

**CIVIL RIGHTS IN NEW YORK CITY
FROM WORLD WAR II TO THE GIULIANI ERA**

**Edited by
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rationale for American intervention in Vietnam to the increasingly popular issue of Puerto Rican independence. Because of the success of the organization in appealing to large numbers of people in East Harlem and the city at large, the rise of the Young Lords represents the most observable political development within the Puerto Rican community following the riots of 1967. Through protests, grassroots organizing, and political education, the Young Lords consciously established an alternative to what they perceived as the failure of the social service-oriented antipoverty strategy adopted by the Puerto Rican reformers since the 1950s. The Young Lords enjoyed tremendous popularity in New York, in part because they tapped into these sentiments. They were also the first group to originate in the mainland United States whose main purpose was to achieve Puerto Rican independence and foster a sense of pride in being Puerto Rican through a political understanding of Puerto Rico's history of resistance against U.S. domination.⁴

As we have witnessed recently in New Orleans, the urban disrepair against which organizations like the Young Lords and Black Panthers fought, and its racialized character, is still with us today. There is a lot that can be concluded about this age of great dreams during which ordinary people took the reins of history in their own hands. One of the most important contributions of radicals was that they helped alter the terms of the political debate in America. The conservative ideas that have become dominant in the movement's aftermath for almost four generations have upheld that government is not charged with the task of solving social problems, that the invisible hand of the market will redistribute wealth and address all manner of crises, and that success is determined by individual virtue and poverty is the result of inherent character flaws.

In the 1960s however, radicals won the argument that poverty was brought about by circumstances beyond the control of the poor and that these circumstances had long historical roots and that they were tied to the organization of society. They won the argument that racial oppression was a natural outgrowth of a society divided by class; that urban renewal in the form of gentrification and business-sponsored development would not solve the profound problems of urban deindustrialization and disrepair; and finally, they argued that imperialist war was not acceptable in a democratic society. All of these ideas merit reconsideration in American society today.

8 "Brooklyn College Belongs to Us": Black Students and the Transformation of Public Higher Education in New York City

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Black student activism exploded in the spring of 1969. These students followed in the footsteps of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and were deeply influenced by its radical and Black Nationalist organizers, many of whom had left the South and were active on college campuses across the country. Coinciding with the grassroots community control of schools movement, African American college students in New York City aimed to redefine the relationship between educational institutions and urban black communities. In the spring of 1969, students at every single division of the City University of New York rose up in protest. The two-week occupation of City College in Harlem precipitated a political crisis in the city and ushered in a major shift in public policy; as a result, it received extensive local and national media attention, but strikingly, it has garnered little attention from historians. Similarly, the struggle at Brooklyn College has been virtually forgotten, even though it was crucial in reshaping the admissions policy, the university's relationship to communities of color, and the curriculum. As one observer has rightly noted, "The integration of CUNY has been the most significant civil rights victory in higher education in the history of the United States."¹ Yet this story has been left out of most narratives of the black freedom struggle, an elision that is all the more striking in light

of the fact that much of the post-civil rights backlash has focused on ending affirmative action in college admissions.² This chapter examines the black student movement in New York City, focusing on Brooklyn and City colleges, in order to show the enormous impact that this generation of student activists had on university policies, structures, and cultures. While not as iconic as the students in suits and ties at Greensboro lunch counters earlier in the decade, these students may have read *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung* and contemplated guerilla warfare, but they won reforms that transformed public higher education and paved the way for the expansion of the black middle class in the New York City region. While emphasizing the students' achievements, the chapter also examines opposition to the movement, shedding light on ideas and alliances that would grow much stronger as political conservatism gained ascendancy in the United States.

Additionally, this story complicates the widely held view that the ascendancy of Black Nationalist politics in the late 1960s blocked multi-racial alliances, moved class issues off the activist radar, muted black women's voices, and alienated and drove away white allies. Rather, this generation had a flexible and dynamic conception of so-called identity politics: They forged alliances with Latino and Asian American activists, occasionally collaborated with radical white students, and kept socioeconomic issues front and center. African American female students, moreover, fought for black studies and affirmative action as much as their male peers, notwithstanding the rise of a macho political rhetoric. One key change, of course, was that black students also wanted to organize all-black formations, and be the leading force in shaping the tactics and goals of antiracist activism on campus. And this they achieved.

The students were not protesting racial segregation in college admissions but rather token desegregation, the terms of which had marginalized black and Puerto Rican students in the overwhelmingly white campus culture, labeled them culturally deprived, and expected them to be grateful. Students pushed back against these terms. Black and Puerto Rican students had long ago gained entry to tuition-free City, Brooklyn, Hunter, and other colleges under the prevailing admissions standards. Affirmative action, meaning programs and policies aimed at admitting "minority" students who did not meet the prevailing entrance criteria, began with the Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEEK) program in 1966. Reflecting the new clout of a growing bloc of black and Puerto Rican legislators in Albany, SEEEK provided promising graduates of city high schools a college education and the extra academic support, counseling, and remediation needed to succeed. It was by far the

largest program of its kind in the country. These new admissions policies, culminating in 1970 with the launch of open admissions, were part of a social movement to redefine both the mission of public universities and the criteria to determine "merit." Black students, in particular, posed the question: Should public colleges be expected to offer opportunity to a broad range of taxpaying New Yorkers, or should they be permitted to adopt the exclusionary practices of private institutions and rely on test scores to determine admission? Moreover, students demanded a new answer to an old but critical question of the civil rights era: How should the United States correct the consequences of segregation—in this case, the unequal educational system that it had produced? The prevailing view had been that efforts should focus on improving primary and secondary schools in order to better prepare students for college. But in the late 1960s, African American youths argued that it was the college's responsibility to offer the appropriate remediation. They increasingly framed access to higher education as a right of postwar U.S. citizenship. Fortunately for them, the broader urban turmoil across the United States played a role in encouraging college officials to reevaluate admissions policies. After several summers of very serious and deadly urban unrest, white administrators feared black militancy and the prospect of riots at their gates. According to one scholar, CUNY's motive in authorizing open admissions was "to appease an explosive urban youth population."³

Black student activists at Brooklyn College launched their movement on a campus that, in the spring of 1968, was 96 percent white.⁴ The campus tumult of the late 1960s reveals the stunning lack of preparation for desegregation on American campuses. For its part, Brooklyn College had appointed a committee in 1964 "to look into the need to create educational opportunities for students on the campus, or students who were not being admitted." In the words of acting president George A. Peck, it "worked sporadically at first" and finally came up with a plan to admit two hundred black and Puerto Rican students in a special program in 1968.⁵ The students did not demand open admissions for all graduates of city high schools—a policy that the Board of Higher Education was in fact already preparing to launch in 1975—but rather, more specifically, they called for a sharp increase in the black and Puerto Rican student population.⁶ For all the vaunted erudition and cosmopolitanism of the faculties at the City University of New York, Brooklyn College offered thirteen courses "with content related to American minority groups," the president's office reported in 1969, and all of them had begun in 1968! A big problem, the administration contended, was "finding faculty

to teach them,"⁷ a statement that points to the slow pace of the production of African American PhDs in the United States fourteen years after *Brown* and twenty years after President Harry S. Truman had appointed a committee to study minority access to higher education.

Among the small number of black students at Brooklyn College, a few key leaders emerged, notably Leroy (Askia) Davis and Orlando Pile. Both young men were involved in off-campus organizing and their efforts at Brooklyn College should be seen as part of the overall black freedom struggle. Pile was the student representative on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community school board and was also involved in local welfare rights organizing. African American women were at the center of both these campaigns, a fact that balances the largely masculinist portrait of the Black Power era and illustrates a broader range of influences on a generation that venerated Malcolm X and Frantz Fanon. Askia Davis came up to New York from Georgia at age fifteen. He saw *The Battle of Algiers*, read *Black Skin, White Masks*, and joined the Black Panther Party. But Malcolm X had the most decisive and far-reaching influence on his life trajectory. All his life he had eagerly awaited the day he could join the military. "I always dreamed of going to the air force academy," and becoming a pilot, he said—in order to drop bombs. "That was my goal. I was a warrior." He might have gone to Vietnam like his brother if he hadn't encountered *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. "Reading Malcolm X really changed me—really, like overnight."⁸

In 1968 Davis and Pile began to reach out to the small number of black students—approaching them in the library, Davis recalled—and soon organized BLAC, the Black League of Afro-American Collegians. In conjunction with the Puerto Rican Alliance, BLAC became a major force on campus, especially as the protests dramatically increased black enrollments. BLAC would present eighteen demands to the administration in the spring of 1969, but they also tried to change campus conditions through their own direct action. One tactic they used to overcome black students' sense of isolation in the classroom, especially in the face of offensive or insensitive racial remarks, was to get groups of black students to register for the same course. In 1969, five or six black student activists plus several more non-political black students enrolled in an introductory literature course taught by Robert Fitzhugh. The first day, Askia Davis recalled, Fitzhugh walked in and saw "this sea of black faces. He was shocked." Still, Davis remembered, "We were polite. We wanted to learn." One day Orlando Pile asked Fitzhugh why there were no black writers on the syllabus and even presented the professor with a

list of important black writers. One imagines that James Baldwin and Richard Wright were probably on this list. Fitzhugh retorted that these writers were "social activists, not major novelists." A "personal confrontation" ensued. Fitzhugh asked Pile why he didn't leave the class if he didn't like it, and Pile said, "Why don't you?" "And then," said Pile, still incredulous many years later, "the professor walked out!" BLAC leaders arranged with the dean for the black students to withdraw from the course, and the activists did, but the others chose to remain. A couple of weeks later, the remaining students changed their minds and told Pile that Fitzhugh was grading all their work poorly and had "disrespected them" when they brought it up. Number eleven on the list of eighteen demands called for the dismissal "of all White professors who have demonstrated racist tendencies," specifically Robert Fitzhugh of the English department.⁹

The "18 Demands," interestingly a much longer list than the "Five Demands" at City College, are wide ranging and reveal much about the students' political sensibilities and vision. The list is striking for its boldness and scope. Yet at the same time, it is concrete and pragmatic, suggesting the students' dual sense of themselves as radical yet efficacious. The first demand called for the admission to Brooklyn College of all black and Puerto Rican applicants regardless of their scholastic record. The second demand called for "a free tutorial program" and "basic skills courses" to enable students "to fulfill their scholastic potential." While the first goal seems to reject all entrance criteria, the second one illustrates that the students still took academic success seriously. Even though students were challenging prevailing definitions of who was qualified to enter college, they were not rejecting academic culture or excellence. On the contrary, they wanted to benefit from it.¹⁰ Most significantly, the demands show the students' desire for Brooklyn College to serve the educational needs of the population of Brooklyn, not only of those applicants whose test scores were the highest.

These college student activists also called for the establishment of Afro-American and Puerto Rican institutes to be "controlled by Black and Puerto Rican students with the help of the Black and Puerto Rican faculty and the community." The wording of this demand suggests both that the students had a nontraditional conception of ethnic studies and that they did not trust the college to set up the institutes and so claimed this role for students of color. At many campuses student activists had a "movement" conception of black studies—seeing it as a bridge between black students and black communities, in addition to its transformative

intellectual potential. The thirteenth demand called for a special course that would give academic credit for field work in the community, reflecting this generation's desire to make their college educations "relevant" to community needs, and their desire not to wall themselves off in an ivory tower. Indeed, Brooklyn College set up an entirely new college—the School of Contemporary Studies—that incorporated many of these goals. Echoing a similar demand at City College, the fifteenth demand asserted that students majoring in education—future public school teachers—should be required to take courses in black and Puerto Rican studies. This reflected the students' sense of obligation to use their position inside the college to affect the education of Brooklyn youth of all ages. The students also demanded the hiring of black and Puerto Rican professors in all units of the college, showing their desire not to let the creation of the new Afro-American and Puerto Rican institutes create an excuse for the other departments not to diversify.¹¹

By early 1969, student activists had engaged in extensive organizing on campus and had gained considerable support. The BLAC faculty advisor was Professor Craig Bell, but Orlando Pile felt that each of the small number of black professors on campus supported them, as did several white professors as well, "especially and very vocally" Bart Meyers, who later penned a useful history of the struggle for the campus newspaper. In keeping with the nationalist ethos of the time, it was important to black and Puerto Rican students to lead and direct their own organizations and movement. The largely white Students for a Democratic Society chapter on campus supported the citywide push for open enrollment, and they were engaged in a range of campus actions that spring. Pile said that their support was fine but "they could not be part of us."¹²

In mid-April, frustrated that the faculty had not yet considered the eighteen demands, a group of black and Puerto Rican students came to a faculty meeting, took over the microphone, and commanded faculty not to leave. "Militant" students disrupting normal campus procedures and making "demands" to a "frightened" faculty became the archetypical sequence of events at American campuses in 1969. "We want the 18 demands presented now," Askia Davis declared. "You will not shut your eyes any longer," he told the faculty. "Brooklyn College belongs to us, not you."¹³ The president subsequently participated in a forum of two thousand people, but the administration, according to the student radicals, took a "rigid stance."¹⁴ Davis felt the president was "dead set against African American studies and open admissions."¹⁵ Students at City College encountered similar difficulties on these issues, especially admissions,

and it would ultimately fall to the Board of Higher Education to enact a new admissions policy.

In March, April, and May student militancy increased, culminating in a mass demonstration in the president's office at the end of April. One hundred and fifty students from BLAC and the Puerto Rican Alliance and forty white students "squeezed into" the president's office in Boylan Hall, where a meeting among administrators and student representatives over black and Puerto Rican issues was in progress. They dramatically presented the eighteen demands but the president was actually out of the office. Some students reportedly engaged in minor vandalism and some one spray painted the words "power" and "revolution" on walls inside and outside the building. The students stayed for a couple of hours and left when they heard that the police had been called. In the meantime, some radical white students took over other campus buildings, while black students blocked the entrance to Boylan Hall, and unknown persons set small fires on the campus.¹⁶ In early May, one hundred students led by SDS held a demonstration inside the dean's office, and acts of arson and vandalism continued, alongside daily and increasingly large rallies. On May 6, President Peck alleged that a hundred students, mostly black and Puerto Rican, blocked firefighters from entering the administration building to douse a small fire, reportedly the fifth small blaze of the day.

In contrast to City College, where the administration engaged in negotiation with black and Puerto Rican student activists, including the "militants," at Brooklyn the administration decided to turn to law enforcement to quell student protest. They sought an injunction barring students from "congregating in or near buildings, creating loud or excessive noise, or employing, inciting or encouraging force or violence." Students fought the injunction with attorneys from the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and the New York Civil Liberties Union, who argued that it was an unconstitutional restraint on freedom of speech and assembly. It should be noted that there were many white students who had been advocating and engaging in aggressive forms of protest—and this was well known to campus authorities. Indeed, some Brooklyn College officials, like white administrators at many American colleges, saw radical whites, especially those in SDS, as more destructive than black student activists. Some even viewed white radicals as instigating black student revolt. Peck later testified to a Senate committee investigating campus riots. Montana senator Lee Metcalf asked him, "So you think that SDS in spite of the fact that they were not part of this black revolt,

spurred it on and encouraged it, and, using your phrase, masterminded it?" To which Peck replied, "All they could." He added that he did not think SDS had the same emotional commitment to "the cause of blacks" but used it to advance general social destruction. Interestingly, though, this worldview did not prevent Peck from targeting black and Puerto Rican students—but no white students—for arrest that spring.¹⁷

Shortly before dawn on May 12, 1969, police officers across the city raided the homes of seventeen African American and Puerto Rican Brooklyn College students, including Orlando Pile and Askia Davis. They arrested the students and even arrested Pile's mother, Blanche Pile, for interference. Another two students were also indicted. As college students with no criminal records and strong family and community ties, the \$15,000 bail was widely seen as excessive. The students spent four days at Rikers Island. They were each charged with eighteen felonies and five misdemeanors, including inciting riot and arson, which together carried a sentence of 228 years. The allegations had come from an undercover police informant who had infiltrated BLAC and befriended the students. "He looked the part," Askia Davis noted, with his big afro, dark skin, and beard. "He had the rhetoric, but he was really a cop." In Pile's view, the allegations by the police informant were a form of retaliation: They represented the administration's attempt to thwart the black student movement and block their demands to change Brooklyn College. The next day the prosecutor claimed to have found in various homes "a revolver, a sharp-edged spear, and clubs" as well as batteries and gasoline, which he termed "material used to manufacture firebombs."¹⁸

The eighteen-year-old Davis had been a member of the Black Panther Party and had actually been named on the original warrant for the New York "Panther 21" but was in California when the police made those arrests. "I was meant to be the Panther 22," he said, which likely explains the overwhelming force they used to arrest him that morning in May. He remembered his thoughts when he heard a knock on the door early that morning. "A young lady lived next door. I was basically trying to seduce her. She used to knock at my door; we used to tease and flirt, but nothing ever happened. So I get this knock at five o'clock in the morning and I said, 'Wow, she finally gave in.'" Nine police officers came to make the arrest. Three came through the door. "They threw me to the floor, put a gun to my head, and cocked the trigger." When the officer finally pulled the gun back and looked at the very youthful-looking Davis, he said, "God, you're nothing but a kid." They searched the

house and found nothing unlawful. Rikers was a "rough experience" although it made him feel he could endure hardship and prevail. He believed that authorities were trying to punish and intimidate them for their activism.¹⁹

The media made much of the radical literature the police reportedly found in the students' homes and used this to promote an image of them as violent, subversive radicals, undeserving of support or sympathy. The *New York Post* highlighted that the students were in possession of "The Writings of Che Guevara," "Quotations from Mao Tse-tung," and a "typewritten document entitled 'Blueprint for Campus Revolt,'" which the district attorney said referred to the "strategy at San Francisco State College."²⁰ *New York Daily News* readers were given an over-the-top account that sought to stoke fears of Communism: "Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold revealed that 122 detectives making pre-dawn arrests in four boroughs found inflammatory writings of Chinese and Cuban Communists."²¹ This media frame exacerbated the already-powerful stigma of criminal prosecution in the eyes of the public. But in the eyes of the students, the arrests backfired and increased campus support for BLAC's agenda.

Moreover, the arrests sparked an outpouring of support among black New Yorkers. "The black community really got together" to support us, Davis said. Attorneys George Wade and Ray Williams argued before Brooklyn Supreme Court judge Dominic Rinaldi that the bail was punitive. Williams also pointed to the racial bias in the arrests, noting that "there were S.D.S. students involved but they were not brought in because they are white." Outraged at the assertion, the judge warned him against "using the courtroom as a vehicle for racist statements." But the Appellate Division ordered the bail reduced to \$6,500. U.S. representative Shirley Chisholm, herself a Brooklyn College alum, raised the bail money. She convinced Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, the president of NEGRO, the National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization, to put up his share of Interfaith Hospital, a drug treatment clinic in Queens, as collateral. And she got the Reverend William A. Jones of Bethany Baptist to put up his church.²² As it turns out, the case never went anywhere—the state never produced any evidence, and after about a year of delays and negotiation, the attorneys and judge reached a deal in which the students accepted a short probationary period, and the charges were dismissed and the students' records ultimately expunged. The *Kingsman* editorialized that the probationary period "seems suspiciously like a move to repress dissent on campus, since the 19 are not guilty enough to be prosecuted."²³

After the arrests and subsequent stationing of one hundred New York City police officers on campus, a large group of students and faculty went on strike. Their demands were: Drop the charges against "the BC 19," implement the eighteen demands, and get the police off campus. Askia Davis said he didn't realize how much support the black and Puerto Rican students had from the majority white campus until this point. The *Kingsman* editorialized in favor of the strike: "The 20 arrests on Tuesday morning were conducted in a manner that heaped disgrace on the American legal system and added to many students' hatred and distrust of the New York City Police." It demanded that the administration remove police from campus, reporting that an officer had arrested a student for spitting, which led to a bloody clash.²⁴ The relentless pressure finally induced the college to make concessions, and President Peck and the faculty went on record urging the Board of Higher Education, the governing body of CUNY colleges, to enact a new open-admissions policy. They passed a resolution urging the Board of Higher Education "to offer a college education to every high school graduate in the city, particularly needy Negroes and Puerto Ricans."²⁵ Clearly, the students' efforts to bring the black liberation movement to Brooklyn College had an effect; it had a similar effect across the river in Manhattan, but without the criminal prosecutions.

Student activists at the City College of New York (CCNY) had also engaged in a long series of escalating tactics before two hundred of them took over the buildings of south campus on April 22, 1969, and renamed it the "University of Harlem." As at most colleges, the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. had precipitated a transformation in black student consciousness and sparked a new determination, even a sense of obligation, to step up the pace of change. "The movement really began in 1968," south campus occupier Sekou Sundiata recalled.²⁶ The struggle at City was led by the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community (BPRSC)—a name that richly signifies the politics of the era by emphasizing the collective over the individual and asserting a black/brown partnership in a Black Nationalist era that was moving toward third worldism. The left-wing W. E. B. Du Bois Club also contributed to the formulation of the "five demands," having presented President Buell Gallagher with a petition of 1,600 signatures to "End Racism at CCNY" in November 1968. This evidently motivated students of color to launch their own effort. "We were indignant," Sundiata said, "that the Du Bois Society was circulating those kinds of demands which really articulated our interests, and that we had not moved on them ourselves."²⁷

City College, located in the heart of Harlem, was only 4 percent black and 5 percent Puerto Rican.²⁸ As a professor put it, "There City College sits, smack dab in the middle of the largest Black community in the country, and only 9 percent of its day time students are Black or Puerto Rican. And 5 percent of that 9 percent came through the SEEK program."²⁹ As at Brooklyn College, City's faculty and students were predominantly Jewish, a composition that reflected, in part, the legacy of anti-Semitic admissions and hiring practices at private universities. The students relied on research by CUNY economics professor Alfred Conrad to ascertain the racial composition of area high schools and, as a result, they called for a student body that was 43 percent black. This constituted an enormous jump and suggests that students had embraced a radical new conception of a public university's responsibility to its community. As the students put it, "We are committed to make this college more relevant to the community."³⁰ While this may have seemed radical in 1969, in many ways it was an approach steeped in the history of City College, which had been founded as a free college to serve the children of the poor and from 1900–1925 had required only a high school diploma for entrance. A minimum grade average was then introduced but open admissions returned for World War II veterans.³¹

The second most controversial BPRSC demand was for a school for black and Puerto Rican studies. According to the students, the curriculum at City College offered "virtually nothing" on Africa or African Americans. In the words of Toni Cade, author of the groundbreaking feminist text *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, and a highly regarded mentor to the protesting students, the English department clung to "the deeply entrenched notion that Anglo-Saxon literature is The Literature."³² The leadership of SEEK professor Toni Cade is worth elaborating on, especially since activism from the late 1960s, including the black student/black studies movement, has been framed—and not inaccurately—as a quest to restore black manhood.³³ Still, black women played critical roles in these movements. Cade penned an open letter to students encouraging them to seize control of their educational destinies. Steeped in the vernacular of the era, it offered both guidance and solidarity and conveyed the humanism propelling radical activism. It bears quoting at length. "Dear Bloods," she wrote: "There are two traditions within our culture that are worth looking at, for they tell us a great deal about our responses. One, we have been conditioned to turn off, short out, be cool; two, we have often been pushed to make something from nothing. The first response is a negative one. We did it, or do it, to survive

surely—but at great cost to ourselves. We've learned how to bottle up anger, put our minds in a jar, wear a mask. The second is a creative urge. It too comes out of the need to survive. . . . Out of which bag do you dip?" she asked. "Something out of nothing is so much better than blowing a fuse," she advised. "On the assumption that all of you mumbblers, grumblers, malcontents, workers, designers, etc. are serious about what you've been saying ('A real education—blah, blah, blah'), the Afro-American-Hispanic Studies Center is/was set up. Until it is fully operating, *the responsibility of getting that education rests with you in large part*. Jumping up and down, foaming at the mouth, rattling coffee-cups and other weaponry don't get it. If you are serious, set up a counter course in the Experimental College. If you are serious, contact each other." And she closed, "Serious, Miss Cade."³⁴

Cade was not only a key supporter of the students, but she formulated and publicized a model for a black and Hispanic studies center at City College. "At least 90 percent of the several hundred rebellions that have taken place on the American college campuses and in the American high schools in the last six years," she wrote in a campus newspaper, "were propelled by and revealed a gross dissatisfaction with the curriculum (its premises, its omissions, its presentations, its designers)." Contestations over knowledge and learning had moved to the forefront of black activism. This essay was composed before the takeover of south campus, but Cade saw it coming. "We can safely assume that an explosion is imminent," she declared. "The students have already indicated that they are weary of being lied to, tired of playing games, damned if they'll be indoctrinated, programmed, ripped off any longer." Cade proposed that the center be "a course-offering agency, a research agency, a buttress, a skills bank, [and] a conference center." Doubtless her most controversial idea was for the center to be "controlled by Black and Latin students and faculty who will have the power to hire using their own standards, and to design courses considering their own needs." Toni Cade appended a list of courses that the center might offer, including "American Justice and the Afro-American," "Negritude," "Revolution," and "Trends in Western Thought." Her eventual goal, which in light of the demographics of City College was very radical, was that "the Center would lead ultimately to a Black University."³⁵

In February 1969, the college had hired Barbara Christian, the literary scholar who would produce pioneering scholarship on black women writers during her long career at Berkeley, and Wilfred Cartey, a Trinidadian-born literary scholar, to design a black studies program. Both were

also affiliated with Columbia University at the time. According to Christian, the call for such a school was "a very controversial demand." Initially, she wrote, "the students were primarily concerned with their own culture—black, African, Afro-American, West Indian, Puerto Rican culture." But, she said, the involvement of Asian American students in the struggle at City College encouraged them to broaden their vision. "The students then took a look at how many courses were offered on Latin America, how many courses on Asia. And there were very few." This desire to address the needs of all "minority" groups on campus induced Christian and Cartey to propose a school of urban and third-world studies, but the faculty senate rejected their proposal late that spring.³⁶ As we shall see, the college administration resisted the proposals designed by black professors and moved instead to implement a very different vision.

Paradoxically, as the students were struggling to radically expand the size of CUNY colleges, the already-existing SEEK program was slated for drastic cuts, a development that foreshadowed worrisome things to come. In his February 1969 budget proposal, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller slashed SEEK funding. This sparked a mass spring mobilization on New York campuses, which all sent busloads of students to Albany to save SEEK—CCNY alone sent thirty-five buses. Still, despite their staunch support for SEEK, the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community rejected paternalist aspects of its structure—such as rules prohibiting their election to student government. But most bothersome was that SEEK counselors were mostly white and were required to be clinical psychologists. The students felt that this stigmatized SEEK students as "psychologically flawed." The only counselor of color was Betty Rawls, who became a strong ally and mentor to the student activists and participated in the spring negotiations with administrators. Thus, the BPRSC demanded "a voice for SEEK students in setting guidelines for the SEEK Program, including the hiring and firing of all personnel." Like their counterparts in Brooklyn, the students occupying south campus also demanded that courses in Spanish language and black and Puerto Rican history be required for all education majors.³⁷

The response to the five demands revealed a wide gap in perception between black and white New York communities. On the one hand, the students received an outpouring of support from black and Puerto Rican New Yorkers, who provided south campus with food, solidarity, and protection. They viewed the sit-in as part of the civil rights movement's quest for equal opportunity and inclusion. But the students also faced substantial criticism and, they felt, misunderstanding. They were accused

of lowering standards in both admissions and curricular offerings, of supporting racial exclusion, and of generally pushing an agenda that was more political than academic. In response, they issued press releases offering careful elaboration of their positions. They explained that yes, white students could take courses in the school for black and Puerto Rican studies; it was not a "racial" project, but one meant to teach and research the history and culture of "80% of the world's population." Moreover, "the school is not a vehicle for political indoctrination." It "will not have a watered down degree," they emphasized. Students had to meet all the regular requirements to graduate. And the admissions demand—to offer graduates of area high schools a proportionate place at City—"will not lower the standards of the college. Students would be given supportive services on the model of SEEK and would not be allowed to move on through the college unless they fulfill the standards for graduation at CCNY."³⁸

Students also sought guidance and solidarity from faculty, who organized two support groups: the Black and Puerto Rican Faculty Group and the integrated but predominantly white Faculty for Action.³⁹ The students worked with both groups. As white SEEK professor Fran Geteles remembered, the student activists were savvy organizers who understood that both groups had something to offer. Some scholars of the civil rights movement, and especially of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, have lamented that the rise of Black Power politics led to an emphasis on slogans and speeches at the expense of grassroots organizing.⁴⁰ But Geteles's memory complicates this interpretation. She felt that "the students were very smart politically. They adopted Black Nationalist thought and rhetoric but didn't behave in an exclusionary way. They were shrewd organizers." A Brooklyn College professor had a similar recollection. Carlos Russell, an Afro-Panamanian educator and activist who directed SEEK before becoming dean of the School of Contemporary Studies at Brooklyn College, described black student activists there as committed and idealistic. To illustrate, he related how one cold winter day, a student gave his shoes away to a homeless man: "They were like SNCC," he said, referring not to the group's northern image but to its reputation for identification with ordinary folks in the South.⁴¹

In response to the seizure of south campus, CCNY president Buell G. Gallagher closed the college. This created an opportunity to negotiate an end to the crisis, and for two weeks negotiators from all sides worked eight to fourteen hours a day to reach a settlement. But Gallagher's decision also galvanized the opposition. It's important to appreciate that City

College alumni held influential positions in city government, media, and the courts, and many clamored for a police response. Mayor John Lindsay's policy was to bring in police only if requested to do so by the college president, and Gallagher did not want a police raid. At a key faculty meeting, Wilfred Carrey stirred his colleagues with moving arguments against calling the police to open south campus, advocating instead "conciliation with black students." Also influencing administrators was CCNY's location in Harlem, an African American neighborhood whose community leaders had aligned themselves with the students. Askia Davis thinks this was the main reason arrests were not made at City but were made at Brooklyn College, which is located in an area that was affluent and white.⁴²

Gallagher's early public statements reinforced two common—though contradictory—views of black student activists of this era: first, that they embodied/portended violence, and second, that they were more pragmatic and serious about reforming higher education than white student radicals, who were typically portrayed as either more frivolous or more destructive. The occupation of south campus at City College occurred shortly after a photo had circulated around the world of black students at Cornell exiting a building heavily armed after the administration had agreed to several of their demands. In the eyes of some, Cornell became Munich—and denunciations of liberal "capitulation" to threats of armed violence proliferated. Gallagher took to the airwaves in New York City, declaring over WCBS radio, "Both incidents [CCNY and Cornell] illustrate graphically the failure of student extremists to understand what a university stands for." At this juncture, Gallagher revealed his distance from black students and a lack of understanding of their particular motives: "The student militants' rejection of personal accountability, regardless of whether their background is privileged or ghetto, stands at the heart of the campus revolution across the country. Tyranny, whether exercised by the majority, or a minority, is still tyranny." He also echoed a widely held view among college officials that student radicalism would strengthen conservatism. "With each forcible takeover, each ransacking of administration files, each disruption of classes for the majority of students, the hands of the ultraconservatives in the legislature are strengthened."⁴³ Yet, at the same time, as Gallagher began negotiations with the students, he came to respect their sincerity and the seriousness of their mission. A week later he was asked to defend his decision not to call the police when he had called them several months earlier to quell a largely white antiwar protest. "The circumstances are not the same," he

explained. "They were causing extensive damage . . . smoking pot and fornicating in public," but the black and Puerto Rican students occupying south campus "are behaving in an orderly manner." And as he got to know black and Puerto Rican student activists that spring, this view solidified.⁴⁴

The upcoming fall election turned the CCNY sit-in into a citywide political controversy and foreshadowed the way that racial backlash politics would dramatically shape electoral discourse in the ensuing decades. State senator John J. Marchi, who was opposing the liberal Lindsay for the Republican nomination, attacked the mayor "for not taking swift police action" at City and other CUNY campuses.⁴⁵ Actually, there was at least one police officer on south campus—an undercover agent, whom the students had discovered, interrogated, and released.⁴⁶ Another political aspirant took the matter to court. City Comptroller Mario Procaccino, who was seeking the Democratic nomination for mayor, obtained a Supreme Court injunction directing the college to open on May 5. This was precisely when students and administrators all believed they were making substantial progress in the negotiations. Police opened the campus and occupied it for rest of term as a wave of fires, vandalism, and violent attacks on black students followed. Gallagher, president for seventeen years, resigned on May 10.⁴⁷ He said that "politically motivated outside forces" had made it "impossible to carry on the process of reason and persuasion."⁴⁸ Indeed, that same day a *New York Daily News* editorial called for the House Internal Security Committee to probe charges that "Red Cuba and Red China are helping to finance some of the worst campus troublemakers." It called for a "Hayakawa for City College," referring to the authoritarian president of San Francisco State College, who was willingly doing the bidding of conservative California politicians, most notably Governor Ronald Reagan. Their wish seemed to come true with the selection of Joseph Copeland as acting president, whose commencement address equated the occupiers of south campus with the Ku Klux Klan, sparking a walkout by graduating black and Puerto Rican students.⁴⁹

The Jewish Defense League (JDL), a right-wing vigilante organization led by Rabbi Meir Kahane, had also gone to court to open the college, but Procaccino had gotten there first. Formed in 1968 to combat alleged anti-Semitism by black New Yorkers, the JDL quickly became notorious for fanning the flames of black-Jewish division in the city. In 1969, Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, voiced the perspective of mainstream Jewish

when he condemned the group: "The so-called Jewish Defense League violates every ethic and tradition of Judaism and every concept of civil liberties and democratic processes in American life."⁵⁰ The JDL's activities at Brooklyn College betrayed the strong-arm tactics of the organization and its lack of support among the college's large Jewish population. By 1971, black and Puerto Rican students had a greater visibility and presence at Brooklyn College and had begun to win seats in student government. Askia Davis believes this growing political clout inspired an attack by the JDL. One day that year, Kahane "brought in a huge group" to campus. Coincidentally, a few hundred black and Puerto Rican students were meeting at the student center that day, and the two groups converged. "It was really bad," Davis recalled. Several people went to the hospital. Yet Davis remembers this clash as an important turning point. "Every year we were subject to some kind of attack at Brooklyn College." But this time, "they attacked us and got beaten. . . . They took a heavy blow that day." He stressed that the students were defending themselves: "We had no interest in fighting Kahane or anybody else. We were just kids. He brought grown men out on the campus and they came out with all kinds of objects: bats, and other things." Moreover, Davis recalled, the skirmish with the JDL did not reflect black-Jewish relations on campus: "We had more support among the Jewish students than he did," he said. In fact, college authorities obtained an injunction barring the JDL from campus, and Kahane later consented to "refrain from disruptive activities at Brooklyn College." Looking back, Davis said, "Just that we ended up feeling safe was a big, big accomplishment."⁵¹

The student uprisings across the city in the spring of 1969 induced the Board of Higher Education to accelerate and broaden an open-admissions plan slated to begin in 1975. The original plan was to assign most high school graduates to community colleges, rather than four-year, or senior, colleges but student protest won a much larger number of slots at the senior colleges, and moved up its launch to 1970. Of course, the students had not led the call for open admissions. Allen Ballard, a black CCNY professor, director of SEEK, and scholar of black education, argued that "by moving from a quota arrangement specifically designed to serve the needs of Black and Puerto Rican students to a position of open admissions, the board both diverted the thrust of the Black and Puerto Rican demands and gained a white middle class constituency for the program." Ballard, it should be noted, was the first black director of SEEK, and he implemented the BPRSC demand to permit the hiring of

social workers, rather than solely clinical psychologists, as SEEK counselors. Still, the impact of open admissions on black and Puerto Rican educational opportunity was nonetheless substantial. "I don't know, as of this writing," Ballard wrote in 1973, "whether open admissions will be a success or not. However, it has opened vistas for Black and Puerto Rican high school youths previously condemned to a life of poverty because their averages and SAT scores did meet the requirements of the City University of New York."⁵² The impact of open admissions was dramatic: 35,000 freshmen entered CUNY campuses in 1970, a 75 percent increase from 1969. One-quarter of these entering students were black or Latino. After open admissions, 75 percent of New York City high school graduates attended college, a rate well ahead of the national average. According to the historian Conrad Dyer, two-thirds of these students would have been ineligible to attend college, even community college, under the old admissions standards. In 1975, five times as many black and Puerto Rican students were enrolled in the senior colleges as in 1969.⁵³

The demand for curricular change, however, produced a much more equivocal outcome. Over the summer, the Board of Higher Education had rejected the demand to establish a separate school of third-world studies but authorized CUNY colleges to set up urban and ethnic studies departments. Without consulting the BPRSC or black and Puerto Rican professors, including the two—Christian and Carney—City had hired to design such a program, acting CCNY president Joseph Copeland announced the creation of the new Department of Urban and Ethnic Studies and appointed Osborne E. Scott, a former army chaplain and current vice president of the American Leprosy Missions, as chair.⁵⁴ Wilfred Carney called the two-course department "an insult not only to the black and Puerto Rican community, but to City College itself." This move by a college president to simultaneously grant a black studies program and then turn around and contain or undermine it was not unique to City College. Most colleges around the country failed to finance or build the kinds of innovative, large, and comprehensive African American studies units that black student activists and their faculty allies had envisioned. At City, this development was transparent, as Copeland had been hired as a revanchist president. His quest to put black folks in their place found blunt expression when he publicly called Professor Carney "shiftless." Calling it an "insidious and malicious" remark, Carney raised the prospect of a lawsuit and declared: "I'm not seeking an apology. I'm seeking redress for a group." For his part, Copeland did not deny using

the word, saying, "I've never associated that word in my understanding with any racial group." But this supposed naïveté is contradicted by his evident awareness of the implication of the word in the offending quote. "He's too goddamn shiftless—and you can use that word in your story there—shiftless," he had said to a campus reporter.⁵⁵

The tendency by many to credit—or blame—the City College protest with the onset of open admissions has, along with the legacy of the criminal prosecution, worked to suppress an acknowledgment of the significance of the struggle at Brooklyn College. But the students there achieved a great deal. "We were responsible for changing the climate of the campus," says Orlando Pile, now a physician.⁵⁶ After open admissions, the number of black and Puerto Rican students rose significantly, but as Davis underscored, "it wasn't just blacks and Latinos who benefited from open admissions—a lot of working-class whites had been shut out too." Other reforms included the establishment of an Afro-American Studies Institute and a Puerto Rican Studies Institute, which both became departments a year later, significant changes in required courses, and more counselors.⁵⁷ An important, though controversial, legacy of the protest was the creation in 1972 of the School of Contemporary Studies as a division of the college, whose mission was to be "present oriented, concerned primarily with the social problems that are engaging our contemporary world." Until its demise in 1976, the school was located in downtown Brooklyn and offered a unique field studies requirement where students did internships in legal services agencies, health service organizations, and penal institutions. As its dean, Carlos Russell, recalled, the program "brought the streets and classrooms together." An evaluating committee later reported that "some students appear to have been profoundly affected by their experience in field study." Nevertheless, the main campus faculty tended to regard the school's curriculum, faculty, and students as beneath the standards of Brooklyn College, and rifts developed internally between Russell and his faculty.⁵⁸

These changes on New York campuses were part of a national trend, as many colleges and universities began to increase black enrollment and implement other reforms in the face of concerted black student protest. Having long ignored or postponed social change, universities suddenly had to act fast in the face of student revolt. Yet many commentators then and since have blamed student activists for "coercing" change or ushering in black studies programs of questionable quality, even though of course it was administrators who established the programs. But others saw inevitability to the confrontations. In May 1969 George Paster, the

dean of students at City College, resigned in protest over what he viewed as the impermeability to change of academic institutions. "People who want to change such institutions," he said, "have to grab them by the scruff of the neck and yell: 'please listen to me' if they are ever to be heard. I honestly don't know anyway you can break through the rigidity of the institution other than the way the blacks and Puerto Ricans have done it." He felt that students used force "to be heard[,] not really to destroy." Moreover, in a point echoed by administrators at other campuses, Paster said that "once they had been heard, we sat down to some of the best and most productive discussions ever in the college—they have taught us so much."⁵⁹

Still, open admissions always retained critics who argued that high admissions standards were more important than broad access to public higher education. "Only at CUNY," a SEEK professor wryly observed, "were those standards viewed as fixed, immutable and exempt from social and political realities."⁶⁰ Albert H. Bowker, the former chancellor of the City University of New York, thought racial resentment drove the attacks on open admissions. "There's been a lot of white flight from City College," he observed. "And most of the people who write about this are City College graduates who are mad."⁶¹ In a fateful conjuncture, open admissions coincided with the New York City budget crisis of the 1970s, and the ensuing drop in funding seemed to make the discourse of failure shrouding open admissions a self-fulfilling prophecy. The severe budget cuts climaxed in the "retrenchment of 1976" when the state of New York took over the City University of New York, laid off many faculty, and imposed tuition for the first time.⁶² The caseload of SEEK counselor Fran Geteles doubled from fifty to one hundred students. "Class sizes also grew sharply," she said, "which made it much harder to help students than before. Remedial classes had been no more than twenty; now some had forty students."⁶³

A *New York Times* review of a 1984 play called *Open Admissions* reflected the skeptical view of open admissions, saying that it "shuffles its poor students through four years of overcrowded and under-taught classes—then pushes them out the door with a worthless diploma."⁶⁴ Still, those "worthless" diplomas brought thousands of black and Puerto Rican students to the middle class. But the attacks took their toll. By 1990, some of the creators and proponents of open admissions were lamenting that the college had made such a radical change with too little resources and planning. Allen Ballard thought CUNY should have

implemented "a well articulated, gradually phased in, well funded operation aimed at a savable number of Black and Puerto Rican students in the high schools." Professor Leslie Berger felt similarly: "It was almost criminal to let them come in and let them fail because of the lack of service. We knew what we needed. It was no mystery."⁶⁵ In 1998, Republican Mayor Rudolph Giuliani declared that "open enrollment is a failure" and the CUNY Board of Trustees replaced it with standardized tests for admissions and eliminated all remedial courses from the senior colleges. As a City College student wrote, "the avenue for education for many NY high school students has been closed."⁶⁶

This discourse of failure obscures the fact that a generation of lawyers, civil servants, teachers, artists, and social workers in New York City got their start through open admissions, notwithstanding its severe underfunding and other flaws. CUNY colleges today are both more competitive and more expensive, reflecting and reinforcing the widening socioeconomic divisions in the United States. Black and Puerto Rican college students in the late 1960s rejected market-driven approaches to higher education. They insisted upon the right of working-class African Americans and Puerto Ricans to receive the benefits of public higher education in New York City. Their tax dollars, after all, were paying for it. As Barbara Christian put it in 1969, a "much over-looked factor is that City College is supported by taxes. And Black and Puerto Rican people pay taxes just like everybody else. Yet they are not in any way represented in the ethnic make-up of the College."⁶⁷ Inspiring this generation was the conviction that seniors at poorly funded and poorly performing public high schools should not be punished for society's failure to provide high-quality secondary education for all but rather should be rewarded for their determination and desire to gain a college education. These student activists understood that college was critical to class mobility, especially since workers of color in New York City had been the first and hardest hit by deindustrialization and automation.⁶⁸ It's important to appreciate that the struggle for affirmative action, open admissions, and black and third-world studies was centered at public universities as much as, if not more than, at private ones. This is a story not of elites but of the children of migrants and immigrants. Like their counterparts in the South, they were tired of waiting for someone to enforce Supreme Court rulings; they understood that to achieve more far-reaching social change, they had to put their bodies on the line—and so they did.

more precise figures, see Gary Eidsvold, Anthony Mustalish, and Lloyd F. Novick, "The New York City Department of Health: Lesson in Lead Poisoning Control Program," *American Journal of Public Health* 64, no. 10 (October 1974): 959. The last document was replicated as a pamphlet by the New York City Department of Health, Vertical File, New York City, Poisoning, Lead (1970s Folder), Municipal Archives of the City of New York.

41. Juan Gonzalez, quoted in *El Pueblo Se Levanta: The People Are Rising*, videorecording (New York: Third World Newsreel, 1970); also quoted in "The Young Lords," recording by Elizabeth Perez-Luna, Pacifica Radio Archives, 1977.

42. For a discussion of the Young Lords' "Lincoln Offensive," see Johanna Fernandez, "The Young Lords and the Postwar City: Notes on the Geographical and Structural Reconfigurations of Contemporary Urban Life," in Kenneth Kusner and Joe W. Trotter, eds., *African American Urban History Since World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 60-82.

43. "Bronx Conflict Focused on Community Control," *Hospital Tribune* 3, no. 9 (n.d.): 1, 20, D. Samuel Gotteson Library, Yeshiva University, Albert Einstein College of Medicine Archives, Lincoln Hospital Papers and Vertical File, 1960-1975; Fitzhugh Mullan, *White Coat, Clenched Fist: The Political Education of an American Physician* (New York: Macmillan, 1976); Cleo Silvers and Danny Argote, "Think Lincoln," *Palante*, July 3, 1970, 2, 16; Ellen Frankfurt, "The Community's Role in Healing a Hospital," *Village Voice*, November 26, 1970, 12, 14; "Lords Liberate Hospital," *Old Mole*, August 7, 1970, 5; Alfonso A. Narvaez, "Young Lords Seize Lincoln Hospital Building," *New York Times*, July 15 1970, 34.

44. On the popularity of the organization see Juan Gonzalez, interview by Columbia University Oral History Program, New York, 1988, 61. This is the most complete publicly accessible oral history of any member of the organization to date.

8. "Brooklyn College Belongs to Us": Black Students and the Transformation of Public Higher Education in New York City

Martha Biondi

1. "CUNY contains the largest number of black and Latino scholars ever to attend a single university in the history of the United States. The importance of CUNY as a source of opportunity for non-white students and their communities is highlighted by the fact that CUNY traditionally awards the largest number of master's degrees to black and Latino students of any institution in America. Last year CUNY conferred 1,011 master's degrees to black and Latino students while the State University of New York awarded only 233." Ronald B. McGuire, "The Struggle at CUNY: Open Admissions and Civil Rights," <http://leftspot.com/blog/?q=book/export.html> (accessed November 24, 2010).

2. Much has been written about open admissions; see, for example, David E. Lavin, Richard D. Alba, and Richard A. Silberman, *Right versus Privilege: The Open Admissions Experiment at the City University of New York* (New York: Free

Press, 1981). But scholars of the civil rights and Black Power movements have neglected or ignored it. See for example, Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), and, more recently, Pamiel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006).

3. Conrad M. Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions: The Impact of the Black and Puerto Rican Students' Community (of City College)" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1990), 193.

4. Bart Meyers, "Radical Struggle for Open Admissions at CUNY," *Kingsman*, February 27, 1976. In 1968, 192 black students entered as part of a new Educational Opportunity Program. Others came through SEEK, which by early 1969 made up of 470 students. Another new 1968 initiative was the One Hundred Scholars program, where the top one hundred graduates of each high school were automatically accepted to college. Forty-five of these students chose Brooklyn College. Still, according to one student who entered that year, black enrollment in the liberal arts college was only 1 percent. *New York Times*, May 21, 1968; Duncan Pardue to Franklin Williams, February 5, 1969, Institute of the Black World Papers, box: Survey of Black Studies Programs, folder: Brooklyn College, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library; Orlando Pile, telephone interview by author, June 30, 2005.

5. United States Congress, Senate Committee on Government Operations, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders*, 91st Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), 5193.

6. Students at City College advocated admitting black and Puerto Rican students in proportion to their presence in local high schools. They also called for access for poor whites as well and said they should constitute 20 percent of the freshmen class, reflecting their presence in the local high school population. Students at Brooklyn College called for the admission of all black and Puerto Rican applicants, regardless of their scholastic record.

7. Duncan Pardue to Franklin Williams, February 5, 1969.

8. Askia Davis, interview by author, July 19, 2005, New York City.

9. Pile interview; Davis interview. The president said he "deplored racism but procedures of academic freedom must be maintained." Only the Board of Higher Education, he said, could take action on specific evidence of racism. Bart Meyers, "Radical Struggle for Open Admissions at CUNY," *Kingsman*, February 27, 1976.

10. At City College, SEEK professor Fran Geteles said that the students there "were very sensitive to the issues of under-preparedness and were not asking for indiscriminate entrance." Conrad Dyer found that many former student activists reiterated this point in interviews. See Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions," 103.

11. *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders*, 5197-99.

12. Pile interview.

13. *Kingsman*, April 23, 1969.

14. Meyers, "Radical Struggle."
15. Davis interview.
16. *Ibid.*; *New York Times*, May 1, 1969.
17. *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders*, 5203.
18. *New York Times*, May 14, 1969; *Kingsman* (special edition), May 12, 1969; Davis interview; Pile interview.
19. Davis interview.
20. *New York Post*, May 13, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 2, University Archives and Special Collections, City College of New York (hereafter CCNY).
21. *New York Daily News*, May 14, 1969.
22. *Ibid.*; *Kingsman*, May 16, 1969; Davis interview. Ironically, Dr. Matthews also went to jail in 1969—for refusing to pay federal income tax. An outspoken advocate of self-help and black capitalism, Matthews, the first black neurosurgeon in the United States, said he gave his taxes to his organization, NEGRO, rather than to pay for welfare programs. President Nixon commuted the six-month sentence after sixty-nine days. *New York Times*, April 2, 1973.
23. *Kingsman*, February 27, 1970, and March 6, 1970; Judge Rinaldi said the indictments would be dismissed after six months "if they behaved." Things didn't turn out as well for the prosecutor or the judge. In 1983 Eugene Gold, who was Brooklyn district attorney from 1968 to 1981, admitted to "unlawful sexual fondling" of a ten-year-old girl—the daughter of an Alabama prosecutor—in a Nashville hotel room during a convention of district attorneys. And Judge Dominic Rinaldi was suspended from the bench after being indicted for perjury in 1973, although a jury later acquitted him. See "Gold Gets Probation in Fondling of Child; Agrees to Treatment," *New York Times*, October 21, 1983, and "Dominic Rinaldi Dies: A Retired Justice," *New York Times*, November 27, 1983.
24. "STRIKE!" editorial, *Kingsman*, May 12, 1969.
25. *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders*, 5191.
26. Sekou Sundiata (formerly Robert Feaster), interview transcript, n.d., Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 1, CCNY.
27. "Chronology of a Crisis," n.d., Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 1, CCNY; Sundiata interview.
28. These statistics describe 1967. Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions," 64. This was the first official ethnic census conducted at CUNY schools.
29. Barbara Christian, "City College Saga Part 2: Dual Admissions," *Inside and Outside the Plaza*, n.d., reprinted from *Harlem News*, June 1969, Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 2, CCNY.
30. The Black and Puerto Rican Student Community to the faculty and students of City College, press release, April 26, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 4, CCNY. Conrad's spouse, the writer Adrienne Rich, also taught at CCNY and was a supporter of the student activists. Frances Geteles, telephone interview by author, August 29, 2007.

31. Barbara Christian, "City College Saga Part 2: Dual Admissions," *Inside and Outside the Plaza*, n.d., reprinted from *Harlem News*, June 1969, Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 2, CCNY.
32. Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions," 98; Toni Cade, "Realizing the Dream of the Black University," *Observation Post*, February 14, 1969, Martha Weisman Papers, Open Admissions folder, CCNY. In 1970 Toni Cade became Toni Cade Bambara.
33. See, for example, Steve Estes, *I Am a Man! Race, Manhood and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
34. Miss Cade to "Dear Bloods," n.d., Five Demands Conflict Collection, Public Relations folder, CCNY.
35. Toni Cade, "Realizing the Dream of the Black University," *Observation Post*, February 14, 1969, Martha Weisman Papers, Open Admissions folder, CCNY.
36. Barbara Christian, "City College Saga: Lesson in Democracy," *Inside and Outside the Plaza*, August–September 1969, Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 2, CCNY.
37. Alecia Edwards-Sibley, "The Five Demands," *Paper*, April 2002, Martha Weisman Papers, Strike of 1969 folder, CCNY.
38. Black and Puerto Rican Student Community, "Queries and Answers on Demands #1 and #4," May 28, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 7, CCNY.
39. There was some overlap—Betty Rawls and Barbara Christian were in both groups. Geteles interview.
40. See Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).
41. Carlos Russell, interview by author, June 11, 2005, New York City.
42. Bart Meyers, "Radical Struggle for Open Admissions at CUNY"; "Talk of the Town," *New Yorker*, May 3, 1969, in Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 1, CCNY; Davis interview.
43. WCBS Transcript, "Campus Disruption—II," April 23, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, Public Relations folder, CCNY.
44. *New York Post*, April 30, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 1, CCNY.
45. *New York Times*, May 1, 1969.
46. Transcript of film (unfinished), Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 2, CCNY.
47. Bart Meyers, "Radical Struggle for Open Admissions at CUNY," *Kingsman*, February 27, 1976.
48. *New York Post*, May 10, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 1, CCNY.
49. Editorial, *Daily News*, May 10, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 1, CCNY; *New York Post*, June 13, 1969, Five Demands Conflict Collection, box 1, CCNY.

50. *New York Times*, May 18, 1969.
51. *New York Times*, May 5, 6, and 25, 1969; Davis interview.
52. Allen B. Ballard, *The Education of Black Folk: The Afro-American Struggle for Knowledge in White America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 127, 141.
53. Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions," 176.
54. "Urban and Ethnic Studies Dept. Created," *Campus*, September 2, 1969, Martha Weisman Papers, CCNY.
55. "A Negro Professor at C.C.N.Y. Charges Slander," *New York Times*, September 20, 1969.
56. Dr. Pile graduated in 1972, attended medical school at Rutgers University, and did his internship and residency at MLK/Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles. Askia Davis is an administrator for the New York Public School system. He has served as special assistant to three chancellors.
57. Davis interview; Pile interview.
58. Russell interview; Memorandum, n.d., and "Report of the Committee to Evaluate the School for Contemporary Studies at Brooklyn College," March 1976, Information Files, #91-021; folder: BC—Schools—School for Contemporary Studies, Brooklyn College Special Collections and University Archive.
59. "Dean Quitting CCNY Post Tells Why," *New York Post*, May 28, 1969.
60. Ed Quinn and Leonard Kriegel, "How the Dream Was Deferred," *Nation*, April 7, 1984, 412-14.
61. Albert H. Bowker, oral history by Harriet Niathon, September 6, 1991, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
62. Martha Weisman, "Legacy of Student Activism at the City College," April 21, 1989, Legacy of Struggle Collection, CCNY.
63. Geteles interview.
64. Frank Rich, quoted in Quinn and Kriegel, "How the Dream Was Deferred," 412.
65. Dyer, "Protest and the Politics of Open Admissions," 184.
66. *Closing the Door: The Fight for a College Education*, a film by Ellie Bernstein, c. 1999, CCNY; Kelechi Onwuchekwa, "The Truth behind Open Admissions," *The Paper*, April 2002, Martha Weisman Papers, CCNY.
67. Barbara Christian, "City College Saga Part 2: Dual Admissions," *Inside and Outside the Plaza*, reprinted from *Hartem News*, June 1969, Legacy of Struggle Collection, box 2, CCNY.
68. See Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- 9. Racial Events, Diplomacy, and Dinkins's Image**
Wilbur C. Rich
1. See M. A. Farber, "Black-Korean Who-Pushed-Whom Festers," *New York Times*, May 7, 1990, B1.
2. See Claire Jean Kim, *Bitter Fruit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
3. Howard Kurtz, "Bonfire of Inanities: How News Fuel Racial Tension," *Washington Post*, May 10, 1990, B1.
4. See Don Terry, "Diplomacy Falls to End Store Boycott in Flatbush," *New York Times*, July 16, 1990, B1
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