical inadequacy that requires more space than this footnote to explain. Lastly, the anger inspired and humiliation imposed by racism made many men wonder what they had to contribute.

2. Information about the School Board Election campaign of 1977 is based upon "Citizen Organization and Conflict Resolution Based On a Value System", the titles of a proposal for funds (October, 1976) and an interim report to the New York Foundation (June 15, 1977). The Foundation granted the Center $20,000 to hire a staff member for one year.

3. In each of the 1977, 1980, and 1983 elections that U.C.C. ran candidates and won a seat on the school board. The law required U.C.C. to set up a separate campaign group and a separate office. Campaign volunteers raised separate monies to pay for renting an office, a telephone and the cost of campaign literature because the law stipulated that not-for-profit organizations could not support political candidates or they would lose their tax-exempt status. In fact, U.C.C. fudged this legal problem. A paid staff member was assigned to give direction to the campaign and occasionally the U.C.C. phone was used.

4. I mention the marital status of the women because unless they were married, or were single with a person, such as a grandparent, to whom they could entrust their children, it was impossible to carry major responsibility in a campaign. Of course, as this was a campaign about public schools, everyone, including the African American man, had children. Only the two young white men who were U.C.C. member/volunteers who were assigned (an assignment they wanted) by the organization to participate in CPBE, had no children.

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CHAPTER XVII

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE: TRACKING THE ASSAULT ON THE WELFARE STATE

In the mid-1980s, U.C.C. volunteers joined a march through the neighboring community of Howard Beach led by Al Sharpton , a noted NYC black activist, after three black men were beaten with baseball bats by a group of young whites. One of the black men fleeing across a highway was run over by a car and killed. A year later, U.C.C. volunteers joined a similar march through neighboring Canarsie after a black teenager was beaten by whites and a real estate agency showing homes to black families was firebombed. U.C.C. joined these marches because they were attacks upon black civil rights and upon the freedom of ENY residents to travel through and live in these neighboring communities freely and without fear.

After the college struggles, between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s, aside from its articles and invocations about integration and other racial issues in the newspaper and its school board campaigns, and its emphasis upon the need for integrated struggle in its community organizing efforts, U.C.C. did little organizing on issues that were specifically related to race. Except for the issue of affirmative action, public issues explicitly related to race had ceased to be salient nationally or locally. In the main, U.C.C. worked on specific community problems, especially local educational issues in relation to the Community School Board; tried but failed to organize a broad day care response to the fiscal crisis; and, tried but failed to find other community organizations in

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the City with which to ally in opposition to the budget cuts. Only its campaigns related to the school board and its on-going internal cultural and educational programs had some success. In the main, U.C.C. tracked and criticized ideas advocated at every level of government that sought to de-legitimize both the welfare state and to justify the austerity resolution to the NYC fiscal crisis. It attempted to educate its members and the community about the meaning of these attacks and to offer an ideological and political alternative. It used its newspaper to observe, report, analyze and exhort about the consequences of the fiscal crisis, and, since it could do nothing more, it lived with them just like everybody else.

There are three points that are of particular interest about U.C.C.'s efforts. One is that it saw in the early 1970s and throughout the decade a concerted, mounting and fundamental attack upon the idea that society, through the instrument of government, was responsible for the welfare of its members. U.C.C. saw this as an attack upon a broadly defined working class. It did not require the crystallized signal of Reagan's election to the U.S. presidency to see the national and local ideological artillery and policy initiatives aimed at the social ideas that defended the welfare state. By the early 1990s, these policies and their ideological defense would result in two decades of wage stagnation and increasing income and wealth inequality.

Located in a working class and poor community and alert to what was happening to the public and private sector jobs and public services that local residents depended upon, U.C.C. felt the hard times of members, volunteers and acquaintances produced by the impact of government policy, especially in the NYC fiscal crisis, by finance capital's

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rationalization of the City's budget process (Lichten 1986). It could point to the relationship between the hard times in people's everyday community lives, the national and local policies that produced hard times, and the ideas that defended these policies because that was the strength of its political economic theory. Its theoretical and political focus upon issues of political economy and class enabled U.C.C. members and leaders to articulate the ideological attacks on the welfare state, the class meanings of the austerity resolution to the fiscal crisis, and the symbolic, political and economic relationship between the attack on NYC and the attack on the welfare state.

U.C.C.'s analyses were not unique, nor did it have the resources or venue for their theoretical elaboration. Other individuals and some groups on the Left shared its point of view (e.g., Alcaly and Mermelstein 1977; Marcuse 1981; Tabb 1982) and elaborated it more fully. But, the second point of interest about what U.C.C. was doing, is that its vivid tracking of the specific impact of government decisions upon daily community life, and its political and sociological analyses were lived with, presented and defended to a working class, mainly African American and Latino community audience. It used its newspaper, discussions series, conferences and community meetings with invited speakers, and community action campaigns directed at state agencies.

Third, however, while its political economic and class analytic understanding of the fiscal crisis was mainly correct, the strategic political and economic direction to which U.C.C. thought its analysis pointed was not. As analyzed in Chapter 6 above, U.C.C. continued to believe that the working class defined analytically in relation to the productive process in orthodox Marxian terms could with, will and work, become the

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organized center of a 'people's coalition' that was interracial. U.C.C. could not theoretically incorporate the idea that the spatial, occupational and political structures that constituted the industrial city and the basis of working class movement had faded. At first, therefore, U.C.C. looked to organized labor, especially the public service unions to lead a movement in opposition to the investment banks' resolution to the NYC fiscal crisis. It became clear relatively quickly, however, --upon the unions' investment of billions of dollars of pensions funds in NYC municipal bonds -- that the unions feared the consequences of the City's bankruptcy more than they feared the draconian lay-offs, speed-ups, wage and benefit give-backs and terrible shredding of ENY's community life.

Although NYC had begun laying off workers in 1974, the fiscal crisis is generally said to have begun in June, 1975, when the bankers refused to buy any more municipal bonds. (Alcaly and Mermelstein 1977; Shefter 1987; Lichten 1986) Even before the heaviest consequences of the fiscal crisis were felt however, by the middle of 1975, U.C.C. had framed the perspective with which it analyzed national and local government policy. In the next two sections of this chapter, I will quote extensively from the U.C.C. newspaper. As the newspaper served both an educational function for U.C.C. volunteers, and as an expression of U.C.C.'s position to the residents of 9,000 and then 15,000 households where it was distributed, it is a useful indicator of the organization's perspective and how it developed. In addition, many of the key articles were discussed in staff meetings before they were written.

At the same time, it needs emphasizing that the newspaper was a community newspaper not a vehicle for theoretical elaboration. For example, U.C.C.'s economic

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policy recommendations are bounded by a Keynesian (New Deal) framework and are relatively unsophisticated. It urges government spending for full employment and to meet the needs of social needs of the working class, lower middle class and poor during a period of "stagflation". But, it does not think through the potential impact of the huge deficits (and need to pay interest upon mounting debt) that might result in the absence of economic growth. It wants to explain the issues and inform the community but the newspaper's primary purpose was to serve as an organizer: to publicize the organization's activities, explain the organization's community action efforts and invite people to join. As such, the articles are necessarily short and occasionally hyperbolic. Some contain over-generalizations. Most attempt to frame an opposition of ideas between those represented by government policy and those of U.C.C.; many attempt to offer alternatives to current policy (e.g., what was done in other countries, what was done in the past, what can be done to struggle for a different future); and most end by urging the formation of interracial struggle. Most seek to present and criticize current ideas that the newspaper anticipates are held by community residents and that stymie organizing, e.g., the idea of the economy as an uncontrollable given; the idea of political and economic realism as bounded by corporate and financial rationality; the idea that welfare recipients are blameable for their plight; the idea that public service employees are paid too much; the idea that the working class and poor have depended too much on government extravagance; the idea of government as a protector and facilitator not an active intervenor in social life.

It is important also to emphasize that the ideas developed in the newspaper were

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discussed, often far more extensively by members, other volunteers and other community residents in courses taught by the executive director at The New School attended by 30-40 members, in community conferences and meetings attended by 40-150 people, and in semi-annual, two-day leadership institutes attended by 60-80 members and volunteers. The period between 1973 through 1978 was one of continuing, collective education of members and other volunteers, as well as efforts to include more community residents. Often also, outside speakers were invited to make presentations on issues of concern to the community. In the Spring, 1976, for example, with a small grant from the NY State Council for the Humanities, the Center organized a 12 session series of discussions on the topic, "Is Government Responsible For People". Invited philosophers, anthropologists, economists, and historians lead discussions before 40-100 attendees on topics such as the right to housing, "sewage disposal and other aspects of a beautiful world", and trends in health care as related to the NYC fiscal crisis. Among the better known speakers were economist (not-yet-Nobel laureate) James Tobin who spoke on "What Can Government Do About Unemployment"; philosopher Thomas Nagel who spoke on "'Justice, Property and the World Food Problem"; economist Sam Bowles who talked about "Beyond the Educational Frontiers"; and British historian of the English working class, E.P. Thompson who spoke about "Tom Paine and The Rights of Man " The following year, Tobin and Nagel returned and joined ecologist Barry Commoner as the principal speakers at a community conference on "A Rational Approach To Public Policy". U.C.C. also organized a series of discussions "Art and Society" in the Spring, 1977 that emphasized the role of government in making art available to working class

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communities. Among the better known speakers and performers who made presentations were drama critic, director and founder of the Group Theater, Harold Clurman, actors Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis and Eli Wallach, playwright, and founder of the Negro Ensemble Company, Douglas Turner Ward, and jazz drummer and musicologist Max Roach. Well-known performers produced large audiences. But, a community conference on "Goals and Values For Education", led by noted (but not to their ENY audience) academics in the field of education also produced a large audience of 150 attendees because it was scheduled in the Fall, 1977 soon after the CPBE committee had managed to win a seat on the Community school board for a U.C.C. board member. The several months of intensive campaigning were still on people's minds.

There are a number of moments in time at which to begin tracing the development of U.C.C. perspective in the 1970s. But, before the beginning of the fiscal crisis, three are especially suggestive. New York City had experienced modest economic growth through the 1960s, especially in finance, real estate, business services and as the headquarters site of many national and international corporations. At the same time, beginning in the 1950s and throughout the 1960s, New York had begun to lose its manufacturing base, the sector that traditionally employed people at the bottom of the economic scale. In 1940, one third of the labor force worked in manufacturing industries, but between 1950 and 1975, the city lost 50% of its manufacturing jobs. In 1969, NYC's economy fell into recession and the City's unemployment rate climbed from 4.8% in 1970 to 10.6 % in 1975, aggravated by the national depression of 1973-75, the deepest since the 1930s. Most analysts refer to the decline in economic growth in 1973-

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75 as a recession, but it is important here to note that what looked like a recession in terms of aggregate national and NYC statistics, was felt as a depression in East New York where the unemployment rates were always one and one-half to two times that of the City as a whole. Although it hard to know what proportion were held by community residents, between 1970-76, ENY lost 50% (10,000) of its manufacturing jobs, one-third of which were in the garment industry.

Feeling the pinch of community unemployment, and believing that the issue was being ignored in the presidential campaign, U.C.C. invited economist Richard D. Wolff to talk to a community audience in September, 1972. A Marxian economist, Wolff presented an early version of the argument about the 'deindustrialization of America' . The newspaper reported that the unemployment situation would not improve, "if Professor Wolff's argument is correct" , unless a government concerned with creating employment gained control of corporations and their profits. Otherwise, manufacturing jobs would continue to leave the U.S., as multi-national U.S. corporations scattered their investments abroad and played the workers of one country off against another.("The Real Issue", 10/72) After the November election, the newspaper reported, "The reality of 1972 is a shrinking economy, fewer jobs, growing unemployment in all sectors, and reduction in public services for such necessary services as education, health and social welfare. By making 'busing" and the 'work ethic' his central campaign issues , Nixon made the Negro and the unemployed the scapegoat and focused on people's fears" ("The Election and After", Nov. 1972).

After the summer of Nixon's resignation (1974), the newspaper reported that

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President Ford's prescription for inflation followed the 'old time religion' of Nixon and his advisors. The President's policy, according to The Link was based on the belief that too much money was chasing too few goods; thus, he planned to reduce "over demand (the desire of working people to live decently) on undersupply (the phony shortages created by giant monopolies, like oil who want higher profits". Over-demand would be squelched by cutting federal domestic spending, calling for increased worker productivity ("no wage hikes"), and establishing a tight money policy that drove interest on loans and mortgages to 12%, reducing consumer spending, and forcing business dependent on borrowing to cut back on new capital investment and production. The result would be increased unemployment and a weakening of labor's ability to organize. "It seems," The Link concluded, "administrative efforts to curb inflation are directed mainly at the poor, working people and smaller business, while the major corporations get assistance on their way to greater and greater profits" ("Rx For Inflation", 9/74).

Opposing The Ideological Attack On The Welfare State

By the middle of 1975, the newspaper articulated the political and ideological framework U.C.C. would reiterate for the next five years. I quote all of a lengthy (lengthy for this community newspaper) article in the newspaper in order to indicate and then emphasize the chords U.C.C. would continue to hammer:

> A great debate is being fought in our country and the quality of our lives is at stake. What should be the responsibilities of government for unemployment, health care and everything else which comprises the life of working class and lower middle class people? The arguments are pitched as sharply as they were in the 1930s depression.
>
> President Ford's side insists the less government the better; people

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should be able to stand on their own two feet, on bread lines or waiting for unemployment insurance if necessary. Government budgets and social spending must be cut.

The other side, our side, argues that Americans have economic rights similar to those spelled out in Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1944 speech to Congress -- the right to a decent job, decent housing, food, health care and education. These rights must be adopted as national goals, pursued and accomplished through government action.

Behind Ford's policy is a basic assumption -- that society achieves its maximum development when "individuals" are free to compete for scarce resources, profits or jobs with only a minor amount of government fine tuning. That's why Ford proposes to limit the growth of federal spending and transfer spending power to individuals by a $28 billion tax cut and a $28 billion reduction in federal expenditures. Is Ford's assumption correct? One measure is whether all parts of society benefit from his program.

Ford's proposal to cut social expenditures, his refusal to finance cities throughout the country, reduces current benefits to the poor, the working class and [lower] middle class . Funds for public education, food stamps, mass transportation and health care are slashed. His tax cut, however, increases benefits to the upper income groups and lowers the corporate tax rate for corporations which already operate under advantageous regulations with a variety of government subsidies and contracts. "Maximum social development" turns out to mean that government will maximize the profits of banks and giant industry, precisely those "individuals" who control our economy and create our problems.

Ford's clichés about individual competition don't hold water. All of us know that free automobile competition never led to safer cars or better mileage. Only the government's imposition of strict requirements forced the car companies to install seat belts and transform gas guzzlers into more efficient vehicles.... Where would New Yorkers live without government intervention? According to The New York Times, "perhaps more than 70% require some form of government assistance in housing...

In fact, the "individuals whom Ford wants to ....have never been able to prevent social catastrophes or provide for our deepest, ...social needs. Up to the late 1930s depression, for example, there was no public welfare, social security or unemployment insurance in this country except what was provided by private agencies. Confronted by the needs of millions of unemployed, private charity drowned. It was only the intensive struggles of

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working people, mainly through their unions and organizations of the unemployed, which pushed government to enact public employment programs, welfare and social security.

FDR's 1944 speech to Congress was the achievement of a people's struggle over many years to make government recognize its responsibilities for the lives of people. It was an idea accepted by the federal government through the 1960s War on Poverty. But, things don't stand still and President Ford is trying to return our nation's thinking back to the pre-depression era of Herbert Hoover.

It's up to us to push back. Because our social problems are national in scope and rooted in the unplanned nature of our economy, the federal government must intervene to set our direction and enforce it. Bills are in Congress now which focus on full employment, national health care, and full funding for education. Up to now our Congressmen have been lying low. Let's flush them out. Their job is to represent us, not Ford and his corporate cronies ("The Responsibilities of Government", October, 1975).

The themes that would be emphasized for the next five years are the following: First, U.C.C. would emphasize the existence of a fundamental ideological conflict over the role of government, and how best to maximize social welfare and development. Second, U.C.C. emphasized that the sides in the debate over the role of government represented different classes whose interests in these issues were in basic conflict. Those who would whittle down government seeking to remove financial (taxes) and regulatory restraints upon the private economic sector represented big financial and industrial interests; those who emphasized the need for an activist government to assure the social needs of all represented the working class, lower middle class and poor. Third, U.C.C. would continue to emphasize that the social and economic legislation of the 1930s, and the social and economic rights projected in FDR's 1944 speech for future realization were the achievements of people's struggles, especially working class people,

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not the hand-outs of charitable government leaders. Fourth , U.C.C. designated Ford's and Carter's efforts to reduce the scope of government as an effort to take back the victories and rights won by earlier social struggles, and as an effort that deliberately forgot what was learned in the Depression of the 1930s.

Fifth, although U.C.C. continued to refer to the unplanned nature of the economy, the powerful influence of banks and giant corporations, the centrality of the profit motive in shaping corporate action, the nature of the society as composed of classes, it did not, in the newspaper, name "capitalism" -- an absence, in part, that was a remnant of the defensive reaction of U.C.C. leadership to the heyday of anti-communist, anti-left repression in the 1940s and 1950s. Although economic issues, the limits of capitalism and the meanings of class society had been discussed within the Center for many years, the volunteers were not involved in a systematic examination of capitalism or the possibility of socialism as another form of economy until its series of leadership institutes began around 1972-73. Finally, in relation to all these issues, U.C.C. emphasized the possibility of policy courses alternative to those enacted and the need for an interracial struggle of working people to push for more democratic and equitable alternatives.

According to U.C.C., it was not only the Republicans who were aggressively attacking the ideology of the welfare state and seeking to return the country to pre-New Deal ideology. Five years later, in an article with the same title, the newspaper criticized President Carter's proposed tax cut and his State of the Union address in almost identical terms.

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...the tax cut is coming from services that we badly need and cannot provide except socially. No individual can replace the pipes that are rotting beneath the city's streets, fill the potholes, provide snow removal, or repair the hundred of bridges that may be falling down if they are not maintained. It is social monies, the combined funds of personal and corporate taxes that build quality schools, libraries and parks -- the resources we all need and enjoy but cannot build ourselves. Private business has never been able to provide jobs and decent housing [for all].

'...Government cannot solve our problems', said the President in his State of the Union address. 'It cannot define our vision. Government cannot eliminate poverty or provide a bountiful economy or reduce inflation or save our cities or cure illiteracy or provide energy' [NY Times, 1/20/78, 12:1].

Carter isn't telling the truth. His administration has defined a vision for society. It is a miserly, cold and cramped vision as far as working people are concerned. It is a vision which tolerates high unemployment, deteriorating public education and inadequate housing for the majority -- and more tax breaks and subsidies to business.

The Administration's vision of society calls for more self-reliance and 'individual initiative' on the part of the poor. But the government takes responsibility for the welfare of business...Industries investing abroad are insured -- with our tax money -- against nationalization and the dangers of revolution.

The President claimed that the government cannot eliminate poverty save our cities or cure illiteracy. This is also not true. Public schools throughout the nation are screaming for help...The government could subsidize education -- instead it chooses to subsidize the military.

What government can and cannot do depends upon your vision of society. Carter's administration has chosen not to use government power to create a better society for working people... We have a different vision of society. We think government is responsible for the welfare of people in our society. We are not alone in that vision. It was shared by millions of Americans during the Great Depression of the 1930s...the achievement of a people's struggle over years to make government responsible for people. But, Nixon, Ford and now Carter have attacked the concept of government responsibility and would turn the clock back to ...pre-Depression thinking...

The 'individual initiative' and 'self-reliance' clichés didn't work in the 1930s and won't work now. Only the federal government can 'eliminate'

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> poverty, provide a bountiful economy, reduce inflation, save our cities, cure illiteracy and provide energy.' President Carter is moving the country in the wrong direction. It will take an organized movement of people to turn it around. ("The Responsibilities of Government", February, 1978)

The problem with the Democrats and the Republicans, The Link declared, is their assumption that big business will extract us from our economic mess. They both believe that solutions that maximize profits maximize public welfare:

> They believe that the interaction of private greed leads to public good... But, this isn't true...Our present depression was initiated by the White House in 1969 to 'cool off' the economy and achieve price stability. Sustained full employment appears to be a threat to corporations because the labor market tightens, labor unions are more combative and wages tend to rise at the expense of profits. In 1969 there was a corporate demand to restore profitability by deflating the economy, that is through the suffering of the working class and the poor...With some administered ups and downs and a sharp down-turn in 1973 administered by Ford, we have reached the slump we are now in.
>
> In short, there appears to be a basic conflict between what maximizes public welfare -- full employment -- and what maximizes private profits. ("Jobs, Yes, But When?", 7/76)

In making these arguments to themselves and to their black and Hispanic working class community audience, U.C.C. leaders and members were required to articulate ideas about taxation as social money, the social and changeable nature of the economy, "trickle down" economic policy, the definition of social property, the reasons for government, and the role of government in defining a vision for society. Further, the newspaper constantly reminded its readers that the social and economic rights they held and that were being taken back were the hard-won victories of the struggles of working people, not the benevolent offerings of bankers, businessmen and politicians. These ideas then constituted U.C.C.'s perspective on the NYC fiscal crisis and national policy and framed

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the positions U.C.C. espoused in relation to the problems and needs of its ENY.

At the end of 1975, The Link reported that the president wanted to see economic recovery by the 1976 election but was projecting a seven per cent unemployment rate through 1978 because "recovery" meant the recovery of corporate profits not the standard of living of working people's. In this rehearsal of "trickle down" economics for the next decade, the newspaper pointed out who would have to wait and what waiting cost:

> Ford and His Secretary of the Treasury Simon believe that if business is doing okay then the rest of us will be okay too. The goodies gotten by General Motors and Mobil Oil will presumably trickle down to ordinary people in the form of more jobs and higher wages. That is why legislation pushed by the Administration includes reduced corporate taxes, tax loopholes and an end to natural gas price controls instead of a full employment program.
>
> That policy may sound good theoretically. In reality, however, it means that we have to wait for private industry to decide its profits are high enough to justify rehiring laid off workers; it means we have to suffer deteriorating public education, public transportation and social services; it means that the average working family in this country has to foot the bill to get the big corporations back on their feet. ("Recovery and Unemployment", Dec., 1975)

Several months later the newspaper criticized the idea of the economy as an unchangeable, given state of things:

> But let's suppose the president is right -- that all we have to do is wait for years for the benefits of tax incentives and subsidies to private corporations to trickle down to working people. Do we want to wait? Do we want to live in a society with such ups and downs? Isn't it time we examined the cost to our lives and the lives of our children of living in a society which periodically inflicts a drastic cutback in the quality of life of working class and lower middle class people?
>
> Economies are not like tornadoes and earthquakes which begin and act beyond human control. People make the economy they want. Through their governments, people decide how much unemployment there will be.

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> Governments decide what proportion of a nation's wealth is used to make bombs, to educate children, or to remain in the hands of big corporations. In 1974, for example, the President and his advisors decided to raise the level of unemployment [by raising interest rates] in order, they said, to control inflation. The conscious choices of government can be consciously changed.
>
> With all the brains and wealth this country has, we should be able to figure out a government policy which guarantees full employment and the things we need for a decent life. People make government policy but right now the corporate wealthy influence government policy most in their interests. ("Let's Plan for Jobs", April, 1976)

After President Ford's State of the Union address at the beginning of 1977, The Link reported that Ford was trying to persuade the American people that our government must betray the New Deal and the Great Society promise of a government responsible for people. U.C.C. counterposed Ford's concept of government with its own:

> Ford said,"Government exists to create and preserve conditions in which people can translate their ideals into practical reality'". But, which people and whose ideals.
>
> [The unemployment rate was 7.7% through 1976 and just below seven per cent in 1977.] "Every industrial nation in the world has some form of national health insurance but Ford says we can't afford it... We need millions of new housing units. Ford plans to rebuild and rehabilitate 54,000 units less than last year...[Ford said] "We need a balance which favors greater individual freedom and self-reliance." But the freedom he proposes is for people to be unemployed, sick without health care, and fend for themselves...
>
> ...the central question is, "...what is government for and whose country is this. Government ought to be the major instrument by which we create a decent life for all people. But, if we want the government to be ours, then we have to organize to take it away from the Fords and the interests he stands for. ("State of Whose Union", March, 1977)

The topic of 'welfare' was a particularly touchy one in East New York where a high proportion of the population were public assistance recipients. Many working class

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and lower middle class African Americans and Puerto Ricans, as steeled by an individualist ideology as the rest of middle class America, and yearning for a sense of their own dignity in a society that treated them with little, agreed with the Administration's assessments of the blameworthiness of people on welfare. Frequently in community meetings in which the subject came up, someone would tell a story about some lazy wastrel (almost always a woman) who lived down the block from them. The newspaper conclusion of a longer article was:

> This is the politics of welfare. Our economy creates unemployment and the only solution the legislature can find is to cut welfare in order to attract business investment. ("Politics of Welfare, April, 1997)

Observing that between 1971 and 1976 the private sector in the U.S. economy generated six million new jobs while the labor force grew by 12 million and automation destroyed 40,000 jobs each week, The Link reminded its readers who gets blamed for social problems and why:

> ...the problem of poverty is essentially related to the way our economy works. American business simply can't provide enough jobs for all the Americans who want to work.
>
> Government agencies, including the welfare department, school system and our elected officials blame the poor for their poverty. That is why they attach work requirements to public assistance when over eight million Americans are unemployed. Like most other societies, we assume that our social problems are caused by the biological, social, psychological or moral failings of the victims of these problems rather than to the failings of the society itself. When we focus on the 'welfare mother', 'the school drop-out' and don't look at the institutions of society...people's anger is deflected from society onto the victims of the way our society works. This way the status quo is maintained -- the rich get more and the poor get less. (Poverty and Society", April, 1977)

Anticipating in ENY's lower middle and working classes, either agreement with

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or inchoate attitudes of resistance to the "tax revolt" and the passage o f Proposition 13 in California (a state constitutional amendment that cut and limited property taxes) U.C.C. made two arguments. It defended the concept of taxation and pointed to big corporations as the initiators of the movement.

> ...without taxes society cannot exist...We learned that lesson the hard way during the Great Depression...The way our society works... there is no housing built...unless someone makes a profit and medical care is only provided if it makes money for the doctors and the hospital, Without the general revenues collected by taxation life would be miserable. We would have no police protection or fire protection...the unemployed would be out of luck. There would be no unemployment insurance. The elderly and the poor could forget about medical care. Only the rich could send their children to school because public schools require tax revenues to pay salaries, buy equipment and build buildings. ("Proposition 13: A Fake Solution, Oct., 1978)
>
> The anti-tax movement isn't just a spontaneous outburst of feeling by hard-pressed working people upset about high taxes. The so-called "Revolt" is being orchestrated by the big corporations in this country who face a world in which [their profits]...are less secure than they used to be...Business is looking for more secure profits, a larger share of the national income and removal of public constrains on their freedom of action (such as environmental protection legislation, anti-trust legislation and legal protection for collective bargaining.)
>
> ...Business lobbies are demanding (and getting) lower taxes for corporations and the rich; a roll back of all government programs and jobs not immediately serving the needs of the business community; increased authority over workers through weakened unions and a sizeable reserve of unemployed workers willing to work for low wages.
>
> ...The American people have been told to lower our expectations; we are told we are 'living too high off the hog' and that big government (not big business) is the enemy. So we have seen public...programs sliced to ribbons.
>
> The anti-tax movement is an effort by one group to pass the burden of business enforced austerity onto those more defenseless...The movement is a product of conditions created by business' drive for larger profits. It accepts the lie that the cause of middle class and working class families' financial

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squeeze is government's effort to solve or ameliorate social problems. The real cause is that business is trying to solve its problems at our expense. (Business Leads Anti-Tax Move", Oct., 1978)

Opposing The Austerity Resolution To The Fiscal Crisis and The Ideological Attack on New York City

U.C.C.'s account of the causes of New York City's fiscal crisis was similar to many explanations offered since then (e.g., Alcaly and Mermelstein 1977; Lichten 1986; Shefter 1985; Tabb 1982;), and very much in opposition to the ideological accounts offered at the time on a federal, state and municipal levels of government to justify the austerity resolution of the crisis. In U.C.C.'s perspective, the fiscal crisis was produced by a confluence of demographic and economic changes many of which were the consequences of specific federal and municipal government policies and some of which were a product of capitalist economic dynamics that produced U.S. deindustrialization, and the movement of manufacturing to non-union/cheap labor parts of the country. In 1976, the newspaper wrote:

> Our own political leaders claim that New York and other cities are short of money because the tax base is eroded. Government highway and housing policy stimulated the middle class flight to the suburbs. Business abandoned the cities seeking cheaper labor, lower taxes and higher profits in the suburbs, the south and abroad. Then hit by our current national depression, the cities faced declining tax revenues, increasing demand for services and skyrocketing costs of materials, interest and energy. No wonder the cities have empty pockets. ("There Is Money", October, 1976)

In other words, in U.C.C.'s perspective, the NYC fiscal crisis was the product of national social and economic causes and federal policies, and could only be solved through actions by the federal government. The following is a summary of U.C.C.'s analysis that refers only to factors that the newspaper explicitly discusses.[1]

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First, during the 1950s and 1960s, roughly one million poor blacks and Puerto Ricans migrated to New York City at the same time that approximately one million middle class white moved to the suburbs. The migration of poor blacks northward searching for jobs and more freedom was a product of the mechanization of southern agriculture and a desire to escape from racial oppression in the South. The departure of one million middle class whites to the suburbs was the product of federal government policy financed by social money. Federal money built the highways that linked the suburbs and central cities, and federal money in the form of V.A. and FHA loans routed private savings and investment capital into the construction of single family suburban homes. This reduced the proportion of the taxable middle class and left in the City a higher proportion of working class and poor people more dependent upon a variety of public services. NYC's tax revenues grew only slowly while social expenditures increased significantly.

Second, in 1940, approximately one-third of NYC's labor force was employed in light manufacturing that provided entry level jobs for the unskilled and semi-skilled. By the mid-1970s, as poor blacks and Puerto Ricans moved into the City, the number of manufacturing jobs had sunk drastically. Traumatized by the labor uprisings of the 1930s and immediate post-war period, protected by U.S. economic and military dominance after WWII, big capital invested in low wage areas of the world like Taiwan and the Philippines, and , along with many NYC light manufacturing firms, built new plants in the non-unionized South and Southwest in order to protect and expand profits. Further, although the national and local economy continued to expand through 1969, the

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recession in 1969-70 and the depression in 1973-75 generated high rates of unemployment. New York City's source of revenue from the taxable middle class and from business slowed in growth at the same time that the unemployment rate rose.

Finally, the City could not pay for the social services it provided without borrowing money, and then borrowing more money in order to pay off both the principal and the large debt services the banks charged. Debt service became an increasingly large part of the City's budget until finally the banks refused in June, 1975 to grant any more loans. The banks pushed for a solution to the City's debt problems that would assure their repayment regardless of the social impact of the lay-offs and reduced services. U.C.C. emphasized that the concerted effort on the part of government, financial and business interests to solve the fiscal problems of New York by eliminating jobs and reducing services was a direct attack not only upon the working class and the people of ENY, but also upon a vision of government and society. There were gaps and crudities in this analysis but it was mainly correct. The problem was that U.C.C. could not contrive a workable strategy from the theoretical implications of this analysis beyond calling over and over again for a struggle against budget cuts.

Throughout the period of the fiscal crisis, national and state political leadership consistently argued that the fiscal problems of New York and other cities had local causes and needed to be solved locally. U.C.C. answered:

> When Ford and Secretary of the Treasury refuse federal aid to New York City and demand of New York City, "Keep your house in order", they [say]....that New Yorkers couldn't expect the rest of the nation to solve "our" problems. But, who lives in which house? Are the problems of NYC different from the rest of the nation. Should we restrict the polio vaccine to

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the children of New York City because it was discovered by a City College graduate?...New York City has subsidized rural and suburban America ...Cities are trading and communications centers, industrial and banking centers [and have provided] the housing, support and education for millions of immigrants who worked and helped make America what it is now.

The cities have taken responsibility for education, housing, employing, transporting and feeding people [in recent years, especially Negroes and Puerto Ricans] from all over the country who migrated looking for jobs and a decent life. Under this burden, the cities edged toward bankruptcy. But it is the "national house" which has been irresponsible -- unwilling to take on the cost of resolving our national problems, putting a higher priority on making war than solving our national problems. ("Keep Your House In Order", July, 1975)

Indignant at what it perceived as an undemocratic attack by banking interests on the right of people to govern themselves and upon the achievements of working people, the newspaper pronounced:

The banks are running New York City. They are bent on securing higher profits and seeking to push New York City and New York State back 100 years. After 100 years in which people struggled for a decent life, the banks are saying "no more". They reject the responsibility of government for the health, education and welfare of people.

The banks charge NYC with being "too generous", with "offering luxuries it can no longer afford." Are high minimum wage laws, a tuition free City University open to children of the lower middle class and working class, and public city hospitals luxuries? No. These are victories in the struggles of working people to assure decent wages, medical care and higher education for all, as essential as police and fire protection and sanitation. City workers salaries are tenth in the nation in average real wages.

These victories were not giveaways by generous bankers, businessmen and politicians. People fought so that their taxes would be used to improve the lives of people. ("Cities In Bondage", 9/75)

But, in U.C.C.'s perspective, it wasn't only the banks who were at fault. It was the excessive reliance upon business' drive for profits as the principal shaper of economic

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decisions and the concept of private property in the U.S. economy that needed to be changed:

> The main reason businesses move from one area to another...is the desire to employ cheap, easily controlled labor...From the employers point of view, the worker's desire for a decent wage and job security is simply 'greed'.
>
> When workers are not unionized, they must accept whatever wages and benefits industry offers. That is why the 'sunbelt' and some southeastern states look so attractive to the automobile industry, the garment industry and many others. Taiwan, Korea and the Philippines look good to them too -- and many American businesses have moved abroad. Governor Carey's budget director, Peter Goldmark, said, 'We must bring NY State in line with the rest of the world if we are to retain industry.' The 'rest of the world' of 38 cents an hour employment in the slums of Manila or Seoul. That is what we have to offer U.S. businessmen if we would have them voluntarily choose to stay in N.Y.
>
> ...Under the law in this country, the owner of property has the right to do whatever he wants with it. This may make sense if you are talking about bicycles, a private house or your automobile -- but industries are social products. Any corporation is only profitable because of the labor its employees put into it, and thousands of workers are able to support their families and purchase goods only because they are employed by that corporation...Yet the decision to locate that industry in one or another section of the country (or in another country) is made with only one consideration in mind -- increasing profits.
>
> Not all countries allow business to move wherever profits are highest. Britain, France, West Germany and the Netherlands all require companies to get government approval before relocating or closing a plant. The decision can then be based on a nation's needs -- not just the benefit of one corporation...We don't have to let cities die because they are abandoned by industry, nor let rural areas stagnate because industry stays away. Decisions about where industry should locate affect our society as a whole. These decisions cannot be left to the dictates of individual corporations. ("Industry Wants Cheap Labor", February, 1997)

Simply put, according to The Link, the working class and lower middle class of cities throughout the country were being scapegoated by the federal government for the

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problems created by business, banks and real estate interests:

> We are witnessing the worst attack on the working class and lower middle class since the 1930s depression...According to Ron Nessen, the Presidential press secretary, 'New York is like a wayward daughter hooked on heroin. You don't give her $100 a day to support her habit.' The people of NYC are blamed for choosing extravagant and irresponsible leaders to manage our city. We are blamed for our desire to make New York a humane place to live, a city where public services, however inadequate, provided many people with the possibility of a decent life.
>
> ...This charade needs unmasking and responsibility for economic crisis should be placed on the refusal of rich and powerful businesses, banks and real estate interests to carry their fair share of the City's financial costs. They refuse to recognize any responsibility for the people of New York leading a decent life. They have bled the City dry through profiteering and usury... for years they threatened to move unless NYC lowered assessment of their real estate.
>
> Ford and the bankers are trying to shift responsibility for the nation's problems of inflation and unemployment onto the working class and lower middle class throughout the country, but mainly in the cities. They do not want corporate profits touched. Every major urban and industrial area faces the same problems --Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit. In just one week in October, NYC, Buffalo, Rochester and Illinois faced default on loans and bankruptcy. ("The City is People", October, 1975)

The Symbolic Significance of NYC

By 1976, U.C.C. saw the links between the national economic attacks on social welfare, the federal government's specific blaming of New York City for extravagant mismanagement, and the emphasis even on the New York State level ("Carey Courts Business, Cuts Social Services", February, 1977) upon "fiscal integrity", the restoration of "individual freedom" and "end[ing] government regulation. U.C.C. asked and answered the central question in an ideological puzzle that it saw:

> If the problems of the cities are so clearly national in scope, why has

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New York City been attacked so sharply by the banks and the federal government.

The answer is related to the way big business, the banks and the Ford government [and later Carter] have tried to solve this country's economic problems -- that is by cutting back on social service expenditures, by skinning the hides of working people instead of making the banks and big business pay for their fair share.

More than any other city in the world, New York stands for a concern for all people: minorities, immigrants, the poor. The City and NY State have led the country in progressive social legislation. If New Yorkers could be scapegoated and beaten down, the powers that be reasoned, if the rest of the country could be persuaded that New York was too generous, then perhaps working people all over the country could be forced to lower their expectations and accept a lower standard of living. So far, the hogwash has been swallowed. ("There Is Money", October, 1976)

What U.C.C. saw and what it presented to its community, was an early vision of how the austerity resolution of the NYC fiscal crisis, and the concerted mustering of an ideological attack upon New York by every level of government, and by corporate and banking interests, combined to form an experimental political probe for the dismantling of the welfare state. U.C.C. recognized this as being, in part, a counter-action to the government expansion that sought to accommodate the political and economic demands of the working class, and especially of the black working class and poor during the 1960s. What U.C.C. could not know (and what it hoped would not happen) was that this mustering of reaction was also, exactly and simultaneously, a rehearsal of both the policies and their ideological justifications that would gather support and elect the President in 1980, and establish many of the terms of national debate on the role of government throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

What could be done, what ought to be done? After the Democratic Mayoral

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Primary between Ed Koch and Mario Cuomo, The Link observed:

> The progressive vote in New York has been fragmented. The people whose votes made NYC the most progressive city in the world, whose strength sustained a free university, well-paid city workers, a more humane attitude toward welfare, and some of the best public hospitals in the City -- these people are now splintered and disorganized.
>
> Puerto Rican ran against Negro, Jewish and Italian politicians sought the votes of their own groups. The labor unions tied themselves hand and foot to the regular Democratic Party --whatever its program -- when they used retirement funds to buy municipal bonds. Each piece of a once powerful ['people's'] coalition was looking out for its own interests. This coalition has to be rebuilt. The politics of 'me first', ethnic separatism and 'look after our own' has brought disaster to New York City. We need a candidate who speaks for working people and the poor. ("New York Loses in Mayoral Primary", September, 1977)

U.C.C. knew very well what was being lost. Its political economic analysis and lived sense of history enabled it to remember clearly the accomplishments of an earlier working class-based, class-oriented political coalition, and contrast that coalition with the political helplessness of the working class at that moment. Its theory enabled U.C.C. to explain the fiscal crisis and focus steadily upon the consequences the austerity resolution for East New York's people. At the same time, U.C.C.'s theory urged an appeal to class identity that could not be effective because the structural bases and widely shared ideology of class political identity were gone.

The Fiscal Crisis in East New York

U.C.C. made two major organizing efforts in relation to the austerity resolution to the fiscal crisis: one in relation to the cutbacks in day care, and one (discussed above) in relation to the Community School Board. Before discussing the day care campaign, I want to review briefly how the newspaper observed and reported on the impact of the

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fiscal crisis in specific areas of daily community life. As the newspaper said at one point, "short-falls, fiscal crises, budget deficits are cold, painless, technical terms" for "sacrificing the health and education of our children, our jobs, [and] a clean and safe community."

In 1975, when the Children's Room of the New Lots Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library was closed, the Childrens Learning Center (U.C.C.'s day care center) began a campaign for increased City and State aid to libraries. In working class communities like ENY, libraries are not only places to read or borrow books. After school, during the cold months, the reading room tables are filled with elementary and middle school students who need a clean, warm, well-lighted place to do homework with friends until it is near the time their parents return home from work. A day care parent committee was formed, the children performed plays about the cuts before audiences of children at other day care centers, and the parents' committee petitioned parents at other day care centers to gain support for the re-opening of the Children's Room, which never re-opened. . .("Fighting For Our Library", May, 1975, and July, 1975)

When the City dropped two buses from the B-83 run from ENY to central Brooklyn, the result was a nine minute wait between buses during morning rush hours and the remaining buses were so crowded that "by the time the #83 progressed from Ashford St. [at the beginning of the line] to Vermont St. [six blocks away], passengers [waiting at Vermont Street] were left on the sidewalk". The cuts in bus service and the loss of 4,500 transit jobs, The Link reminded readers were part of the solution to the fiscal crisis. "The money saved goes to pay off interest on bonds owed to the banks; it is

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paid for by the unemployed worker who doesn't have access to a job in transit and by the tired commuters who must wait longer and ride under more uncomfortable conditions." (City Cuts B-83 Bus Service", July, 1977).

When the U.S. Army moved its recruiting office from Kings Plaza on the south end of Flatbush Avenue to the Fairfield Shopping Center in ENY "in order to be closer to more likely recruits", The Link asserted, "ENY doesn't need the Army recruiting office. It needs jobs." Despite the Army's claims for its training programs, according to The Link, Army veterans suffer among the highest levels of unemployment in the country. Congress pours million into Army recruiting and can't find money for education and full employment. ("Army Recruiting In ENY", September, 1977).

In "City Streets Going To Potholes" (November, 1977), The Link warned its readers of a pothole on Schenck Avenue between Hegeman and New Lots that was a yard wide and a foot deep that had been there for already a month as a result of the 18% cutback in the road maintenance workforce. (I have a personal memory of my friends and me joking about our higher annual mechanics' bills and the quicker depreciation of our cars from driving in that time on Brooklyn's pot-hole pocked, axle-bending, hubcap prying, wheel denting, tire flattening streets.)

At NYCHA's Linden Houses, the halls were dirtier, the buzzer systems didn't work, the lobby door locks were broken (making the buildings less safe and the lobbies even dirtier) and apartment repairs were delayed because the project lost 15 provisionals who did all the outside work between March and September. Four regulars had to be pulled off indoor maintenance and NYCHA had not replaced other workers lost by

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attrition.("Linden Houses Hurt By Budget Cuts", July, 1977)

In July, 1975, before the lay-offs, there were 138 sanitation men in District #44 covering ENY. A year and one half later there were 124 men with far more garbage to pick up because Starrett City with its 5,800 apartment units (not yet filled) opened up. Pick-ups were reduced to two times weekly south of Linden Boulevard, and three times weekly to the north. The streets were noticeably dirtier and smellier. ("ENY Services Down", October, 1976)

In December, 1976 ("Crime Linked to Unemployment") The Link reported on a study by a Congressional Joint Economic Committee that found that changes in the unemployment rate had a profound impact on people's reaction to social stress, and especially upon crime, a worrisome fact of everyday life in ENY. "In 1970, [in the U.S.] 1,740 homicides, 1,540 suicides, and 5,520 additional mental hospital admissions could be 'blamed directly' on the 1.4% rise in unemployment that year." Government, the newspaper concluded, has a responsibility to consider the human impact of its economic policy decisions as well as a responsibility to deal with the problems created by its economic policies.

"We are 'lucky'", The Link effused ironically, "to live in a high crime area because we had fewer lay-offs. The 75th precinct lost 70 policemen since July [1976]" But now, there were no continuity of police officers at the schools, no regular traffic officers at intersections, and no police available for a block party or other community event. ("ENY Services Down", October, 1976).

In October, 1978, The Link reported that "Kings County Hospital didn't even have

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enough blankets for all its patients last winter. Two housekeepers now do the work of four and the lack of clerical staff ties nurses to paper work instead of letting them work with patients..."

"Our children have no place to play. Playgrounds and parks are unsupervised and rarely cleaned. A 50% cut in the workforce means glass in the sandbox, unrepaired slides and swings, broken water fountains and closed off or filthy restrooms." ("More Budget Cuts To Destroy NYC, October, 1978).

By July, 1976, in ENY's School District #19, 50% of the guidance staff had been lost, along with approximately 200 teachers in 25 elementary and junior high schools making class size larger; and, crossing guards were lost. Specialist cluster teachers returned to regular classroom teaching, instrumental music was practically eliminated, as were most special science, library, music and art classes, as though The Link wrote, working class children did not deserve to participate in our human heritage. In addition, there were insufficient aides making lunchrooms and hallways dirtier and more hazardous. ("The Real World of Education", July, 1976)

In the Brownsville Health District covering ENY and Brownsville, the NYC Department of Health closed the Eye Clinic and two of the five Child Health Centers, dropped two out-reach staff who checked on appointments and child immunizations, reduced service in the chest clinic, dropped several public health nurses thus reducing the frequency with which the nurses visited the public schools from twice weekly to once every two or three weeks, and did not rehire dentists and doctors lost through attrition. ("City Axes Childrens Health Care", March, 1975; "ENY Services Down", October,

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1976)

Shorter library services, higher unemployment, gaping potholes, higher crime rates, dirtier streets, fewer crossing guards, the elimination of music and science programs, larger school classes, fewer buses, few public health nurses and no more eye clinic, and so forth. Then, in 1980 came Reagan, crack cocaine, and murder. By the late 1980s, ENY's precinct was registering the highest numbers of homicide in the City.

One needs to be a better writer than I am to convey without falling into cliché and sentimentality the calamity that befell East New York's people in the decade 1974-85. No one with eyes that looked outward who walked or drove through the community with concerns that extended beyond his/her own skin could not see and feel the harshness of its life in that period and afterwards. Peoples have lived through much worse conditions, certainly, and doubtless there were many, even then, whose domestic lives were only mildly affected. Of course, the insecurities of the poor -- the working poor, the unemployed and those on welfare-- were exacerbated, and, many youth grew up thinking that these conditions defined their possibilities; the poor and young people suffered most of all. But, everyone felt the weight of the coldness, fear, anger and punishment of ENY's street life. Everyone was affected by the abrasiveness of public transit, intimidated by street crime, aggravated by potholes and felt anxious about their children's experience at school and in the streets. If raising children is always a perilous enterprise, and, even more so for black and Hispanic working class parents, this period of austerity policy and the dashed sense of a possible future that it produced among many youth (that lasted for many years afterward) made the consequences of inevitable parental and

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youthful missteps far more often irreparable.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a number of books were published with celebratory names like The Backyard Revolution: Understanding the New Citizen Movement (Boyte 1980), Citizen Action and the New American Populism (Boyte, Booth and Max 1986), and many others that identified with a neo-Alinskyan and populist tradition of organizing. The authors of these books saw great potential in local organizing for the realization of democracy in American life. U.C.C. 's organizers were aware of some of this literature. They looked at their own failed efforts to stimulate community organizing in almost every area of community life: libraries, unemployment, housing maintenance, health care, public schools, playgrounds, and public transportation. They looked at the inability of any local or city-wide group in NYC to turn back the combined power of various levels of government, banking and corporate interests to impose social austerity upon NYC's residents and especially upon communities like East New York. Aware of their minor successes and of their (and others') major failures to organize a powerful opposition to austerity, U.C.C. perceived the "neighborhood or citizens' movement" as having nothing to do with U.C.C.'s experience in ENY, NYC or what its members and leaders knew about other major northeastern and mid-western cities, or the direction of government and capitalism. During this period, 1975-83, U.C.C. spoke at official local and city-wide forums and created its own forums in the community. It worked with parents associations, block associations, ad hoc and established community groups within ENY and elsewhere in NYC. It sent out mailings, made phone calls and knocked on doors. Despite all its efforts to organize on various

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issues, it was only in day care and in relation to the public schools that U.C.C. managed to construct actual campaigns with any resonance.

In his thoughtful book about ACORN, Gary Delgado (1986:195), wrote, "The avoidance of racial issues within the organization has both external and internal implications. In avoiding issues of race, ACORN has been unable to form linkages with single-issue minority groups organized around desegregation, police brutality, or saving vital services. This position has also had its effects on the recruitment of staff." Members and leaders of U.C.C., in contrast, were acutely conscious of race and did not avoid racial issues. They fought for integration throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and fought to save vital services in East New York and wherever else there were groups ready to ally for a city-wide battle throughout the 1970s. U.C.C.'s inability to connect to other groups in NYC fighting for "desegregation" or "to save vital services" was mainly due to the non-existence of those other groups in ENY and their sparsity in NYC.

The Childrens Learning Center

In the second half of the 1970s, despite the fiscal crisis, the organization seemed to most of its members and leaders to be as robust as it had ever been, perhaps more so. The enthusiastic hours volunteered by fifteen young men and women of the generation that had graduated the no tuition and Third World corridor struggles contributed significantly to a sense of dynamism which attracted many residents volunteers --at least for short periods. But, the single most important contribution to U.C.C.'s hope that it might continue to reach new residents for its campaigns and programs was the opening of its day care center in 1973.

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The decision to try to expand into day care had rested on the idea that people were more likely to at least consider the ideas of people they knew, respected and trusted than they were those ideas they read in newspapers slipped under their door, or briefly discussed in doorways with callers on a house to house campaign. The provision of needed services of quality could establish a relationship of trust and mutual respect between the organization and the users -- in this case U.C.C. and parents. Based on that relationship, parents might be involved in learning about the ideas that were the basis of the educational curriculum to which their children were exposed. Parent support of those ideas and the organization that cared for their children might move them to consider participating in other activities of the organization. At the least, based on their knowledge and respect for the organization's staff and volunteers, parents might weigh the ideas U.C.C. advocated more seriously.[2]

This approach had worked in the past, although its effectiveness had diminished considerably with respect to the summer camping program for youth that U.C.C. provided. In the 1970s, parents were glad to be able to send their children to a safe place at camp where their children had fun during the summer. But they barely read the mail from the organization that provided the resident camping service until the following Spring. U.C.C. hoped that the impact of a year-round, community-based service like day care that was a necessity for working parents might have different results.

The search for funds to start a day care center began with the formation of a day care committee of volunteers around 1970 in a period when publicly funded, privately - sponsored day care centers were being opened throughout the community and the City.

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The Center became one of three organizations in NYC (the others were upstate) to obtain low interest mortgage money made available through the NY State Community Facilities Act, to build its own day care center on the site of its annex on New Lots Avenue. RoseMarie H., the assistant director at the time, remembers:

> It was a fluke. The City wanted to open day centers in communities like ENY so it went to its friends in the poverty programs or to those who were ex-poverty program employees, to the politicians and to the politically connected in the churches and asked them to incorporate boards that would be the legal entity to run the day care centers. Remember Vinnie J. from United Negro and Puerto Rican Front that became part of the poverty program. He set up a group that operated two day care centers. I think even Bill W. got an administrative job in one and afterwards went to prison for embezzling its money. The City went to everybody except us. And, almost all of them were being opened in rented facilities --often with exorbitant rents that became a scandal a few years later. Day care centers were seen as power bases and opportunities to provide jobs. It was part of Lindsay's effort, like those Neighborhood City Halls, to try to set up an alternative political machine. They didn't come to us because we were critical of Lindsay, the poverty programs and the people on the community boards. If you wanted the deal from the City you had to go through the community boards and that left us out.
>
> But, the State was looking for what they called grass-roots groups with track records that could run a program and administer money. Most of the groups that they funded were upstate. There was also some competition between Lindsay and Rockefeller at the time, and the State wanted to sponsor some day care facilities in the City. Somebody up in Albany, I forget who, put us in touch with the Community Facilities Agency. And, our leadership convinced them to give it to us. Morris and Evelyn were impressive, they dealt with ideas. It was clear to the State we knew what we were doing. We weren't fly-by-night. We had operated a sleepaway camp for 15 years. And we got the buses, and the fireplace too. Morris argued that a poor community should get a great facility and they went for it. I think we were only one of two or three groups in the City that got a building built this way, that we owned. Afterwards, we negotiated with City for the operating money which included the mortgage money, the same way it included the rent money for the other day care centers.

The Childrens Learning Center opened in the Fall, 1973 and won an architectural

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prize from Progressive Architecture. The NYC Agency for Child Development of the Human Resources Administration provided the monies for the operation of the day care center and the mortgage payment. The Learning Center enrolled 100 pre-schoolers who attended from early morning to early evening and 80 school-age children who attended after their school day ended. U.C.C. leadership persuaded State authorities to include the cost of two school buses in its mortgage as much to provide bus service for parents as for the regular trips on which the children were taken.

As a result of the staff's intensive outreach and recruitment prior to opening, especially among white, working class and lower middle class parents (who lived in the distant northeastern corners of the community) but also with Hispanic parents, the Childrens Learning Center opened with an enrollment that was thoroughly mixed racially and ethnically even though it was located in a working class black area. The racially mixed character of the Learning Center enrollment lasted throughout most of the seventies. By then, the budget cutbacks in day care that resulted from the austerity resolution of the NYC fiscal crisis had eliminated the salaries of the two social work para-professionals. Their recruitment work had aimed mainly at white parents because there was no problem recruiting the majority of black children or the substantial minority of Hispanic children. Further, the exodus of young white families had substantially reduced even the small recruitment pool that existed in the earlier part of the decade.

The integrated education curriculum of the Learning Center did not change. There was a substantial mix of ethnically diverse African American children and staff as well a large minority of Latino children and staff. The children continued to learn about

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the holidays, foods, dances, songs, clothing and living conditions of other children throughout the world. They continued to learn about budget cuts in education and day care and the staff took the children to public hearings of the Board of Education and Board of Estimate with signs, where they testified. And, they continued to sing civil rights songs -- "black and white together, we shall not be moved" among others -- but by 1980 there were no more whites associated with the Learning Center except for some staff and the only white children were the kids of a few U.C.C. parents.

The Childrens Learning Center was intended to provide a needed service for working mothers (and others). It was also seen as an opportunity to organize a curriculum informed by by the U.C.C.'s ideas about integrated education and the richness of difference (Eisenstein, 1976, "A Philosophy and Curriculum for the Childrens Learning Center"). And, it was seen as an arena for recruiting parents based on ideas and values expressed through the curriculum. To some extent it worked. It provided a needed service; the staff consistently organized parents meetings about the Learning Center program and U.C.C. campaigns; the program offered parents an opportunity to be involved in Learning Center support committees; and, staff and volunteers urged parents to participate in U.C.C. campaigns and programs. Some parents joined committees and participated in U.C.C. programs, especially those in which their children sang or folk danced. Some were moved to become active in U.C.C., at least for an occasional campaign. Fewer became members with responsibility in U.C.C.

There were several reasons for this much weaker than hoped for response. First, there was the problem of the shortage of women's time. Second, U.C.C. ideas about

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integration and the richness of difference seemed to many parents like good ideas for a day care center and children but only rare parents found them politically compelling. Third, the administrative staff was learning its job in the first five years of the program. They focused more upon the tasks of running the children's program and tended to scant the goal of organizing parents until the early 1980s. Fourth, the disorientation and self-protectiveness produced by the internal conflict among the leadership in U.C.C. prevented the top leadership from developing a longer range and systematic approach to the array of goals for pre-schoolers, after-schoolers and parents, and the conflict inhibited the daring needed to experiment with new ways of tackling the problems of the day care center.

It took six years, the death of the director in 1979 and the reshuffling of the day care administrative staff before the day care center figured out how to break away from organizing the after school program in imitation of the mold of the sleep-away camp program. It took the same six years to remember and act upon the idea that parent involvement hinged not only upon the sophisticated politics and educational program U.C.C. leaders and members had developed over years but also upon what a new generation of younger, inexperienced parents wanted to do and what they wanted to learn. Slow learning had been institutionalized.

What the parents wanted to do was organize fish fries, candy sales and book sales in order to raise money that would immediately contribute to the enrichment of their children's activities. What they wanted to learn were the answers to practical questions such as how they could help their kids with their homework, what discipline meant and

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how it should be developed, what "normal" was, and how they could encourage their children to read. As this approach was slowly resuscitated and U.C.C. became more involved with parents on their terms, U.C.C. began to incorporate a recognition of the limits upon women's time to be volunteers. To a small extent, in the 1980s, the new approach worked. The few new individuals who joined the U.C.C. Board were all African American parents whose kids had attended or were enrolled in the day care center.

In the 1970s, despite the U.C.C. and Childrens [*sic*] Learning Center (CLC) administrative staff's problems of slow learning, U.C.C.'s day care center justifiably acquired a reputation as one of the best operated day care centers and independent (private) pre-school educational programs in East Brooklyn. For some residents and other organizational leaders, the provision of a high quality program that met resident needs was understood as an expression of concern for the community even though most of the U.C.C. leadership --including the executive director and president of the Board -- were white, but not the Puerto Rican assistant director who also directed the day care center. What this meant was that in a low income, African American and Latino (mainly Puerto Rican at this time) community, still oriented to the elaboration of black and (to a lesser extent) Latino ethnicity, despite U.C.C.'s conflicts with the local political establishment, and despite its weakness in figuring out how to address the problem of race and black ethnicity in political terms, the operation of the day care center contributed to U.C.C.'s legitimacy in the community.

U.C.C.'s day care center served black and Puerto Rican children and (mainly)

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their mothers. But, it saw the day care services it provided and its political organizing initiatives on day care in terms of its class analysis, not from a feminist position addressed specifically to women's needs, and not from a racialist position addressed specifically to the needs of African Americans and Latinos. It was based on this class analysis and its reaction to what it perceived as attacks on the working class, from the Nixon administration (1973), from Albany (1974), and from the City in the austerity resolution to the fiscal crisis (1975 - 1977) that U.C.C. tried to organize a response to the fiscal crisis. The themes U.C.C. emphasized in its day care organizing efforts -- the attacks on working class families, the insistence that government must take responsibility for people, the attention to the absence of organized opposition to the curtailment of the welfare state -- echoed the themes of its perspective on City, State and national policies throughout the 70s.

U.C.C.'s political efforts in day care began in the Spring, 1973, two years before the NYC fiscal crisis, just a few months after the Learning Center opened. 40 parents attended an emergency meeting called to figure out what to do about Nixon's administration's proposal to withdraw federal funds from day care. They decided to form a Council of ENY Day Care Centers. From the meeting they marched to the office of Congressman Brascoe who pledged his support. Then, in the Spring, 1974 NY State cut day care funds eliminating several thousand day care slots and reducing the eligibility level at which a family of four could enroll their children without fees from $13,000 to $8,500. U.C.C. saw this as part of the phase-out of quality day care for working class families. The Link declared, "In the present climate, social and educational programs are

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the least considered by the government. The concern is with saving money and not with creating a healthy environment for children to learn and grow...A fight against this attack on the working class is now under way." U.C.C. sent parent petitions and telegrams opposing the cuts to the usual suspects --the governor, mayor and state legislators -- mobilized other local day care centers to do the same, participated in a city-wide rally for day care at City Hall in August, 1974. (The Link, "Day Care Shut Out", Sept., 1974)

The NYC fiscal crisis began in the Spring, 1975. Very rapidly, city-funded day care centers lost their family workers and several teaching staff. Day care centers throughout the City, including two in ENY, were closed. A year later, the U.C.C. newspaper reported that NY State and the Emergency Financial Control Board (the state appointed group with authority over the City's budget), were making day care eligibility regulations even more stringent. Unemployed women would have only 60 days to find a job and at most a 60 day extension before they were ruled ineligible for day care without fees. Only student -parents enrolled in two year colleges or vocational training programs were eligible; four year college students in liberal arts program would no longer be eligible for day care. "The emphasis on training and education of the working class and poor which was so much a part of the politics of the 60's", The Link reminded its readers, "is clearly not on today's agenda."

> Under the banner of economy, services needed by working class and poor people are removed while other segments of society considered more important by government are being [supported]...This is only the tip of the iceberg...a statement of what our society is and where it is headed.
>
> The tragedy is the absence of organized protest and the acceptance of the idea that we must learn to live with less. But, who is being asked to live

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> with less...those least able...Only government can reverse what is happening. And government will only respond to organized pressure. ("Day Care Affects More Than Children", April, 1976)

As usual the article called upon the community to join the U.C.C. day care committee to fight against the attacks on day care, and just as usual at that time, very few residents accepted the invitation, although they were willing to sign petitions and even contribute money for telegrams.

For two years, between the late Spring, 1974 and the Spring, 1976, U.C.C. held meetings with the boards and directors of local day care centers and tried to organize the East New York Coalition for Day Care. The coalition was intended to involve parents in a struggle for full funding for day care and for the idea that day care should be seen as education not custodial service. The coalition existed as a real entity for a few months and then dissolved. There were logistical, ideological and political reasons for the failure. Day care centers were under-staffed and directors were burdened by time-consuming procedures that made it hard to allocate time to parent organization. No other day care centers in East New York at the time had a viable parent organization, a difficult thing to create without assistance from people not tied to daily day care tasks. At the Learning Center, U.C.C.'s staff and volunteers helped by supplying people and direction. In addition, most day care directors and their boards conceived day care as a custodial service, sometimes as an educational program, but, almost never as an opportunity for recruiting parents for community action.

Lastly, many day care center boards or directors were tied to anti-poverty or political party leaders. The Chairman of the board of the ENY Community Corporation,

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the major local descendant of the anti-poverty program, had been a director of a city-funded day care center; another member of the ENYCC board was board chairman of another day care center; the director of one of the multi-service centers chaired the board of another day care center, and so it went. The leaderships of the day care centers, the poverty programs that still existed, the Community School Board and the local Democratic Party clubs were intertwined. Unwilling and unable to challenge the ideology that framed budgetary decisions or the politicians that approved them, they sought protection for their own centers through their connections not through struggle.

In July, 1976, U.C.C. exasperatedly pointed out that the politics of day care in ENY mirrored the political situation in the City. "For two years, the Childrens Learning Center has tried to build an ENY Day Care Coalition to be a voice and a force in opposition to city-wide cuts. Despite cutbacks in program funds and eligibility restrictions, ENY centers have chosen to go it alone. Even some politicians tried to save individual centers but failed." The need was for all Centers to get together. ("Fight for Day Care", The Link, July, 1976) Over the next several years, The Childrens Learning Center staff, children and often parents appeared at various City budget and other hearings to testify for day care but the ENY Day Care coalition never emerged.

Others groups in the City that were fighting for day care were bigger and similarly opposed to the budget cuts and eligibility restrictions. But, none had as clearly enunciated a working class-oriented program. U.C.C., for example, would annually support the NYS Child Care Coordinating Council's (the official group of old-line day care organizations that bargained with the City on budgets for private day care centers

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that were funded by the NYC A.C.D.) advocacy of more generous day care budgets at the NY State level. At the same time, however, U.C.C. emphasized its principled stand for tuition-free, universal access (without income requirements) to publicly funded and operated, full-day pre-school education and after school services run as public, educational programs under the State Department of Education.

Its rationale in support of day care paralleled its rationale for tuition-free, public higher education. The longitudinal research demonstrated that working class and poor children did better in school, were more employable, finished high school at higher rates and engaged in criminal activity at lower rates when they were prepared with pre-school programs with parent involvement and an educational orientation (Berrueta-Clement et al, 1984). With women participating in the work force at such a high rate,

> "...we have reached a point in the development of our society and economy at which the care and education of young children cannot be perceived as an individual problem. It is a social problem for which society as a whole, through government, must accept responsibility and work to resolve...Any fee [for day care] is a rejection of the idea that our society as a whole, not only parents, must pay for the development and care of young children...As long as there are income requirements, there will always be political pressure to lower the income level above which families become ineligible. Income requirements in our society guarantee racially segregated and economically segregated programs. [Further, day care] "... should be administered and regulated by an educational agency...[because] the goals of the day care system under the State Department of Social Services and local departments of social services are and have always been primarily custodial and only remotely educational ("A Position Paper on Early Childhood Education and Care", October, 1985).

Other day care groups labelled U.C.C.'s call for no fees and universal access during a period of budget cutbacks as unrealistic. NYC-based coalitions pointed to the NYC Board of Education's enormous bureaucracy, invoked the Board's inability to

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educate minority students, and argued that community-based private day care in small buildings was more sensitive to the needs of neighborhood children. U.C.C. answered that public agencies could be held accountable through organized struggle; that children could remain in small buildings; that educational agencies could administer educational program more effectively than social service agencies. Longer term philosophical and political principles needed to be articulated even within annual budget fights because the articulation of principles educated the day care constituency, clarified the need and pressured the politicians. It was more politically realistic, U.C.C. invariably argued, to develop an aggressive struggle for a principled position, even if yearly budget compromises were necessary, than be tied to an annual defensive struggle in relation to the limited budget determined by the 'budgetary realists' in the state legislature. U.C.C.'s effort to spark a day care response to the fiscal crisis was a failure.

Not until the early 1980s did a few of the local day care centers, along with several other day care groups in the City began consistently to join with the CLC's efforts to oppose budget cuts and eligibility restrictions in day care. In 1981, the Learning Center organized 10 bus loads of children, staff and parents from several Brooklyn and Manhattan day care centers to talk to legislators in the state capitol. And, the following year, the high point of its efforts, the Learning Center organized 23 buses for the journey to Albany to support universally-accessible, tuition-free, fully-funded, educationally-oriented day care.

U.C.C.'s day care organizing efforts continued through the mid-1980s. Although U.C.C. and CLC parent volunteers were the major leaders in these efforts, the Learning

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Center's paid staff always played an important role: the teachers helped organize the parents of their children; the administrators organized the teachers and board members in CLC, and the board members and directors in other day care centers. CLC administrators carried much of the leadership of the day care coalition activities. After two years, the demands upon the administrative staff in the Childrens Learning Center itself -- especially in the areas of teacher training and support, and new curriculum development -- were too extensive. The CLC staff needed more administrative attention to carry out the program. Without U.C.C.'s and CLC administrative staff's effort and leadership in the larger coalition it had tried to form, this particular day care struggle collapsed.

ENDNOTES

1. For example, the newspaper discusses the loss of manufacturing jobs in the United States and NYC as the product of the effort of private corporations to invest in areas where labor was cheap and easily controlled, but it does not discuss the impact of foreign competition and the increasing globalization of the economy. The newspaper refers to the mechanization of southern agriculture after World War II as a factor contributing to the migration of blacks searching for jobs out of rural areas to northern and southern cities, but it does not mention the federal government's contribution to agricultural mechanization. The newspaper refers to the increased proportion of poor people needing services in NYC's population. But, it neglects to point out that the political demands of working class and poor blacks for social and economic opportunity, that is, inclusion into the post-war "accord", and for a heightened social wage, forced the expansion of public service budgets. Nor does it mention how the unionization of public employees in NYC and across the country, and their successful demands for higher wages required the expansion of municipal budgets.

2. Ann Withorn (1984) makes a similar argument.

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CHAPTER XVIII

SUBMERGED BY HISTORY

A Brief Survey of U.C.C. in the 1980s and 1990s

After Morris Eisenstein, the executive director died in 1979, the assistant director became the executive director. At the time, the most important single leader in the organization was the white woman who had been the president of the board for decades. It was based on her sense of urgency, her organizational and organizing skills, and her commitment to practice and to the organization, that U.C.C. stepped up its organizing efforts for the next two years. In part also, staff, board and members wanted to demonstrate to themselves that their efforts did not hinge upon the deeply influential leadership of their former director.

Stepping up practical efforts produced some new and important campaigns, especially in the area of day care in the early 1980s. The day care campaign, like any apparently meaningful campaigns whose outcomes were unpredictable, produced its own imperatives, momentum and morale. But, in other internal programs and social action campaigns of the Center, especially where the outcomes were predictably unproductive or boringly repetitive, it was harder to maintain a sense of urgency. The director's death had opened a valve through which internal questions about the U.C.C.'s practice began to trickle. Reasons for repeating the same programs, campaigns and ways of doing things that no longer possessed the same credibility were more challengeable in the new line-up of authority within the organization. Not everyone expressed their doubts, questions or disagreements. That depended upon situational factors such as an individual's

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organizational longevity, his/her position in the organizational structure or in particular campaigns, as well as opportunities for raising questions. Still, even as there was greater willingness on the part of more people to question the Center's practice, the person who had been the president of the board resisted.

Many small, ideologically oppositional organizations, religious or secular, face problems associated with succession when their principal ideological leader dies. U.C.C. was no exception. There was no question about who would officially occupy the position of executive director. The conflict related to succession that emerged in 1983-85 was over the real as opposed to the official structure of authority in the organization.

The conflict was rooted in the history of the organization and the allowances made by the former director to the board president's energetic organizing efforts. For decades, the original executive director and president of the board had supported one another's leadership but it had always been clear that the principal ideological and programmatic leader had been the executive director. In the last several years before the director's death, a chronic conflict had developed between the two of them. The articulated and implicit criticisms that each had levelled at the other had diminished the authority of both. The attention and emotional time the conflict consumed, and the incredulity and tattering of loyalty it produced enervated the organization's impetus outward. Trapped by their gratitude, deference and personal loyalties, the board, staff and members were unable and unwilling to control their leaders. For staff, board members and other members, during that period, it became hard not to wonder, when either of these two spoke, whether either of the two was advocating consistently held

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ideas that each thought made sense, or whether each was soliciting personal support and seeking to undermine the other. Distrust became a private issue. One result was that the death of the executive director had brought sorrow and relief in variously mixed proportions for individuals in U.C.C.

Even if everything else had remained the same, the executive director's death and the generalized dispersal and diminution of authority that resulted would have made space for a process of questioning and conflict over the direction of the organization and how it operated. Such space had already begun to emerge during the internal conflict between the leaders during the 1970s. The immediate result of the director's death was to postpone the emergence of this questioning in the collective effort to keep the organization going. But, these questions could not be suppressed for long; no one in U.C.C. possessed that kind of authority. The main problem that U.C.C. faced was not the loss of its principal leader, but the fact that the world was changing. Although they could not articulate these changes theoretically, leaders and members felt them. The forms these questions and disagreements assumed were in explicitly articulated questions about the old practices --always couched in terms of the Center's ideas -- or in an increased focus upon private issues. Or, they talked about hanging on until a new political and economic situation would move the community to recognize the need for their leadership and ideas. It was a desperate way of talking that indicated their felt current irrelevance.

The new internal conflict began at a point when the former president was the most highly respected member of the organization, a person many members felt close to and

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from whom they had learned much. Freed from her years of battle with the former executive director, she now sought to establish her own authority and direction as primary. At first she attempted to give direction to the organization as a whole, but when the staff, and in particular the director resisted, she withdrew from all her organizational responsibilities except her participation as a 'member' of the Education Committee. The specific conflict that then emerged was over the former president's insistence that she be able to lead the education committee's community organizing efforts (with the agreement of the Committee's chair) free of limitations imposed by the director as opposed to the new director's effort to assert her authority as representative of the board and membership, over U.C.C. campaigns. The problem was that the Education Committee was the principal social action arm of the U.C.C. at that time and regularly required the involvement of other volunteers and staff in order to accomplish its campaigns. Permitting the former board president to set the priorities and determine the actions of the Education Committee without the director's approval meant that her priorities would, in fact become the Center's social action priorities without input from anyone else. By this time, however, the staff and the Board members were no longer willing to accept her controlling aspirations and efforts. The conflict ended with the democratically arrived at decision to oust the former board president from her position as board member after a tortuous and recriminatory year and one-half of meetings of the board, staff and membership that entirely blocked new initiatives. During that period, most of the attentions and energies of the Board, the staff and many members turned inward. The sides eventually chosen consisted of the former board president and the two women (both

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also current U.C.C. board members) with whom she worked most closely -- the chairman of the Education Committee and the U.C.C. member of the Community School Board -- against everyone else.

Some internal organizational conflicts however intense and painful are good for organizations to the extent that they clarify issues, provide experience in democratic action and, by resolving the conflict, revivify an organization. Individuals who disagree with the direction the organization may leave but then the organization is free to move ahead without internal blockage. Some of this did happen. But, the ultimate result, especially as it followed several years of chronic internal conflict in the 1970s was the unrecoverable loss of whatever momentum the organization still possessed.

As the former president, systematically sought to dominate board and membership meetings, as she mobilized to gather people to her side, as she called upon old loyalties and sought to collect upon old debts of relationship, the board and staff perceived her as treating the organization simply as a political instrument. They began to identify her position as less interested in the organization they thought they had built, or how other individuals thought or felt, than in her own control over the organization. With the experience of the earlier conflict behind them and their gratitude and deference exhausted, the staff and board were shrewder, more skilled and harder. The once significant disparity of knowledge and experience between the board and the top leadership had been significantly closed. The board and long-time members wanted an organization in which leaders, especially the former board president, were more accountable to members, not less, in which more, not fewer decisions about the

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organization's direction were arrived at democratically, and in which campaign urgencies were believable. After a year and one-half of discussion in various internal forums, the board resolved the conflict by removing her from the Board and her two allies also resigned. But, that was not the end of it.

There were two other problems. First, the former board president's behavior in this conflict cast a light upon her historical behavior that required U.C.C. participants to think about whether she had always acted this way, whether there was something wrong about the structure of the organization or the ideas upon which its organizing practice was based, or whether there was something wrong with the people, themselves, who had put up with her and the former executive director's behavior for so long. Leaders and members began the slow process of reflecting upon their practice and eventually upon their theory. Before that happened however, the 40 volunteers recruited in the 1983 school board campaign evaporated and other longer time volunteers drifted away. Several relatively new members without a long-time proprietary interest in the organization and with little tolerance for the behavior of the former president or the organization's difficultly in rapidly resolving the conflict left. The result of the conflict was a loss of volunteers, members, momentum and morale.

Second, after this conflict was resolved, the white former board president and the two black women who had resigned from U.C.C. continued to appear at school board and other community meetings related to education. They had been the three most important public representatives of U.C.C. in the area of educational organizing, and education had been U.C.C.'s principal political action arena. Now, when U.C.C. organizers appeared at

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public meetings on educational issues, the former board president spent much of her time attacking U.C.C. from the floor. Instead of being able to address the educational issues in which they had become most expert, U.C.C.'s organizers had to address the criticisms of their former leader. U.C.C. was forced to either attack and undermine the former board president or seek other venues in which to organize. For reasons related to its own historical organizational credibility as well as a sentimental reluctance to attack a former leader who had contributed so much to building the organization, U.C.C. could not bring itself to aim at undermining her any further. In the 1970s, the conflict between the board president and executive director had placed a significant drag on new initiatives and organizing efforts. The 1984-85 conflict almost completely stalled organizing efforts. And, now, U.C.C. was required to shift gears and test other arenas and issues in which to organize and provide leadership which, after its losses, it could not easily do.

In the 1980s, as NYC was supposedly recovering from its fiscal crisis, and the period was declared a happy time for higher economic strata, the quality of public and community life in ENY did not improve much. The level of poverty increased, the inferior quality of the schools did not improve, the drop-out rates and youth unemployment were astronomical, the crack, murder and violence rates leaped upwards, and ENY finally won its notoriety in the City's press as a scene of urban desolation.

For U.C.C., 1980 marked the beginning of the decade during which the organization began to rely for its existence upon government grants. Between 1968 when the federal delinquency grant ended and 1980, U.C.C. had received an occasional foundation grant for a specific project, or a government grant to provide a specific

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service. But, except for the operation of the day care center, U.C.C. had raised all its money for its basic operation through fund-raising activities in the community and the organization, and through contributions from members. Because it was relatively independent financially, U.C.C. had rarely needed to fret over the possible loss of support from local politicians when it planned its tactics and campaigns. In the 1980s, as U.C.C.'s roster of volunteers diminished and it could not recruit new members at the rate it lost the old ones, the organization simply could not collect the amount of money in contributions from members and volunteers that it once had. The young, white and middle class cadres recruited in the earlier college campaigns were now older and with the same obligatory work and family constrictions upon their volunteer time as those faced by the new black, working class women volunteers. The few volunteers left from the fifties whose children were out of the house were less available and less energetic. Fewer volunteers meant less help in raising money from the community. U.C.C.'s dependence upon government grants grew, and it had to pay more heed to the reactions of elected officials to the criticism it levelled.

If the changing structure of women's time, the transformation of New York into a post-industrial city and dissolution of the 'people's coalition', and U.C.C.'s inability to reflect upon its theoretical inadequacies regarding race and class had not entirely foreclosed U.C.C.'s effectiveness, the internal conflicts among leaders and members, which were partly a response to these conditions, did.[1] Within the organization, it was hard to shake off the criteria for self-evaluation that were part of the old days when U.C.C. conceived itself as a social change organization. But, by the late 1980s, it was

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clear to anyone who looked from the outside, that U.C.C. had become a service organization, what it had always proudly claimed not to be.

By the late 1980s, although U.C.C. could still raise a portion of its budget through its customary methods, for the most part, it was dependent upon government funds for survival. And, after years of being criticized by U.C.C., most of the local politicians were either unfriendly or actively antagonistic and it was difficult to get government grants. Nevertheless, in 1989, the fluky convergence of East New York's notoriety, the recognition of the spread of HIV/AIDS among blacks and Puerto Ricans and the high HIV infection rate in ENY, the alertness of U.C.C. staff to the new availability of government funding for HIV/AIDS prevention education, and the absence of competition in the community enabled U.C.C. to win two rounds, three years each, of substantial grants from both the NYC Department of Health and the U.S. Centers For Disease Control. During the period 1989-1996, U.C.C. staff met with thousands of community residents in hundreds of meetings with day care parent groups, tenant groups, parents associations, high school student groups, church groups and many others. It annually organized a Mother's Day March Against AIDS, an ENY Bike Tour Against AIDS, a Community and Clergy March Against AIDS, a 5K Run Against AIDS and many other community events. In addition, with the staff it was able to hire, U.C.C. organized various community action campaigns including: a successful effort to end the vandalization of a branch of a local library that was being considered for closing; successful efforts to rescue four local playgrounds from prostitutes and drug dealers and success in having the Parks Department refurbish them (now that the fiscal crisis was

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over); local efforts for more public health facilities that produced little; and, a local campaign for single-payer national health insurance until the campaign was defeated on a national level.

At the end of all this effort, when HIV/AIDS grant periods expired, except for the involvement of volunteer residents in specific campaigns and specific events, no new members or consistent volunteers had been recruited and old members continued to dribble away. By 1998, only U.C.C.'s day care center, entirely funded with municipal funds, continued to thrive. With only a skeletal staff, one government grant, and a few small foundation grants, U.C.C. was scrambling for funding and operating at a deficit that it could not long maintain.

Being Left in East New York: Sustaining a Commitment to Integration and a Value System

Gary Orfield (1988) asks, what created the turn of the white liberals away from integration. The experience of the United Community Centers suggests an answer to the question that is the obverse of Orfield's: what did it take to maintain the active social and political commitment of a community group to integration ? U.C.C.'s story cannot provide a conclusive answer. That would require a comparative analysis of U.C.C. with groups that relinquished their commitment to integration, and with other groups that managed to retain and act upon their integrationist commitment -- if we can find them. Here I can only suggest the factors that I believe were most important in enabling U.C.C. to retain its active commitment. These were its theoretically- and philosophically-based understanding of integration as its mission , its form of organization, and its leadership.

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In U.C.C.'s theoretical analysis, the possibility of a better life for all was blocked by the private ownership and control of the major means of production and the undemocratic concentration of political power that derived from inequality in the possession of economic power. Most of U.C.C.'s leaders believed and eventually most of its active members came to believe that democratic control over the productive apparatus of the economy would make possible the elimination of poverty and unemployment, the reduction of inequality and the expansion of democracy in all areas of life. This would be accomplished for example, in the area of education, not by eliminating the stimulation, resources and range of experience provided in middle class schools or for classes of 'the gifted', but by the creation of an economy that could, and a state that would make those resources available to all children. From U.C.C.'s perspective, the problems faced by ENY's black and Latino residents including their disproportionate lack of access to resources of education, housing, health care, art could not be changed universally in the absence of democratic, social control over how the wealth of the society was produced and distributed.

Based on its political economic analysis, U.C.C. saw early and clearly the national attacks on the welfare state and the ideological assault upon the idea -- the institutionalized product of earlier working class struggles -- that government must assume responsibility for assuring to all citizens a decent standard of living and opportunity. While neo-populist theorists cheered the citizen's movement as it seemed to emerge elsewhere in the country and railed against Left ideology as contrary to the democratic wisdom of "the people", U.C.C. analyzed the ideological attack on NYC and

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the austerity resolution to the urban fiscal crisis as the advance guard of a national attack by big business and big finance upon a broadly construed working class (including the lower middle class). In NYC, there was no 'citizen's movement' or 'backyard revolution'.

U.C.C.'s Marxism indicated that the experience of workers and the lower middle class in their continuing conflict with capitalists and with periodic economic crises might make them more receptive to criticism of how capitalism worked and to considering other ways to organize an economy. This process had occurred in other industrialized countries and to some extent in the history of the U.S. working class. If it had occurred once, U.C.C. members and leaders thought it might happen again. Capitalism, capital and labor, and their dynamics were still around. A new social movement of the working class and lower middle class that included organized labor along with community groups, and ethnic and racial minorities -- a "people's coalition" -- could be re-forged. This was not only a possibility. In U.C.C.'s theory, the development of an opposition to capitalism was a strong, inherent tendency in capitalist society.

The point I wish to stress here about this analysis is that U.C.C. members and leaders believed it and acted upon it because it made rational sense as a way of explaining their experience in ENY, NYC and in the U.S. It was, they told themselves, because it made better sense than any competing analyses at the time that they held on to this analysis as a basis for setting a political strategy. The movement that this analysis recommended could not be built without a pedagogical leadership. Therefore, based on this theoretical analysis, U.C.C. members and leaders asserted the need to practice provision of the leadership for building interracial movement, should such movement

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emerge, as the mission and responsibility of their organization in ENY. One element of U.C.C.'s commitment to integration derived from the political need to build an inter-racial movement.

Had U.C.C.'s leadership and membership been grounded solely in this version of Left ideology, it probably would have imploded under the pressure of black nationalism and the pervasive atmosphere of status contention that it fueled. As Barbara Epstein has pointed out about the Bay movement against the Gulf War, the groups that defined their identities in terms of difference could not sustain coalitional work across difference. Without a shared value system -- a common identity -- that extended beyond the defense of their particular identities they could not argue and reason together for long because the conflictual work of ordinary politics was perceived as assaults upon dignity and being. In contrast, the ability of U.C.C.'s black and white members to sustain arguments with one another over tactics and over the occasional (most often unintentional) insulting behavior of individuals across difference was grounded in the shared values members and leaders fought over and generally accepted in time. U.C.C.'s value system and the ideas it expressed were at least as important as U.C.C.'s theoretical analysis as a binding and constitutive element of the leaders' and members' sense of their mission.

From its beginning in the 1950s, U.C.C. leadership and eventually the members regularly referred to this value system as a guide in their collective decision-making about U.C.C.'s internal programs and social action campaigns and in their resolution of conflicts within the organization. In addition, it was used by members and leaders to examine their choices in their social lives, how they interacted in the social life they

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created together, and in the way in which they tried to hold themselves and others accountable to the values they professed.

In particular, U.C.C.'s leadership emphasized the value of the 'richness of difference' as a way of life, and as a political strategy. U.C.C.'s leadership persistently emphasized that no class-based movement for universalist goals could be effective without the involvement of women and men of different racial and ethnic groups. No such movement could be sustained unless its participants learned, within the movement, to value the human as well as the political possibilities individuals and groups could create for one another across difference. No such learning could take place, however, without a leadership that explicitly thematized conflicts over difference and superiority/inferiority that, in part, constituted the content of relationships across differences of race, ethnicity and gender. That meant that participants needed to learn how to listen to one another across difference and how to resolve the conflicts that arose based upon the democratic value system that it articulated.

U.C.C. refused the "transcendence" of difference of race, gender, ethnicity that so often meant the neglect of difference instead of its critical incorporation. U.C.C. leaders insisted that these were real axes of social conflict that could not be ignored within an organization or movement, and would not dissolve so long as the society was organized based on principles of scarce wealth and dignity. U.C.C. members and leaders explicitly accepted as their mission and their practice, the provision of leadership in the process of creating intercultural learning processes toward human progress and movement building.

These values did not come from nowhere. Social values come out of human

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struggles and a history of conceptualizing moral needs and laws based on a theology or philosophy of history. U.C.C.'s values were derived from the history of working class struggles and the struggle for democracy as these were conceptualized in both Marxist theory and American democratic philosophy, and creatively interpreted by U.C.C.'s leadership, especially the Eisensteins. U.C.C. leadership thought of its value system as oppositional to the dominant ideology and the common sense of the people it sought to organize, sometimes labeling it a "democratic value system", and at other times, a "working class value system". The U.C.C. leadership defined its task within the U.C.C., and the role of U.C.C. and its members in the community as moving people beyond their common sense values and their narrowly construed identities and interests to a consideration of broader, more inclusive values, interests and identities based upon a broader sociological understanding of the forces that affected them. No single value in U.C.C.'s value system was entirely alien to U.C.C.'s members or its broader community constituency. What was unusual about U.C.C. was the consistency, depth and creativity with which these values were used as guides in the members' effort to build their organization and act in the community.

The effort to change values presupposed that individual actions were based on ideas and values that were amenable to conscious efforts to change, even ideas deeply held and emotionally charged. This fundamentally presupposed the power of human reason. People could change how they acted and thought, with the help of others, over time. If that assumption's presupposition of the potential of human rationality sometimes skipped too frivolously over deep structures of personality and ignored far from

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conscious motivations unfriendly to change, the leadership at least professed a rejection of perfectionism. It recognized that at any moment people possessed different levels of understanding and a multitude of disparate imperfections.

By the term 'form of organization', I refer to the interconnection of social life and political action based upon this value system. It was this form -- the organization as a way of life -- that was crucial for sustaining the group's larger ideological commitments. Philosophy and theory were not abstract ideas. Given the opposition to integration by the larger society, the retreat of white and black liberals and radicals from integration, and the opposition of the black nationalists, no abstract ideas alone would have been persuasive. U.C.C. participants knew that it was their actual experience with the possibility of reasoning together in order to realize these ideas in everyday life in conjunction with the theoretical and philosophical ideas they examined that was persuasive.

Before the New Left talked about 'pre-figuring' a future society by the ways in which groups chose to live in the present, and before the women's movement insisted that the 'personal was political', U.C.C. participants tried to model the society they wanted to bring about by their organizational and personal lives. By modelling that society for themselves and their children within the Center and the community, *and* by initiating and participating in political struggles in order to realize their values and goals more broadly, they sought to help to bring that society about. Insofar as this way of life placed limits upon choices and ways of doing things to which everyone had previously grown accustomed, insofar as the work was hard and constant -- although not unceasing -- it was

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difficult. What was obtained in exchange for the difficulties were the possibilities of new freedoms and new experiences -- the pleasures of being connected to 'different' others, the discovery of 'cultural secrets' that expanded one's self, the sense of participating in a larger and historical life, and of feeling oneself learning and growing.

Their efforts to live this form of life would not have been believable to participants, however, if U.C.C. were a commune focused exclusively upon its internal life. For members and leaders, the validation of U.C.C.'s social life and internal programs was in how these expressed the political goals for which they fought. On the other side of the coin, the validation of U.C.C.'s political goals and campaigns was in members and leaders efforts to realize the values implied by these goals in the social life and internal programs they created.

The result was that U.C.C. was able to maintain a robust social and political commitment to integration long after it was surrendered by almost everyone else because U.C.C. had become a way of life and way of struggle that meaningfully connected members and leaders to one another, and their daily lives to a better future. They believed integration was rational. It seemed true to their experience and seemed to make better philosophical and theoretical sense -- to be sure, with theoretical blindnesses to a changing reality and without lock-tight logical connections between all elements of theory, philosophy and practice -- than competing perspectives. They believed integration was possible because in their struggle to live it -- imperfectly, to be sure, with failure, hypocrisy, manipulation, and superficiality -- they made the unusual happen. Integration was who they were, and the world they wanted and how they thought

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struggles should be conducted. They were not in this thing simply on behalf of others. Since it was dearly theirs. they would not relinquish it easily.

One final thing. The testing. application. and adoption of U.C.C.'s ideas by leaders and members. community residents and college students between 1954-1980 could not have been sustained without leadership. The Center was a product of the interaction of leaders and members (who at different moments provided leadership to other members and the 'leaders'). Other Left leaders in other places and at other times possessed many of the qualities of U.C.C. leadership. Some even conceptualized the role of leadership similarly. I do not wish here to argue that U.C.C.'s leadership was unique. although it is probably true that Eisenstein's rich imagination for the creation of new and illuminating social experience for U.C.C. adults and youth was unusual. What I wish to stress here are three aspects of leadership that enabled the organization to maintain its political economic analysis and its commitment to integration. These are the emphases upon pedagogy. and upon conflict and struggle. .

Leadership construed itself as pedagogical. It emphasized the need to deal with ideas systematically and rationally. It emphasized the power of ideas, of theory and philosophy, and the capacity of its constituency to be rational. to provide understanding and direction, not only about politics and economics, but also about making a flyer. building a retaining wall, the relationship between counselors and children and the camp kitchen staff, and whether unskilled women volunteers should learn to do plumbing in camp. U.C.C. was a place in which there was constant discussion of ideas because ideas. learning, and rationality were serious business. U.C.C. black and white volunteers could

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not have sustained the challenge of nationalism in a black community unless their ideas made rational sense to them and unless they valued ideas.

Second, the leadership stressed the centrality of conflict and struggle. Conflict, the leadership insisted, existed not only between classes and groups in the spheres of economics and politics. It also existed in personal life in the opposition of alternatives between whether one invited only one's closest friends to dinner or reached out to someone different, whether one crossed a picket line or refrained, whether one attended a meeting or joined one's friends at bingo. But, conflict did not only exist. It was always resolved by individuals, groups and the society one way or another. Since the world, and its hegemonic ideology, presented people with a reality that appeared fixed, and limited their awareness of existing alternatives, the leadership conceptualized its role (and, by extension the role of the organization) as raising alternatives to a conscious level with words and by creating new experiences. The leadership defined 'struggle' as the process of resolving conflict by making alternatives visible ('precipitating conflict'), examining their implications, and choosing a course of action.

There were problems with the implementation of this idea within the organization. Too often, conflicts were articulated in terms of either the 'right' way, i. e., the Center's way, or the wrong, i.e., hegemonic way. Sometimes leaders who identified their way as the right way sought, by reducing conflict to a limited set of alternatives, to resolve conflict in ways that inadequately incorporated the oppositions of ideas. Instead of trying to move thinking and acting to a higher level, it squelched opposition. I think of those kinds of resolutions as authoritarian. Nevertheless, the consistency with which

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conflict was examined and struggle was emphasized strengthened the ability of members to withstand oppositions to social structures in the world that they opposed.

For example, the Center recognized and valued the interdependence of peoples. Therefore, it refused the idea that each group had to determine its own destiny by itself. In an interdependent world, each groups's desires unavoidably limited, abraded and conflicted with the desires of the next. U.C.C.'s members refused the idea that identities were naturally given and static because they knew otherwise. The problem, as they defined it, was to define and struggle for values that might be the basis for the resolution of conflict in a the direction of creating a society that made possible a decent life with dignity for all. Taking these ideas seriously, it was not hard to enter into conflict with separatist ideology.

The leadership conceptualized its role as modelling the values, struggles, teaching, hard work and commitment that it professed. The models were never immaculate. As a growing disparity emerged between what the principal leadership professed and how they actually behaved and as this disparity became painful to observe and oppressive to live with, members and other leaders turned increasingly to one another for examples of struggle and support for their own efforts. Or, they left the organization. Many of the people I interviewed expressed anger, sadness and sometimes a sense of betrayal in their evaluation of the behavior of the top leadership in the 1970s. But, it was anger and a sense of betrayal over the leadership's unwillingness/inability to continue to carry out the ideas it professed, not about the weight and value of the ideas. This was true for both those who quit, and for those who stayed. Most recognized that what they

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learned about how to listen and deal with conflict across difference, about the need to keep practicing, about struggle and commitment, and about the importance of theory and philosophy as guides for action and experience, might have been learned elsewhere in some way. But, the Center is where they learned that stuff.

Why Bother About the U.C.C.?

Led by a Jewish radical with an ideology largely left over from the 1930s and 1940s, U.C.C. had a successful beginning in the 1950s among an upwardly mobile, working class mainly Jewish population. After being kicked out of its official position in two NYCHA housing projects, it had been revitalized by the social change movements, especially the civil rights movement, of the 1960s, and a temporary federal grant that was partly a response to those movements. As it shifted its programmatic emphases to address the racial and economic changes in the community, it opposed black nationalism and fought for integration. In the 1960s and early 1970s, U.C.C. developed young adult cadres and momentum based on a radical and integrationist ideology that lasted into the early 1980s. Beginning in the mid-1970s, with the sharper turn to conservatism in national and local politics, and the structural transformation of the industrial city, U.C.C. became increasingly ineffective in achieving its goals as a community organization or in recruiting active, responsible members. Unable to be reflective about its theory, and wracked by internal conflicts that were partly a result of its political isolation and defensiveness, the organization lost momentum and morale. Its capacity to recruit volunteers diminished. It became more dependent upon government funds until it gradually became mainly a service provider. It was a not uncommon arc in the life of

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many such organizations. Why write a dissertation about it?

In an essay entitled "Why Bother About The Muggletonians", Christopher Hill (1983) asks his readers to consider the point of studying an obscure, religious sect in 17th century England whose very name has a humorous ring. The Muggletonians were part of the ferment of religious ideas and groups that briefly flourished during the period 1640 to 1660, when the state church collapsed, the courts and censorship ceased to function and 'religious toleration' established itself, de facto, for the first time in England. In this space of time, when there was "infinite confusion, infinite expectancy, great hopes and great disappointments", when it appeared to many that the end of the world was imminent, many radical groups emerged -- Seekers, and Ranters, Levellers, Diggers, Quakers, and Muggletonians. For the first time, the common people began to take the new ideas seriously and were free to discuss them in their own unsupervised congregations. And then, after this sudden 'Babel of unorthoxoy', the old political and religious hierarchies were restored - - although, not quite.

Hill's answers about the Muggletonians are that "like Everest, they are there", their ideas are interesting in themselves, and they provide another vista for studying the radical milieu of the time and the cultural world of the middling and lower classes. The ability of so many groups to break through and challenge a stable and hierarchical society helps us to understand their society better and be less superficial in our acceptance of its subsequent self-estimate. The radicals were a decidedly small minority of the population, but the powerful ruling classes that preceded and superseded them and whose regime was labeled 'normality', were also a small minority. So, Hill concludes, it

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is not absurd to think that for the unprivileged classes in the social or geographical interstices of a society, democracy, cooperation, equality and fraternity may be 'normal' values, even when the hegemonic ideology of the political economy precludes these values.

Those seem to me to be good reasons for studying the United Community Centers and what it fought for, especially at a historical moment (1998) when powerful forces seek to "take back" the 1960s (and the 1930s also), and define the period as a failure. Like the Muggletonians, the United Community Centers was *there* as an effective community force, in a backwater of Brooklyn, to be sure, weathering history's local storms until it was flooded over by inimical ideological and political counter-currents. Its ideas are interesting in themselves. And, U.C.C.'s existence throughout the 1970s reminds us that the switch from integration to black nationalism, from the universalist values expressed in the civil rights movement to the more particularist values expressed in the movement for black power, black nationalism and black identity, was not nearly so abrupt in one urban community as historians often make it to be. Without the support of many working class black and Hispanics residents of East New York throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, even if they did not become responsible members of the organization, U.C.C. could not have sustained its efforts. U.C.C.'s existence reminds us that there were people, black and white, working class and lower middle class, for whom it was 'normal' to hold a faith in the creative capacity of *human* reason and collective struggle to give progressive direction to *human* development. It was 'normal' to assume that the collective resources and knowledge currently possessed by human beings could

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create a world in which all could live with decency, freedom and dignity. It was 'normal' for them to believe and act upon the ideas that men and women of different races, ethnicities and economic backgrounds, without burying their differences could learn from one another, change one another based on a democratic value system, and in the process grow as human beings. It seemed 'normal' to them to try to make a life *together*, as part of one another's lives.

ENDNOTES

1. Here, I can only assert my belief that the internal conflicts that wracked U.C.C. between 1973-1979 and 1984-85 were stimulated and conditioned by the dynamic psycho-social reactions of leaders and members to their sometimes barely conscious and sometimes intensely felt sense of political defensiveness, isolation, individual and collective self-doubt about their own relevance. I have chosen not to do a dissertation about how the specific political and ideological conditions affected the interpersonal relations of leaders and members and specifically how, within this context, illness, age, jealousy, physical pain, and a sense of personal loss overcame the leadership and affected its relationship to the members.

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ON METHODOLOGY

My principal sources of data consisted of the papers of the United Community Centers and interviews of current and former members of the United Community Centers. I also sought references to the United Community Centers in the records of other agencies that worked in ENY. These included, among others, the records of the NYC Housing Authority in the Wagner and LaGuardia archives, and the archives of the Brooklyn Council of Churches at Union Theological Seminary.

The papers of the United Community Centers included the organization's newspaper, a four page monthly which in the 1970s became an eight page monthly. Beginning in January, 1968 the paper was distributed free of charge to 5,000 homes. In the 1970s this figure was expanded to 12,000 and then 15,000 homes. In this dissertation, the newspaper, sometimes more, sometime less, provided the spine of the narrative.

I worked for U.C.C. on a full-time basis in various positions from October, 1966 to September 1989. I began working at U.C.C. as the research associate with the Office of Juvenile Delinquency Project, collecting and sorting material and writing chapters of reports based on the transcribed tape-recordings of project staff. I worked as the staff member in charge of the Young Adult Group for several years including the period when its College Group organized the tuition campaign and Third World Corridor campaign described above. I edited the newspaper for several years, and directed the teen program in the summer camp for several years. I was the staff member in charge of educational organizing, roughly 1974-85, including the school board campaigns during the second

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half of the 1970sand early 1980s. I wrote countless public statements and fund-raising proposals for the organization 1971-89. I directed the summer camp 1978-1988. often drove the school bus. became a fair amateur plumber, and a pretty good roofer. mixed the batter and made (rarely perfect) pancakes for 140 people every Sunday morning in camp for 11 years. and eventually became a good kitchen worker. But. I never was good at carpentry or electrical work and I never learned quantity cooking. I was the assistant director of U.C.C. during the 1980s. I made and lost dear friends.

In 1989. as the assistant director. I was first in line to become the executive director when the former director retired early in the year. I did not want the job because I was discouraged by the organization's and my own ineffectiveness to accomplish its organizing goals. I had ceased to believe that U.C.C. could ever again become a vital force in the community. I believed that there was something wrong with the organization's practice. theory and relationship to the community but I was not sure what it was and I had only a ragged and less than believable (to me) theoretical framework with which to think about it. Because I knew that a pessimistic director could only promise disaster for an organization that depended upon the communication of morale. I was forced to admit my pessimism to myself. I probably would have taken the job anyway if there had been no other qualified person. Luckily for me, my optimistic friend and long-time U.C.C. colleague wanted the job. I hoped that I was not abusing our friendship by supporting his desire and decision to take the position.

In 1989, I resigned my position as assistant director and returned to graduate school to study for a Ph.D. in sociology. I returned to graduate school because I wanted

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to reflect upon my experience in order to understand what had happened to this once vital organization . Along with my misgivings about the organization's theory and practice, I also thought that many of its ideas about conflict resolution and learning across difference and other elements of its experience were worth considering in the reconstruction of an American Left. I did not at first intend to write a dissertation about the United Community Centers.

When I began to think about this dissertation after three years in graduate school. I was hesitant. Although I knew the community and its social and political history, and I knew the organization and its history, I was aware that my knowledge of both, as well as important aspects of my sense of myself were powerfully shaped by the organization's self-understanding and language. Writing a dissertation about U.C.C. over a period in which the organization's history and my own overlapped in time and meaning presented a problem of objectivity. I thought as an organizer in the terms of this organization.

Several factors enabled me to distance myself from this language and organizational self-understanding. Beginning in 1985, during and after the collective effort to oust the former board president that I discuss in chapter 18, many members and leaders, with different perspectives, interests and levels of understanding began to question themselves, and reflect upon the organization's practice and especially upon the relationship of leaders and members. In this period of questioning, although U.C.C. participants talked to one another about their questions, their re-evaluations were conducted individually, and never as part of an organized effort. At the time, most of us, including myself, were still caged in by our language and theoretical perspective.

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When I began to consider writing about the U.C.C. after three years in graduate school. I formulated my question dourly as: what accounted for the failure of the organization? But. when I told a few of my teachers (CUNY faculty) of my question they were sometimes surprised. How can you call an organization that flourished so long and accomplished what it did accomplish a failure? It was a point I had to incorporate in my research perspective. but. I did not relinquish my question although I subsequently reformulated it as: what were the factors that accounted for the failure of the organization to maintain its ability to recruit new. responsible. active members. I believe that my question as formulated. my focus on failure. rescued me from the celebratory and untheoretical attitude that plagues many accounts of community organizing experience.

As I talked to U.C.C. participants in the 1980s and as I began to interview some of them in the 1990s. it was clear that much of the range and quality of people's experience. as well as their assessments of aspects of their experience coincided. At the same time. many individuals. whether they left the organization 25 years ago in disagreement or stayed on for decades. had arrived at still emotionally charged and widely disparate evaluations of the organization. the leadership and their experience. Everyone. including myself. seemed to have a different take on the organization and each of us believed our take to be *the* take. It was around this time that I realized sharply that the perspectives of individuals varied with when they joined the organization. when they left and how long they stayed. their life stage when they joined and when they left. the organizational area in which they worked. what positions they occupied and what responsibilities they carried. how their subsequent lives colored their memories. as well.

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of course, as their gender, race, educational and class backgrounds, and the kinds of individuals they were before they participated in the organization. My own 'special' perspective was as much shaped by these factors as everyone else's and began to be no more or less credible to me as an account of the organization. What I had to do was find a perspective upon the organization's theory and practice that accounted for the variety, if not every one, of the individual perspectives.

I realized early on that a sociological account of the United Community Centers had to be an historical one. The organization's emphases and practices, and therefore the experiences of individuals within the organization, had changed over time. These changes were not only a product of U.C.C.'s particularities or the individuals within it. They were also a response to dramatic changes in the community and U.C.C. membership, and a response to political and structural changes in the larger society that directly affected individuals in the organization and shaped community life. With U.C.C.'s theory as a given, any effort to understand the organization's development entailed understanding the interaction of the organization and its leaders and members over time with the larger social forces that enabled U.C.C. to achieve what it did and constrained its later effectiveness.

The largest intellectual difficulty I had in graduate school and in preparing myself to write a dissertation was in shifting my mode of thinking from that of an organizer to that of an analyst. Here, I do not need to go into detail about the differences between these interdependent modes of thinking. But, for me, a critical difference was that as an organizer I was much more oriented to the uses of theory for reflecting upon events and

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determining social and political action. Analysis meant focusing much more upon the sociological and theoretical presuppositions of theory. For example, focusing upon the sociological presuppositions of orthodox Marxism's class theory and black nationalism's theory of race made it more possible for me to understand and distinguish between the useful problems these theories attempted to define in relation to one concept of society and the inadequacy of their conclusions in relation to a very different social reality. Making this shift enabled me to begin to distance myself from the language of the organization and my emotional investment in it.

There were three other intellectual moves, dependent upon sociological theory including the books I read and my interchange with teachers, that were useful in levering my perspective away from subjectivity. In the course of writing this dissertation, I realized that the actions of the organization and individuals within it were very much a function of structural factors inherent in the sociational form of this type of organization: its smallness, its self-identification as ideological, and its oppositionality, among others. The form of sociation limited and opened particular possibilities that particular individuals who decided to participate actualized. This realization made it possible for me to shift away from thinking about the organization in terms of the personalities (including my own) of leaders and members. Second, understanding the philosophical and sociological presuppositions of Marxist theory made it possible to understand U.C.C.'s perspective more deeply. This helped me to understand why the purchase upon social reality of U.C.C.'s frozen form of Marxist theory became attenuated as the economy, the metropolitan area and the City changed.

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The most difficult move for me was on the subject of race. U.C.C.'s position on integration and the need for integrated social movement for change seemed to make sense. So did its insistence upon thematizing conflict across racial difference, and its emphasis on the potential for learning and growth through interchange across difference. The black nationalist or racialist analysis seemed wrong. I was stuck in the old debate about race versus class over which should have priority in analysis and political action. U.C.C.'s class analysis seemed to have greater explanatory force and historical extension, but there was too much it did not account for, especially the persistence of racism as a structure, and, in particular, the historical racism of the white working class.

Marx, Weber and the pressure of the thinking of two of my teachers moved me past my inclination to defend the hard and persistent struggles for integrationism of U.C.C. which was also a defense of my own past. The Marxist political economic analysis of the dynamics of global capitalism explained a lot about the restructuring of the economy. It was strong on explaining class structuring and class power. But, there were other fundamental structures of power based on other than economic needs in capitalist society that required other concepts.

U.C.C.'s perspective was strong on the dimension of race as cultural difference and on the need for interchange across difference for human growth and building social movement, but it did not grasp race, as a social structure of power constituted by the unequal distribution of social honor among groups. On the other hand, the nationalist and racialist positions did see race as a social structure of power. But, they did not see the way in which race and racial changes were embedded in a political economy that

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contributed powerfully to creating the grounds on which the meanings of race were shaped, and the grounds on which opportunities for political struggle on status issues were enlarged or diminished. Making these distinctions made it possible for me on a level of analysis to move beyond the framework of the debate (and my identification with one side of the debate) as it had emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s, and as it remains in many quarters.

I do not mean to suggest that any of this was smoothly accomplished. Nor were the steps I describe accomplished in chronological order. My proposal for this dissertation was approved in the Spring, 1994 and it is now more than four years later. Much of my wrestling with the sociological issues involved in the U.C.C. experience occurred in the process of writing this dissertation, as did my arrival at some tentative clarity. At a certain point, for example, I began to think that an account of this specific organization's failure might be interesting. What made it so was the extent to which it expressed more broadly shared processes: how the relationship between theory, practice and the absence of theoretical self-reflection play out for people in a changing world; and, especially the consequences of inadequately conceptualizing the relationship between political economic analysis, class and race. As I became more confident in my understanding of the organization's theoretical inadequacies and practical difficulties, I became more able to reinterpret U.C.C.'s history and my personal relationship to that history. As I became more distanced, I found it possible to evaluate other elements of its history more favorably and even to return to my belief that its experience has some relevance to a few current political issues. Whether I have succeeded in making my

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analysis credible is another matter.

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APPENDIX

On Morris L. Eisenstein, The Executive Director of the United Community Centers, Inc. 1955-1979

The arc of Morris L. Eisenstein's life, from Jewish working class Brownsville, in Brooklyn, to CCNY, to the U.S. Communist Party, to the U.S. Army in WW II, to graduate school after the war and then into academic and social agency jobs is similar to that of many of his generation. Eisenstein was 36 years old when he took the job as Glenwood, the son of Jewish immigrants, whose father was a garment worker. He had grown up in Brownsville, a predominantly working class Jewish community with substantial Black and Italian minorities during the period, 1920-1940 which was only 15 minutes walking time from Glenwood.

Brownsville had been a working class Jewish community from the beginning of the century, a next stop after the Lower East Side immigrant point of entry, and had quickly developed strong religious and socialist segments. Brownsville's reputation grew glamorous for several decades after 1940 partly because, despite the injuries of poverty, many of the thirties generation were able to escape and wax nostalgic, and partly because it was, indeed, a highly organized community with a rich cultural and political life, filled with synagogues, social, recreational and cultural programs, and diverse political groups from the Democratic Party to a very far left. Brownsville, before and after World War II, was a community inhabited by tensely coiled, second generation Jews, aspiring for acceptance and success, who sprung at the opportunities offered by the combined expansion of economic opportunity in the U.S. and the diminution of anti-Semitism (Sacks, 1994). As a Jewish working class crucible, Brownsville forged two generations of tough, intensely ambitious, and daring young men and an astonishingly large number of noted scholars, writers, gangsters, athletes, scientists, union organizers and officials, entertainers, businessmen, assorted professionals and political radicals.

Depression Brownsville remained a permanent influence upon Eisenstein who identified as a tough "Brownsville boy" into his sixties. The African American Brownsville boys of the 1970s- 1990s, if they survive the drugs, shootings, stabbings and inadequate schools into their sixties, may also remember the Brownsville of their youth (the home of two recent, world heavyweight boxing champions) as a place they, too, learned to be tough. But, it wasn't only the boys who learned to be tough. Eisenstein's mother, like other women who lived in Brownsville's tenements, conducted what Eisenstein remembered as never-ending and heroic battles to keep their apartments clean and the roaches at bay, and to keep food on the table, despite uneven employment, by bargaining sharply with landlords, shopkeepers and at the open air food and clothing stalls on Blake and Sutter Avenues. Still, Brownsville was also a place where you learned more than the need to be tough.

For a while, Eisenstein entertained the idea of submitting to training in modern

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dance, having learned to dance in a Brownsville program. He learned to sew with some skill from his father who, like other garment workers, taught his son how to use the sewing machine at home. Brownsville was also, as Eisenstein remembered it, a place of with a strong current of local and international working class solidarity, where families despite their poverty did not neglect to throw a can of food into the barrel stationed near the door of the grocery store in support of striking Australian dock workers. And, many people, including Eisenstein, remembered walking along Pitkin Avenue, a brilliant working class shopping area, where upon every corner through the thirties and into the forties, street orators declaimed politics and interpreted events from the point of view of every species of socialism, including the wildly imaginative sort that shouted : "Workers and Peasants of Brownsville, Unite". Some of the politics may have been fantastically inappropriate for the industrial city of New York, but much of it was real and sensible enough, and all of it emphasized with on-going intensity the importance of working class politics, of ideas, and of understanding the larger world.

Eisenstein attended Boys High School and, with aspirations to be a doctor, he studied biology at the College of the City of New York. It was during the depression of the 1930s that CCNY took on a legendary status as the mainly Jewish "working class Harvard", with "passionate alcoves where revolutionary position-takers argued the `correct line'" and where "bristling students found the world of knowledge, meaning and commitment...there for us to explore". It was also a place during the depression where many students learned a "gleaming readiness for polemic", a taste for combative and sometimes ferocious argument, as well as a respect for the powers of logic and reasoned analysis (Howe, 1976 283,285) . Like a lot of other Jewish boys, one of his intellectual heroes was the philosopher, Morris Raphael Cohen who began his course in the philosophy of science with "Do You Want To Know" written on the blackboard. Eisenstein pridefully told of his 'A' in the course long after anyone around him knew who Morris Raphael Cohen was. It was at City College that Eisenstein developed a deep commitment to science as a way of knowing and to the distinction between knowledge and belief. The Depression, the need to earn a living and then the war, ended his ambition to be a doctor. After graduation, locating a job was difficult, and many years afterward, in a presentation he made criticizing the theory of the culture of poverty, he remembered that after a while, instead of searching for work and planning for the future, all he often wanted to do was dig up enough money to spend the day in the movies. He and his wife Fanny were married before the war and were members of the Communist Party.

While Fanny Esenstein worked in New York as a publicist for the Greek Resistance movement, Morris Eisenstein served in the army for three years. During the war, he was a forward observer and for a year afterwards, he served as a non-commissioned officer in charge of a displaced persons camp. He was an effective and highly decorated soldier, he later explained, because he was an "anti-fascist". In the meaning of the time, that meant he possessed a political analysis, was a Communist, and knew why he was there. He was twice denied battle-field commissions as well as other

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decorations because he was a "big-mouthed, New York Jew" and a Communist. It was hard to push him to deliver the excessive deference some officers required. As a Brownsville boy, he refused to back away from the physical challenges posed by the anti-Semitism of other conscripts. In the war, like many other soldiers, he learned how deeply afraid he could be, and that he could act anyway, more than many, in ways that were called courageous. Placed with an outfit of native Americans he learned of their deep resentments and vicious prejudices towards Blacks whom, they believed, often falsely claimed Indian heritage. When the war was over, as the person in charge of a displaced persons camp he learned that as much as recently starving and enslaved people needed food and freedom, they also needed social controls imposed on them. Far from ennobling people, starvation had taught them to gorge themselves at mealtimes, not to share, regardless of others who were equally hungry. Under such circumstances, he concluded that social control, in itself, was neither good nor bad, but necessary in all societies as human beings sought to assert and enforce claims upon one another. Rather, how control evolved, what kinds of controls, and who controlled whom for what purposes were the questions a democratic society needed to answer.

Not long after returning to civilian life after the War, he and his wife were urged by their Communist Party branch leader not to renew their memberships because "higher-ups" in the District thought "they asked too many questions about Party policy." They did not renew, but they remained persons of the Left. After the war, he turned down a job offer as the education direction of a trade union believing he would have little freedom in a cautious labor movement to develop the consciousness he thought was necessary to resuscitate the moribund spirit needed for a dynamic labor movement. Instead, he entered a combined doctoral program in social work and sociology at Columbia University and continued to work on his Ph.D. until 1952. His dissertation on democratic community organizing, based on work he did as the Director of the East Harlem branch of the Urban League, was never approved. After he and his family were packed and ready to move to Hawaii to assume an academic position, he forfeited the job teaching at the University of Hawaii because he refused to sign a loyalty oath. Instead, they decided to move to Denver where Eisenstein had been offered a job as the Assistant Director of the Jewish Community Centers of Denver. While in Denver, he and his wife helped Mexican-Americans organize against the brutality of the Denver police, and as assistant director of the Jewish Centers he organized a group of Jewish and Christian husbands and wives to examine together the problems of interreligious marriage and how these might be resolved. It was his organization of this group, more than any other single thing, that aroused an opposition group within the Jewish Centers and he was not rehired at the end of two years. He then taught for two years at the University of Buffalo School of Social Work. In September, 1954, he and Fanny, unaffiliated radicals, and their three daughters (their fourth would be born in in a few years), moved to Brooklyn where he took the job as director of the Glenwood Community Center.

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The U.C.C. Newspapers:

Glenwood Community Center News: March 11, 1955-April, 1957.
The Link : April, 1957-May/June, 1961; January, 1968-December, 1980.

The newspapers are on microfilm. The six year and one-half year hiatus between June, 1961 and January, 1968 is the period after U.C.C. was evicted as sponsor of the community centers in public housing. It did not have the resources to publish a community newspaper.

Reports To Funding Agencies:

"Annual Reports of the Muscular Dystrophy Social Group". January-June 1956; September,1956-June, 1957; September, 1957-June, 1958; September, 1958-June, 1959; September, 1959-June 1960.

"Report On Integration of Muscular Dystrophic Children in Program of Camp Glenwood", July-August, 1956.

"Reports To the U.S. Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development", 1965-68:
Grant # 65234. Report: 6/1-8/31/65; Report: 91/65-4/1/66:
Grant # 66025. Proposal For Demonstration Project: 4/22/66; Report: 7/1/66-8/30/66:
Report: 9/1/66-1/31/67; Report: 2/1/67-6/30/67;
Grant # 67016. Report: 7/1/67-8/30/67; Final Report Summary: 9/1/67-3/68.

"Citizen Organization and Conflict Resolution Based On A Value System": "A Proposal Submitted to the New York Foundation, 10/76"; "An Interim Report: 1/15-6/15/77"; and A Final Report To the New York Foundation, 11/77".

"Integrating The Aged and Children in East New York". Interim Report : 11/76-5/77. Final Report: 11/77. A Project Funded By the New York Community Trust.

These reports vividly and extensively convey a sense of how the organization worked in particular areas. As these are reports addressed to various funding agencies, they are naturally always presented with a view toward putting U.C.C.'s accomplishments in the best possible light. As I wrote some of these and know how careful the other writers were, and how insistent the leadership was on the minimization of hyperbole, I am confident that the facts are accurate and the organization's point of view is expressed and illustrated well.

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Presentations To Outside Groups By Morris L. Eisenstein

1963. "To East Bread With Tears...The Challenge of the Future to Community Councils". Presented to the Community Council of Greater Springfield, Mass.
1965. "The Culture of Poverty". Presented to Target Area Teachers' Course, University of Minnesota Training Center For Delinquency Prevention and Control.
1966. "The Camp Director Looks At Himself and His Role in 1967". Arden House Camping Conference.
1967. "New Insights in Camp Leadership". Presented to YMCA Camping Conference. Hampton, Va.
1968. "Testimony". Presented to the Subcommittee on Government Research of the Committee on Government Operations of the United States Senate. Sen. Fred R. Harris, Chairman.
1968. "On Being Relevant". Presented to the East Central Regional Organization of Social Work Students Second Annual Conference at Ohio State University.
1970. "Discussion on Philosophy of Education". Presented to Charette Steering Committee for ENY Educational Complex.
1972. "We Called It Lunch". Presented to Statewide Conference on New Directions for Vocational Education sponsored by State of Michigan Department of Education.
1973. "Some Thoughts On a Matter of the Nature of Conflict". Presented to a class at the New School For Social Research
1975. "Killers of Dreams". Presented to Statewide Conference on Instructional Strategies in Special Needs sponsored by State of Michigan Department of Education.
1977. "Education For What". Presented to U.C.C. Community Conference on Education. A Conference funded by the New York Council For the Humanities.

Presentations To U.C.C. Leadership Institutes by Morris L. Eisenstein

"Do You Want To Know". 2/19/72.
"Presentation". 10/14/72.
"Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby". 10-13-14/73
"Does Man Have A Future". 4/27-28/1974.
"The Unhinged Dream". 10-26-27/74.
"A Time of Decision". 11/1-2/75.

These Institutes were attended by 65-85 board members, members, and staff.

Published and unpublished articles by Eisenstein are in the section on "References".

"A Philosophy and Curriculum For the Childrens Learning Center". M.L. Eisenstein. August, 1978.

"The Collected Works of Morris L. Eisenstein", edited with an introduction by Prudence

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Posner Pace.

After Eisenstein died, the organization decided to devote staff time to this compilation which included edited transcriptions of recorded meetings as well as papers written for presentation or publication. Although much work was accomplished, the collection was never completed. Pace's excellent introduction coherently presents the understanding of many of the leaders and members about the organization around 1980-81.

Miscellaneous:

Other records of the United Community Centers are plentiful but drastically incomplete, a condition for which I must assume considerable responsibility. In the 1970s and 1980s, the organization occupied a double storefront office on Van Siclen Avenue with a large, unfinished cellar in which we had piled many years of tape recordings of staff meetings and meetings of youth as well as cardboard files filled with the organization's accumulated records and papers. In 1989, U.C.C. moved to a much smaller office space in the basement of its day care center where there was limited space for storage. I dumped all the tape recordings, most of which were more than 20 years old, thinking that U.C.C. would never have anyone interested in transcribing them or the money to hire anyone to do it. I also dumped haphazardly most of the old file cartons. My attention at the time was neither well thought out nor focused. We were moving in a relative hurry. That much material remains is an accident.

I read through all the public statements still possessed by U.C.C. that it printed and delivered before various community, municipal, state, and federal agencies, committees, special commissions and various other bodies, 1966-1980. These statements were almost always written by the staff, but they represented the much discussed ideas of the leadership, the Board, and the committees and volunteers who generally made the presentations.

The U.C.C. statements, flyers, and letters to officials related to the campaign on the ENY Educational Complex are almost complete. Also available is a 19 page historical account of the campaign that indicates U.C.C.'s understanding of its participation that was written soon after U.C.C. withdrew from the charette.

The rest is a true miscellany that includes occasional correspondence, flyers, transcriptions of meetings, funding proposals, internal newsletters, position papers, and so on.

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I scoured the New York City Housing Files in the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives at Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College/CUNY for references to the United Community Centers and how NYCHA thought about and worked with

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community centers in housing projects during the 1950s. I found some pertinent and valuable information although not nearly all that I was searching for. My task was made much easier by the librarians and by whoever had created the computerized system that made it possible to limit how many individual documents I had to handle before I felt confident that I had obtained all that I could.

With the aid of the librarians at the Union Theological Seminary Library, I was able to focus my digging through the archives of the Council of Churches of New York. especially the records of the Brooklyn Division.

I obtained the court records related to U.C.C.'s eviction from housing from the Supreme Court of the State of New York County of Kings.

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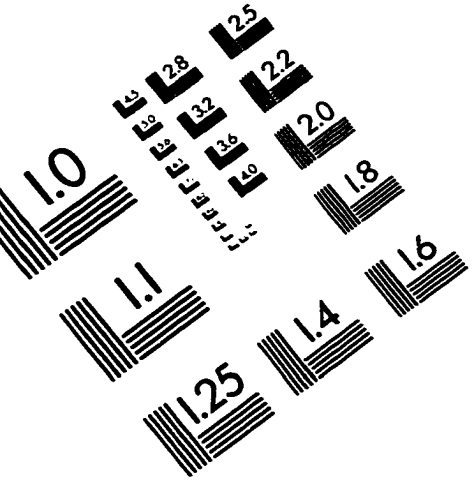
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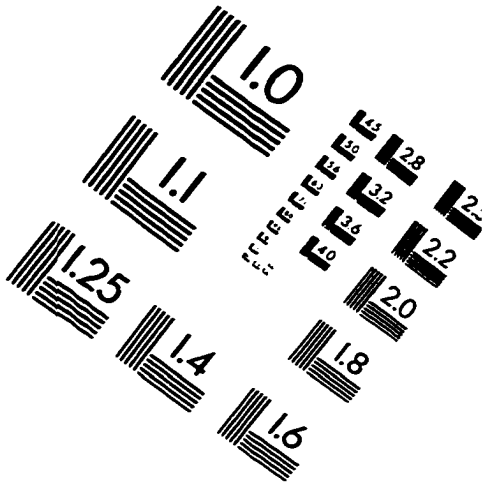
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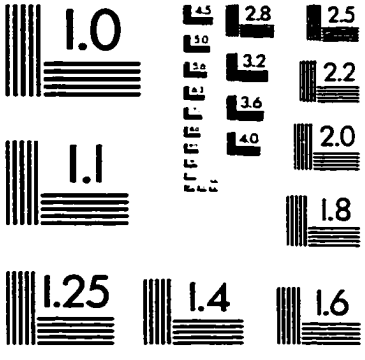
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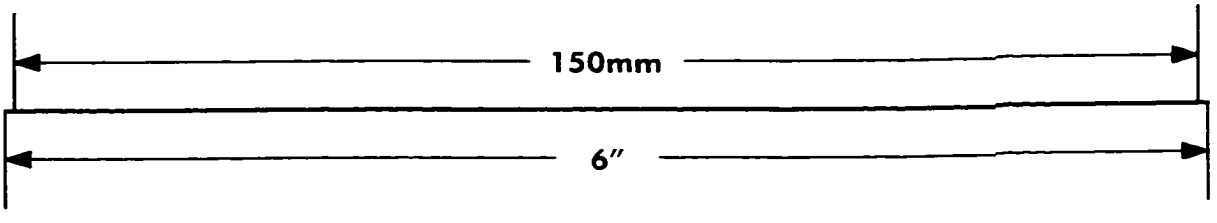
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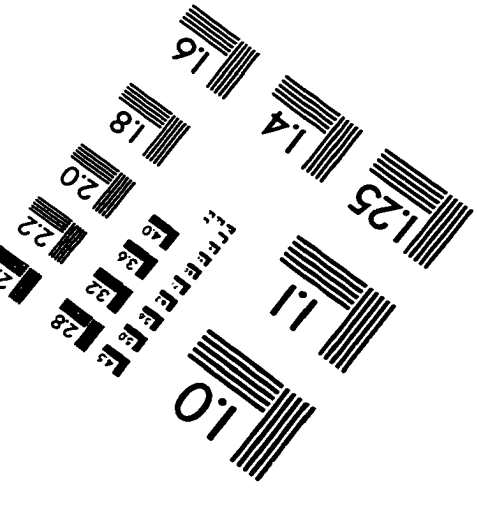
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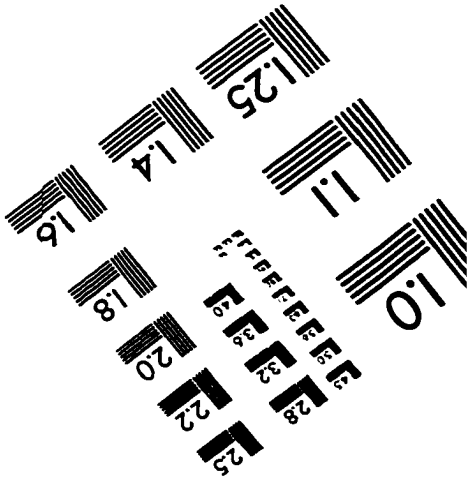












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