FOWLER, TAMARA SHAREE, Ph.D. A Change is Gonna Come: A Critical Study of the Impact of a Community Organizing Group on Power Relations and Public Life. (2010)
Directed by Dr. Leila E. Villaverde, 336 pp.

This research study examines the impact of the congregation-based community organizing group, Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment (CHANGE), on power relations and public life in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Utilizing an action research approach and multiple modes of data collection, I compare and contrast the perspectives of public officials, business leaders, and CHANGE members regarding CHANGE's work in the community. The findings suggest that CHANGE is credited for bringing diverse groups together and increasing participation in public life. While the organization has made some significant inroads in shifting power relations and securing a role in governance, it will need to continue to diversify its constituency to ensure an enduring and effective presence in the community.

Recognizing the limitations of a congregation-based approach to civic engagement including the potential marginalization of different groups, this study takes a philosophical turn in its concluding chapter. The need to cultivate democratic citizenship early in people's lives and the role that educators can play in that work is discussed. The importance of creating public spaces, particularly in classrooms, where diverse individuals and groups can engage in meaningful civic discourse and action also is addressed. I argue that integrating community organizing skills can assist in this effort. I assert that educators who engender an organizing consciousness in the classroom can help equip students with skills vital for shaping democratic citizenship.

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME: A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT

OF A COMMUNITY ORGANIZING GROUP ON

POWER RELATIONS AND PUBLIC LIFE

by

Tamara Sharee Fowler

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Greensboro
2010

Approved by

_____
Committee Chair

To my mentors and the leaders in CHANGE who have taught me some of the most important lessons in my life; my family and friends who have given me tremendous support and guidance over the years; and my sacred partner and best friend, John, who has shown his love by protecting my solitude throughout this process and providing perfectly timed comic relief.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of

The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair _____

Committee Members _____

_____

_____

_____

_____
Date of Acceptance by Committee

_____
Date of Final Oral Examination

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

Stories are powerful because they are readings of daily life and human

interactions. Perhaps conduits to the soul or simply one's way of making meaning in a

chaotic world, stories give us insight into how human beings come to know and be

known. This study is a story of sorts – a chronicle of a particular time, a particular place,

and a particular group of people who share a mission of bettering their community. The

differences arise around what community actually means and what strategies are used to

achieve their objectives. This is a story about a town trying to reinvent itself in the face of

globalization and economic uncertainty. This is a story of the ghosts that persist in

southern communities, and it's a story about an unexpected journey that has challenged

me to question the sources of my deepest values and how I interpret them into daily life.

At its core, this study is a meditation, a wrestling match, a lament, and a vision about a

single question, "Am I my Other's keeper?" and the implications of answering this

question.

This study grows out of my experiences helping to build a community organizing

group, Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment, or CHANGE, through

my roles as a founding member, volunteer leader, and professional organizer. It has also

developed in response to my academic voyage and my inexhaustible struggle with a faith

journey. There has been a confluence between these three paths that has significantly

shaped my perspectives of fellow human beings and my internal life. These corridors

have afforded meaning and a language for the work that I feel called to do in the world.

Central to my inquiry is a reflexive methodology; that is, a willingness to continuously interrogate my own positionality and the ways in which my life experiences and social location influence my praxis throughout the research process. Such reflection begins in the incubation stage of a research project. Hesse-Biber and Piatelli (2007) suggest, "Through self-critical action, reflexivity can help researchers explore how their theoretical positions and biographies shape what they chose to be studied and the approach to studying it" (p. 496). Thus, in order to fully understand the impetus for my research it is important to develop a more detailed picture of its underpinnings.

As a young person newly minted with my Bachelor's degree, I had believed that the non-profit human services sector held promise for achieving change in our communities. I was an activist at heart and my classmates and family often joked that one day they would see me chained to the White House fence protesting some injustice. In college I had become impassioned about issues affecting women and girls and wanted to join the women's movement in some capacity. Having determined early on in my life that I wanted to marry my professional work and my activism, I looked for a place where I could live out my passions. Thus, I joined the staff of a domestic violence and rape crisis program in Winston-Salem, North Carolina where I would serve for nearly ten years as a victim advocate, community educator and coordinator for a multi-disciplinary task force focused on what I hoped would be systems' change.

Early on I discovered, much to my dismay, that there was no movement happening within the walls of the agency. There was wonderful work being done by deeply committed people, but it felt as though we were always responding. Forever in

crisis mode, it seemed there was never a moment to breathe or critically reflect on our work. Being burned out and exhausted I not only questioned how effective we were being, I worried about the unintentional harm we may be inflicting on the very people whom we were serving. In the midst of this environment, I turned back to academia hoping to find a space to wrestle with what I was experiencing and to find new ways of approaching the work.

Concurrently, a shift in my faith journey began occurring which eventually would lead me to the community organizing world. I had grown up in an aging Southern Baptist church where people cared for one another with gifts of food in the event of a birth, sickness, or death, but the care did not necessarily extend beyond the sanctuary into the community at large. We collected an offering for the Lottie Moon fund every Christmas and we heard about missionaries. However, as a congregation we were not actively engaged in the community. We were encouraged to have a personal relationship with Jesus, a vertical connection with little to no emphasis on nurturing the horizontal relationship with our brothers and sisters beyond bringing them to the Lord. My primary concern was supposed to be about my salvation and my afterlife. The hidden curriculum of the church indicated that I should not question anything because it signaled a weakness in my faith. Given that I was a precocious child, I once asked my Sunday School teacher why I should believe in Christ and the crucifixion if there weren't any guarantees. She promptly responded that if we were wrong about salvation we wouldn't lose anything, but if the Bible was true and we didn't believe we would live in eternal damnation.

Ultimately, we didn't have anything to lose by believing – a kind of "just in case" theology. I didn't buy it.

When I went to college I did what many young people do – I swore off the church and organized religion. In the first few years of working as a domestic violence victim advocate, I began hearing stories about the response of faith communities to abuse victims. My deep resentment toward the church resurfaced with accounts of revictimization by pastors and congregations. Given my disillusionment with the church already, these stories sent me over the edge. I became convinced that working with faith communities to address violence against women and children was a primary place to put my energy. I began investigating how to reach pastors and other religious leaders and discovered a group called the Interfaith Partnership for Advocacy and Reconciliation (IPAR). IPAR was comprised of various religious leaders who had come together as a result of a merger between two interfaith groups, Visions of Hope and Religious Leaders for Reconciliation. All of these groups shared similar missions of building relationships and opportunities for collaboration among various religious traditions in Winston-Salem.

Just green enough behind the ears and with a relentless and righteous anger, I began attending the IPAR meetings. In retrospect it is clear that I entered with assumptions and an agenda to change these ministers' behaviors and agitate them to step up to the plate. Fortunately, I would eventually secure the involvement of some of these leaders in developing and delivering domestic violence response training for faith communities. However, possibly the more important part of the story is the unexpected agitation and transformation that I experienced.

You see, this group of black and white ministers and lay leaders who were part of IPAR had an interpretation of their holy texts that stunned me. They were committed to the work of bettering the community through prayer *and* action. They talked about justice. As I sat in the meetings, I realized that in all of my years attending my Southern Baptist church I had never heard the word justice used or the prophetic tradition discussed. I became intrigued and moved. The world began to shift for me as I established relationships with a variety of people whose commitments to social justice and political activism were informed by their faith practices. Consequently, my exhilaration led me to join the Strategy Team of IPAR.

As with many service related organizations, I started to see how easy it was to become focused on reactionary efforts to address the multiple needs in our community. A number of leaders involved with IPAR, including me, became increasingly frustrated that the group had become just "talk" and that we needed to focus our efforts on fixing root problems in Winston-Salem rather than simply responding with charitable acts. In a 2000 IPAR meeting, the Director of our local Department of Social Services referenced some work she had done with a community organizing group in Texas (an Industrial Areas Foundation affiliate) and suggested that we should consider building a similar organization locally. I was captivated with her description of their work and began to investigate different kinds of community organizing efforts across the country. As I began to research different community organizing networks across the United States, I discovered an IAF affiliated organization in Charlotte, North Carolina called Helping Empower Local People (HELP). I called HELP to learn more and spoke with the Lead

Organizer, Chris Baumann, who would later become the first CHANGE organizer in Winston-Salem.

As I said at the beginning of this preface, my study is rooted in the power of stories and thus, I'll conclude with an account of the first experience I had at an IAF assembly. I believe it aptly conveys my initial attraction to community organizing as a way to bridge differences and bring about justice. It also creates a backdrop for the purpose of this study, which is to engage in a more critical investigation of organizing efforts in Winston-Salem and the effectiveness of CHANGE in creating a beloved, just community.

> *In the spring of 2000, a small group of black and white pastors and lay leaders traveled to Charlotte, North Carolina for the Southeast Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) Delegates Assembly. IPAR was in discussions about whether we wanted to extend an invitation to the Industrial Areas Foundation to come to Winston-Salem and teach us how to organize. The small group traveling to Charlotte was charged with reporting back to IPAR about the event and offer recommendations about next steps.*
>
> *We met at a shopping center that April afternoon and piled onto a church van. I sat next to a white man who was a religious scholar and community leader. In time he would become a dear friend and mentor to me and would be instrumental in helping me sort out my thoughts about church and my faith journey. We talked about our respective lives, why we felt called to build community and do the work of justice and our experiences living in the South. I'm not sure any of us knew what to expect when we entered Ovens Auditorium that day. We had heard IAF organizers share invigorating stories about their efforts and after listening to their feisty tales I certainly was ready to take on the powers that be. Nonetheless, there was no way to conceive of what we would see when we walked into the assembly that afternoon.*
>
> *I remember hearing what sounded like masses of voices as we entered the gallery and stopping in mid-step upon seeing hundreds and hundreds of black, white and brown people excitedly talking to each other. There were signs denoting where each organization was sitting, and as I looked around I saw people in t-shirts and*

hats of various shades celebrating their affiliation with groups like Tying Nashville Together (TNT).

We found the guest section and took our seats. Once the assembly began, each of the organizations was introduced. The members would stand up and "hoop and holler" with pride. I could feel my heart pumping wildly in my chest. This was glorious! As the speakers came one by one and shared personal stories and accounts of work in their local communities, I became aware of potent emotions welling up deep in my gut. I looked at my friend and realized by the expression on his face that he, too, was feeling this sensation that something transformative was happening in front of us and in our very beings. Tears were spilling down both of our faces. Referencing our respective Baptist heritage, later we humorously would describe the occurrence at the assembly as "having been washed in the blood of the lamb". In other words, it had been a conversion experience.

Perhaps what was so powerful for me that day was the recognition that while I was still grappling with the intricacies of faith, I had had a deeply spiritual experience sitting with hundreds of diverse people who shared a commitment to justice and equality. These people clearly believed in Dr. King's sentiment that we were caught up in an inescapable network of mutuality and that we were bound to one another. On the way home, we stopped at Wendy's to have dinner, and I sat down with an African-American pastor who was a bastion in the black community. I asked the pastor what he thought about the assembly and in his unmistakable cadence and deep rich voice he proclaimed, "Well, Ms. Fowler, I do believe that's the closest to the kingdom of God I have ever seen."

All I could say was Amen and Amen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It's been a long, a long time coming
But I know a change is gonna come, oh yes it will
(Cooke, 1963, side B)

Overview

Relationships + Power + Reflective Action = Social Change. This is the nitty-gritty of community organizing. Numerous studies have explored the strategies, tactics and successes of community organizing groups, particularly those affiliated with national-level networks such as the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), Gamaliel Foundation, Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART), Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO), and Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). At the heart of many of these models is the central idea of organizing people to assert more power in what historically has been referred to as the public sphere. While several of these organizations have secured significant victories in areas such as living wage ordinances, affordable housing development, and equity in public education, a larger question looms about how such efforts shape and transform the dominant political and cultural landscapes in their respective communities. Gary Delgado, founder of the Center for Third World Organizing and the Applied Research Center, has challenged the stated intent of organizing people for power by raising

questions about the cultural implications of such work; that is, who benefits from that power and to what end (1998). In a 1998 *Shelterforce* article, he asked,

> As community organizers what are we really trying to do? Are we trying to change the size of the negotiating table, add a chair or two, or saw it up and see that everyone gets a fair piece? Or, are we saying, "Wait a minute, the table is in a room, the room is in a house, and the house occupies a particular space in relation to the city, country, planet, and universe?" (p. 18)

Likewise, Harry Boyte, Co-Director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship, suggests that community organizers are often silent about the cultural ramifications of their work (Szakos & Szakos, 2007). He observes that many progressive organizers take it for granted that their efforts are focused on challenging dominant cultural influences, but he queries, ". . . how many would imagine these cultural forces could be transformed?" (Szakos & Szakos, 2007, p. xix). Boyte asserts that when community organizers (and their respective organizations) intentionally name the cultural forces they are contesting, significant shifts in the dominant social structures can take place and move us toward broader democratic change (Szakos & Szakos, 2007, p. xix).

With Delgado and Boyte's observations in mind, I have chosen to investigate how one community organizing group, Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment (CHANGE)[1], located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, has impacted power relations and public life in that community. This study is focused on exploring the following questions: 1) To what extent do CHANGE leaders characterize their work primarily as the political and cultural transformation of Winston-Salem and Forsyth

---

[1] CHANGE was founded in 2002 and is an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation.

County versus issue-based actions?; 2) How do elected and appointed public officials and corporate leaders define and view the work of CHANGE?; and 3) What are the indicators which suggest that, as a result of the organization's efforts, changes in governance[2], participation in public life, individual agency, and the development of meaningful relationships across diverse groups have occurred? For the purposes of this study, my use of the term political and cultural transformation is intended to broadly capture evidence of the dismantling of the master's house *and* the master's tools; that is to say, transformation means addressing power imbalances and inequities through a demonstration of transparent and shared decision-making, access to resources, public policies that are responsive to all segments of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, and a general sense that everyone is considered a valuable, necessary member of the community.

This study grows out of my experiences as a founding member, volunteer leader, and professional organizer with CHANGE. The specific concentration on evaluating changes in governance and power relations developed out of discussions with Mr. Gerald Taylor (Southeast Director of the Industrial Areas Foundation), CHANGE leaders, and North Carolina United Power (NCUP)[3] staff regarding the ways in which our respective

---

[2] The term, governance, has emerged from a contemporary global discourse about democracy and civic agency and suggests a broader meaning than government (Boyte, 2005). Marschall (1999) defines governance as the methods used by individuals and institutions to "manage their common affairs, control resources, and exercise power to achieve public purposes" (p. 168).

[3] North Carolina United Power is comprised of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) affiliates in North Carolina: Charlotte HELP, Durham CAN, Winston-Salem CHANGE, Lexington Citizens for CHANGE, and the North Carolina Latino Coalition. Organizers and leaders from these groups meet together regularly in order to share information about the work happening in their local communities and to create shared campaigns at the statewide level.

organizations define and approach our work. Moreover, I felt the timeliness of this project was ideal. CHANGE is approaching its 10 year anniversary and has recently hired a new Lead Organizer. The organization has also been in the midst of three major campaigns, one of which raised the ire of public officials because of its challenge to the electoral process of the local school board (this campaign is discussed further in Chapter 5). These circumstances have provided fertile ground for inquiry into the questions that form the foundation of this study.

This research project also is a response to my own questioning about the meaning of cultural transformation, the ways in which we effect such change and the frequently evoked language of social justice. Out of my frustration of a seemingly never-ending band-aid approach to social problems in the human services arena, I entered into the world of community organizing (first as a volunteer leader and then as a professional organizer), because I believed I had found an antidote to the short-term solutions offered by service agencies. However, more recently I have found myself asking whether we are indeed making long-term systemic level changes in our communities through an organizing approach. For example, we may be able to win a more equitable school bond but does that translate into a more equitable school system? In short, are we truly changing power relations and the cultural terrain of our communities

I am standing at a crossroads as a former professional advocate, a community organizer, and an academic – all positions which have been chosen as avenues to live out my call to contribute to creating a more just society. I have had a foot in all of these worlds for many years now, and my experiences in each realm have informed my work in

the others. I am in the process of discernment about how all of the pieces fit together for me and where my efforts will be most valuable in terms of contributing to sustainable justice-oriented change. It was my hope that this study, and the reflective process it would entail, might provide me with some insight into the next period of my work. Fortunately, my hopes were realized in unexpected ways and as a result of this study, my praxis and the trajectory of my professional life have been significantly influenced.

Significance of Study and Intended Audience

The significance of this study is three-fold. First, much of the literature written about broad-based community organizing (and the IAF expressly) has been framed through the lenses of modern political and social science theories without fully problematizing the ideas of public life and democratic governance. In contrast, this study will employ critical, postmodern, poststructural, cultural, and feminist theoretical lenses to analyze and interpret the data, as well as frame discussions of power and identity issues. Secondly, many of the case studies on nationally affiliated community organizing groups have focused on efforts in urban areas such as Chicago, Baltimore, and New York. My study will contribute to the literature about IAF organizing in the southern United States.[4]

Third, this project contributes to a distinct area of inquiry regarding the efficacy of such organizations in making sustainable cultural changes and reconfiguring power

---

[4]The only systematic study of a southern IAF organization I have found is a dissertation about Tying Nashville Together written by Michael Byrd (1997). His work is focused on the religious discourse employed in IAF organizing.

relations in communities.[5] It builds upon Delgado and Boyte's questions by juxtaposing how individuals involved in organizing define their mission and view their efforts in relationship to how the usual targets of actions, public officials and business leaders, perceive them. Finally, this study illuminates the possibilities for a more critical and effective approach to organizing by creating a space for dialogue about the larger implications of the work.

Having spent most of my adult life in both academia and broader community-based work, I have written this dissertation for both audiences. I am writing principally to my colleagues who espouse critical pedagogy and are committed to disrupting hegemonic practices reproduced through various structural and systemic apparatuses. So often, as critical educators we shake our students up by lifting the veil on painful, often overwhelming subjects and then provide no concrete methods for addressing these issues. I contend that the discipline enacted by community organizing groups (in terms of leadership development, relational power, and participatory action) can inform the manner in which we teach students about how to critically and creatively think and act their way toward a more just and peaceful world. By both modeling community organizing practices (such as relational meetings and intentional community building), exposing students to community organizing, and by nurturing what I would call an organizing consciousness in our students, I assert that we can begin to create the kind of

---

[5] See Warren (2001), Wood (2002), Shirley (2002), Osterman (2003), Boyte (2004), and Smock (2004) for more critical examinations of the efficacy of organizing networks in the United States.

public space between people where freedom can emerge (Greene, 1988). I have addressed these recommendations more fully in the prologue of this dissertation.

Moreover, I have intentionally crafted the narrative in such a way that is accessible to the general public but assuredly not "dumbed down." I believe that recent political and social history reveals a disturbing trend of infantilizing the American electorate. Politicians, corporations, and media outlets all have contributed to the view that "regular folks" either aren't really interested in the details or are incapable of formulating thoughtful opinions. I reject such condescension and believe that most people are hungry for mature engagement about issues that directly impact their lives. Furthermore, it is essential that these conversations are not limited to adults but also involve young people who both have valuable perspectives to contribute and could benefit from mentoring in civic discourse and political action.

As Harry Boyte (2004) chronicles extensively, the need for critical dialogue about the present face of democratic citizenship is greatly needed. Over the last few decades we have seen an increasing shift to professionalize politics in ways that relegate citizen participation to mere "volunteerism" or emailing scripted letters to representatives. Although we did observe a marked swell in citizen involvement in the 2008 presidential election, we cannot assume it will be sustained or will translate into citizens as co-creators in policy-making and governance. Time will tell. In the meantime, I hope that this scholarship will contribute to the dialogue about these concerns amongst the grassroots and academia.

Methodological Frameworks

My study is informed by and utilizes multiple methods and theories to explore the impact of CHANGE on power relations, governance, and public life in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Reflective of a commitment to interdisciplinary inquiry, my approach to this research project is shaped by the concept of the bricolage. Bricolage is born out of the recognition of the shortcomings of any particular method and the need to use various techniques and theoretical and philosophical frameworks in order to construct a richer picture of the phenomena being studied (Kincheloe, 2001; 2005; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) posit, "The researcher-as-*bricoleur*-theorist works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms" (p. 9). Perhaps most importantly, bricoleurs are unabashedly focused on issues of power, oppression and the need for social change that leads to more just communities. Kincheloe and Berry (2004) explain,

> Emphasizing the numerous common bonds connecting human beings, the physical worlds, and the political domain, bricoleurs emphasize the human responsibility to work toward egalitarianism and justice. Research in this context can never be disinterested or important simply for its own sake. There are too many critically grounded goals toward which it is directed that affect us all in our interconnection. (p. 64)

Furthermore, bricolage is about possibility, particularly in terms of knowledge production and the kinds of methodologies we employ to crack open hegemonic discourses and structures (Kincheloe, 2005).

The primary theoretical lenses that create my bricolage are postmodern, poststructural, critical, feminist, and cultural studies theories (traditions which are all multi-faceted and non-monolithic). I am drawn to these frames because of their emphasis on lived experience and subjectivity, the faces and embodiments of power, the nature of knowledge production, and relationality. Woven throughout these theories is a forthright assertion that knowledge must be connected to social transformation.

Postmodern and Poststructural Theories

The terms postmodern and poststructural are often used interchangeably, because there are similar themes found in each. There are also some distinctive differences which should be noted. For me, poststructural theories provide deconstructive and reconstructive tools that are useful for emancipatory politics and community organizing efforts. Postmodern and poststructural theories converge in their challenge to positivist ideas of truth and reality and their contention that knowledge, consciousness, identities, and systems are socially constructed. Scrutiny of power relations is also central to both theoretical arenas.

More specifically, poststructural thinking places an explicit emphasis on discourses, or intricate and interconnected ways of thinking, acting, and being. Discourses are contextual, always unstable and at times incongruous (Gannon & Davies, 2007). Poststructuralist theories disrupt the naturalizing of structures and metanarratives. In other words, those things that have been taken for granted as real and existing outside of the observer are now open for examination. Unlike postmodern theories which have been criticized for focusing too much on the individual, difference, and the lack of

transformative strategies, poststructuralism maintains that oppressive conditions are not fixed and can be changed. Beyond individual agency, these theories suggest possibilities for collective action and reconfiguration of power relations.

Critical Theories

By and large, critical theories are concerned with the ways in which power and privilege function, the interconnectedness of oppressions, and how social systems are assembled through social institutions, cultural dynamics, and categories (such as race, class, and gender) (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003). Critical theorists are committed to exposing forces that impede individuals and groups from being active agents and autonomous actors. Hegemony and the shaping of consciousness are central areas of investigation by critical theorists.

Formulating an analysis of a group like CHANGE (and I would argue the creation of said group) necessitates an understanding not just of its particular community setting, but of the larger historical and cultural geography in which is situated – in this case a former company town in the southern United States. Educational theorists, Joe Kincheloe and Peter McLaren (2003), offer a reconceptualized critical theory for the 21st century which I believe is helpful in framing my analysis. Their attention to the convoluted ways in which power functions to govern and form consciousness is useful in understanding the extent to which southern ghosts and the benevolent paternalism of the city's patriarchs contribute to people's assessment of contemporary power relations in Winston-Salem. I also consider Kincheloe and Pinar's (1991) description of a Southern epistemology and the ways in which "the present is continually instructed by a living

past" (p. 9) as a lens through which to consider these questions and review the stories and perspectives of respondents in this study.

Cultural Studies

Similar in some respects to critical theories, cultural studies is concerned with the reproduction of history through social structures. Through examination of cultural texts, lived experiences, and the expressed relationships between everyday life and these texts, cultural studies theorists seek to understand meaning making and hegemonic practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003b). Cultural studies provides insight into how social relations unfold and evolve. The Marxist emphasis on how culturally dominant ideologies are expressions of prevailing material relations has contributed to my thinking about the company town ethos and contemporary debates about Winston-Salem's identity based on economic development concerns. In thinking about indicators of cultural transformation, I am drawn to the cultural studies assessment that ruling ideas are still contested and various sites of resistance do arise. I have kept these theoretical perspectives in mind as I have attempted to make meaning of the data.

Feminist Theories

I have looked to feminist theories to both guide me in designing this research study and informing my readings of the data. With regard to a research blueprint, feminist theories emphasize a number of points related to design and interpretation. To begin, research designs that involve shared power, co-theorizing, and the value of the participants' "social knowledge" are encouraged. Feminists also lift up the role that biography and lived experience play in understanding the social world and the myriad of

11

ways that we physically and verbally express our perceptions. As a result, we are urged to be attentive to embodied texts as a part of data collection (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007).

Additionally, feminists assert that critical self-reflection is essential for interrogating the potential individual and cultural biases we bring into the research endeavor, as well as power differentials between researchers and participants (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007). With an understanding that reality is socially constructed, we must be attentive to the various contexts that shape our experiences and thinking. Feminist theories highlight the need to recognize and critically examine the political, systemic, and cultural contexts that participants inhabit which may both produce commonalities and differences amongst individuals' lives.

Furthermore, feminists remind us that our roles and how others see us are constantly in flux; thus, researchers are challenged to refrain from self-identifying as insiders or outsiders prior to stepping into the research site (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007). Instead of holding onto fixed positions, we are encouraged to embrace the fluid nature of our roles and persistently be reflexive. Hesse-Biber and Piatelli (2007) stress,

> Interrogating the self or selves is more than just examining one's social location and its effect on the field, rather, this reflexive process also involves negotiating one's positionality and recognizing the shifting nature of power relations from site to site. (p. 499)

I examine these points further in my discussion of considerations related to my various positionalities in this research project.

Finally, another contribution that feminist theories have provided to my thinking is the need to trouble the dichotomies of public and private. Historically, the notion of the public and private spheres has significantly influenced political discourse and perceptions about the nature of public life in relationship to democracy. Iris Young (1990) questions Enlightenment views of the public/private split and suggests that views of normative rationality and universality of the public have served to exclude many people and groups. Young notes that the construct of the rational citizen actor creates the public as a sphere of homogeneity and false objectivity and unity. Conversely, Young theorizes that the primary meaning of public should include openness, accessibility, and valuing the diversity of human experiences and identities. In Young's estimation, "In such a public, consensus and sharing may not always be the goal, but the recognition and appreciation of differences, in the context of confrontation with power" (p. 110). I would argue that this vision of the public is at the root of contemporary community organizing efforts.

Positionalities and Challenges During Research Process

It is important to discuss the challenges I faced during the research process in terms of my insider-outsider status. Even though at times I struggled with falling into the trap of the insider-outsider dichotomy, I did keep coming back to Michelle Fine's (1994) idea of "working the hyphen"; that is, interrogating the space between which both brings us together and separates us. The more attentive I was to boundary-crossings and my reflexive process, the more I realized that I often found myself feeling in-between. Although I might be sitting with CHANGE colleagues and be viewed as a CHANGE leader (and feel like one), I was still simultaneously occupying a researcher stance. I was

13

listening and noting embodied texts much more critically than I might be if I was solely participating as a CHANGE member.

Not surprisingly, I found that I was constantly negotiating my multiple positionalities. I frequently discovered myself having internal dialogue between all of my selves and trying to discern which voice I was privileging and when. While I was thoughtful about feminist research methodologies that discourage determination of roles prior to entering the research setting, I must admit that my original inclination was to treat this inquiry as participant-observation. Moreover, I had decided to step back from any visible leadership roles in order to provide space for me to be more observant of practices and interactions. While I felt that this could make things more "clean," I also grappled with the artificiality of this. I wrestled with a number of questions, specifically: How would I be interacting with the organization if it was not the subject of my study?; and what impact would my active presence or the withdrawal of my active presence have on the organization's efforts and the study of the organization?

In the midst of my research, this last question particularly became relevant in a conversation with a new Strategy Team member. The team had agreed that I could attend meetings during the period of my research. Although I tried to solely observe and take notes during these meetings, there were times when I was asked for information or when I felt compelled to speak to a given situation. Typically, these situations occurred when there was a question about how certain things like institutional dues or personnel issues had been handled while I was on staff. Following one meeting that I could not attend, I asked the new team member how things had gone. He said it had been a very productive

meeting and that the "old heads weren't there which was good because the new team needed to gel." I asked him to explain what he meant and he said that when former team members (including me) were there, it was easy for the new members to defer to the old guard. Our conversation reiterated to me that I was still clearly seen as a CHANGE leader and that I must be considerate of how this may impact how my work and I were read.

I also recognized the dilemma I potentially would face in writing about my findings and any critiques I would offer. Specifically, Glesne (2006) references the dilemma of insiders having access to *dangerous knowledge*, which may put the insider researcher in a politically precarious position. Furthermore, as an insider I knew I ran the risk of being too close to the data. Coughlan and Brannick (2001) note that an insider-researcher may make assumptions about the data and not probe as deeply. Thus, I tried to be attentive to times that I might fall in the trap of already knowing the answers and not considering alternative perspectives or frames. I constantly reflected on when my vested interest in the organization and strong desire for CHANGE to succeed could potentially be serving as a blindspot in my research. In consideration of these challenges, I tried to be attentive to disrupting my experiences and perspectives through critical reflection, journaling, and dialogue with external advisors.

In some cases not only was I balancing my roles as a CHANGE participant, former staff member, and researcher, I also was weighing my stance as an active citizen of the community. One example of dealing with the tension between my roles was related to an issue that arose with the local County Commission, the Public Health Director, and the Board of Health. In short, some of the County Commissioners had become fretful

about the amount of power and independence that the Board of Health had in setting

health policies for the community (Young, 2009, p. A1). As a result, a faction of the

Commission was lobbying the North Carolina General Assembly to change existing

legislation and allow commissioners to appropriate the powers of the Board of Health.

As I read the article in the paper about the issue, I immediately started considering

who I would call on the County Commission to air my concerns. I also began crafting a

letter to the editor in my head. However, I quickly realized that my role as a political

actor was in tension with my researcher self. This quandary was magnified because

CHANGE had had direct involvement with the passage of one of the recent rules passed

by the Board of Health. The Board had affirmed a rule tightening standards for

monitoring childhood lead poisoning (Craver, 2008, p. B1). This action certainly had

raised the hackles of some of the Commissioners, particularly those who owned rental

property and would be impacted by the rule. CHANGE had advocated for the enactment

of this rule and proudly took some credit for its success. In fact, one of CHANGE's

Strategy Team Co-Chairs had written a letter to the editor of the *Winston–Salem Journal*

shortly after the passage of the rule stating,

> The Winston-Salem Journal's article, "County Board of Health OKs tougher rule
> on lead poisoning " (Dec. 5), completely neglected to mention the role that the
> community played in bringing the change in the lead-paint standard. Anyone who
> attended the Dec. 3 meeting of the Forsyth County Health Board would have
> recognized the role That CHANGE (Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain
> Empowerment) played in getting this initiative passed. It was CHANGE that
> initiated consideration of the change, co-sponsoring a Summit on Lead Paint in
> September with Dr. Tim Monroe and the health department. CHANGE is
> committed to following the developments of this ruling, educating the public
> about testing and the dangers of lead-paint poisoning, helping identify the funding

16

that is needed for enforcement and helping displaced families so that we ensure the children of our community are safe. (Carpenter, 2008, p. A10)

Given these recent events, some CHANGE members interpreted the Commissioners' attempt to take over the Board of Health's powers as a direct challenge to CHANGE and not just to the Board of Health. As one leader noted in an email, "We found a way to effect change in our community on a serious public health issue – lead – and now they [County Commissioners] want to shut it down" (B. Conn, personal communication, March 8, 2009).

At the point at which the Commissioners were vying for power over the Board of Health, I was in the process of preparing surveys to send out to public officials, including the County Commissioners, and would be calling some of them to schedule interviews about CHANGE. Assuming the CHANGE leader's analysis was even the slightest bit correct, I had to contemplate about how my engagement with the Commissioners as a private citizen could impinge upon the integrity of the study. If I acted on my initial inclinations to respond to their recent deliberations, how might that affect their willingness to talk with me? I decided not to write the letter to the editor or call the Commissioners.

Similar challenges presented themselves along the way, and I quickly became attuned to the intricacies of participatory action research. Each time I confronted issues related to my various roles, I tried to consider the potential effects of my decisions. Sometimes I entered into the land of unintended consequences, which while deeply uncomfortable, served to offer important insights into my own journey and the subject of

study. I have captured a few of these incidences throughout the dissertation in order to lay open the messiness of action research and to reiterate the need for a critically reflective praxis. I trust the reader will be able to glean some lessons learned from my experiences.

Chapter Summaries

I initially intended to discuss the history of Winston-Salem in one chapter in order to situate CHANGE's work in the city. However, after reviewing the literature and working with the data I collected, I decided that weaving the history of Winston-Salem throughout the chapters would lend itself better to crafting a meta-narrative of the interplay between place, historical memory, and the contemporary efforts of CHANGE. Thus, the reader intermittently is provided a snapshot of the various faces of the city as a way to contextualize the meanings of the data.[6]

In like manner, rather than discuss CHANGE's primary campaigns in one chapter I have chosen to weave descriptions of them throughout the text. This will provide ease for the reader in terms of making connections between the data analysis, in which the significance of particular campaigns became evident, and the details of the actions taken. I also have included copies of relevant documents and photographs to thicken the description of the campaigns.

---

[6] For those interested in more detailed renderings of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, you are encouraged to consult the historical texts, *Forsyth: The History of a County on the March* (Fries, Wright & Hendricks, 1976), *Winston-Salem in History, Volumes 1-13* (published by Historic Winston, 1976), *From Congregation Town to Industrial City: Culture and Social Change in a Southern Community* (Shirley, 1994) and *Winston-Salem: A History* (Tursi, 1994). Literature pertaining specifically to the African-American experience in Winston-Salem can be found in *African-Americans in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County: A Pictorial History* (Davis, Rice, & McLaughlin, 1999), *Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1895-1920: Community Development in the Age of Benevolent Paternalism* (Miller, 1981) and *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (Korstad, 2003).

Lastly, I would like to remind the reader that I have taken great care to protect the identities of all individuals who actively participated in this study. Accordingly, when necessary I use pseudonyms to distinguish various respondents in order to avoid any confusion in the narrative. I provide a more detailed explanation of confidentiality procedures in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Research Design and Implementation

This chapter outlines the intentions and cycles of participatory action research and why this approach was useful for my study. I also detail the methodological bricolage of surveys, interviews, focus groups, observation of organizational meetings, and textual analysis of media representation that I utilized to examine CHANGE's impact on the community. Additionally, I describe the preparatory steps for design implementation, data collection and provide a general review of the individuals who contributed to this study.

Moreover, I discuss the process of analyzing the data for thematic patterns. While there were some primary themes which I had in mind when I began the study, I was attentive to new themes and patterns as they emerged. I was also tuned in to the silences in the data in terms of what I anticipated hearing or seeing but did not. Themes related to perceptions of CHANGE both internally and externally are addressed.

Chapter 3: Congregation-Based Community Organizing, the IAF and Origins of CHANGE

The central purpose of this chapter is to describe contemporary manifestations of congregation-based community organizing, namely the Industrial Areas Foundation model. This organizing methodology serves as the primary framework for CHANGE's organizational structure, development, and strategies. Furthermore, I present a brief outline of CHANGE's origins so as to contextualize the organization's current work.

Chapter 4: To Give Piety Some Legs: Perceptions of CHANGE's Mission

One of the primary questions at the heart of this study was related to the extent to which CHANGE leaders characterize their work as the political and cultural transformation of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. In this chapter, I examine participants' descriptions of the organization's mission and compare their perspectives to those of local public officials and business leaders. I discuss the rhetorical indicators of cultural and political change and the degree to which CHANGE's work is perceived to effect those ends.

Chapter 5: Kids not Politics: Public Education as a Contested Site of Power Relations

Perhaps no other site reveals the deep divisions in communities like our public school systems. Certainly this is the case in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. This chapter will offer a brief overview of the central sites of contestation in public education in this community, particularly those related to the development of the school board districts, the Controlled Choice student assignment plan (also known as "neighborhood

schools"), school discipline policies, and equitable distribution of resources amongst
schools.

CHANGE has been at the forefront of addressing these issues, and based on my
research it is clear that the organization is largely identified with its work around public
education. CHANGE's most recent campaign to effect school board election reform has
placed the group squarely in the midst of reinventing the local governmental structure
and shifting power relations between elected officials and the electorate. I will discuss in
detail the history of CHANGE's work in public education, as well as the school board
election reform campaign and the potential consequences of its outcome.

**Chapter 6: Where Have All the Corporate Fathers Gone? Changes in Power
Relations and Governance in a Company Town**

The metamorphosis of Winston-Salem from the land of King Cotton and King
Tobacco to a community struggling to find an identity in a globalized context presents an
interesting environment in which to explore decision-making and governance. This
section will examine themes that arose during my research concerning how decisions
have historically been made in this community and the perceived benefits and challenges
with how things have evolved. One of the areas of focus for this study was to understand
the degree to which CHANGE has had an impact on decision-making in the eyes of
CHANGE leaders and public officials and corporate leaders. I offer an analysis of the
responses to this inquiry in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Good Power: Faith, Politics, and Building Beloved Community

Another important part of my research involved trying to understand the role that faith plays in individual participation in public life and understanding of power. This is of particular interest considering the place that religion has historically held in southern culture. Given that CHANGE is a congregation-based community organizing group, I am especially curious about how CHANGE may impact peoples' views about the relationship between faith and politics. This final chapter explores these issues and discusses the manner in which religion can be a roadblock and a resource for community organizing efforts in Southern communities.

<div align="center">

A Note About "Writing the Self"

</div>

One of the considerations in any research endeavor is the presence of the researcher in the record. As noted by Fine, Weis, Weseen and Wonge (2000), "the problem of just how 'to write the self [and, we would add, our political reflexivities] into the text' (Billing, 1994, p. 326)" is a central question for all researchers and particularly for those of us doing participatory action research (p. 170). Finding a balance between contextualizing my connection to the subject of study and capturing my personal experiences while not "flooding the text with ruminations on the researcher's subjectivivities" is a delicate dance (Billing, 1994, p.170). Since the research design I chose values everyone's involvement, I have honored my voice in this process equally to those with who I have been in dialogue.

At times this study takes on an autoethnographic flavor, because I believe my personal experiences working with CHANGE lend themselves to yet another viewpoint

about the organization's efforts. The revealing of my own narrative allows me to situate and reflect upon my work historically, culturally, politically, and personally. As Gergen and Gergen (2003) argue, such reflexivity deepens the nature of the study. They suggest the reader is impacted by this research turn, noting, "The reader finds the subject/object binary deteriorating and is informed of ways in which confronting the world from moment to moment is also confronting the self" (p. 579). That being said, I have been careful in trying not to privilege my experiences and perspectives over others. I have taken care to be aware of the power and authority I have regarding how I interpret the data and whose voices are recorded, especially in terms of not selectively using certain participants' voices to bolster my own positions (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007). I am hopeful that I have choreographed this dance in such a way that invites the reader into a deeper and richer understanding of the subject before us.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Study Design

While this research study grew out of my involvement with CHANGE,

determining a design for this project was complicated because of that relationship. With

consideration of these complexities, I chose to apply a qualitative research approach and

shape this study principally as an action research project. Although action research

emerges from variety of fields and thus takes on different forms, generally this design

seeks to engage participants as collaborators in the research process and has as its goal

the development of practical knowledge that can be used to transform organizations and

communities at large (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Magquire, 2003; Coghlan &

Brannick, 2001; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). As a qualitative

research approach, action research is powerful because it challenges positivistic notions

of knowledge production and value-free research. Central to action research is the belief

that knowledge is socially constructed and that all research is entrenched in particular set

of values. Therefore, action research asserts its positionality as one committed to

confronting oppressive social and political systems and practices and furthering

democratic engagement and social justice (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maquire,

2003).

One of the reasons I was drawn to action research, and more specifically participatory action research, is because of its emphasis on praxis, critical reflection, and shared power and knowledge-production in the research process (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001). Furthermore, I wanted to employ a methodology that reflected community organizing values and methods. The organizing tradition, in which I was trained and is used by CHANGE, upholds the importance of building relationships, exercising mutual power, and utilizing experiential learning cycles to deepen knowledge production and meaning-making.

As noted by Dr. Sung Sil Lee Sohng (1995), ". . . . the participatory approach to community research offers an epistemology and methodology that addresses people, power, and praxis in the post-industrial, information-based society" (p. 2). Exploring the social interactions between people, power relations between individuals and systems, and the engagement of praxis are fundamental to successful community organizing. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2003), participatory action research has three specific characteristics which distinguish it from traditional research approaches: collective ownership of the research project, an analysis of social problems as defined by the community, and a focus on community action. Participatory action research is rooted in a commitment to address oppressions and disrupt hegemonic patterns, particularly relations of power in the research process. It also seeks to democratize the research process by engaging individuals and communities, who are typically studied, as decision-makers and co-researchers (Cahill, 2007). This methodological approach affirms the

importance of lived experience as the beginning point for inquiry, the continuous

production of knowledge through collaboration and action, and the ways in which praxis

can promote social change (Cahill, 2007).

It is important to note that unlike traditional research methodologies, action

research is not a linear process and requires a great deal of creativity, flexibility, and

critical reflexivity. Herr and Anderson (2005) use the metaphor of "designing the plane

while flying it" to describe the action research approach (p. 69). There is a recognized

action research method, based on the work of Kurt Lewin (1948), which involves

continuous cycles of plan-act-observe-reflect. However, these cycles are broadly defined

and malleable to each individual study (Herr & Anderson, 2005). In short, action research

projects are ever-evolving and unfold as new information is gathered, analyzed and

reflected upon.

As a final point, action research studies frequently mirror the researcher's

interests and intersect with her or his own learning edges, values, and passions (Herr &

Anderson, 2005). This is clearly the case with my study. Accordingly, it is vital that

one's practice be reflexive throughout the implementation of the study design. By

interrogating one's own social location, philosophies, decisions, actions, and biases, the

researcher is able to be attentive to how his or her standpoint impacts the various stages

of the research process (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007). In

addition, reflexivity provides another rich source of data to be examined and possibly

acted on. These perspectives were taken into account while framing my study design, and I believe are reflected in my research methodology that will be described in more detail below.

Data Collection Sites

Qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena within the larger social context, particularly the relationships and meanings created between people, systems and cultures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003a; Janesick, 2003). As such, qualitative research designs often draw on multiple sources of data both to provide a more complete picture of the topic being studied and to increase the validity of the findings (Blee & Taylor, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003a). Janesick (2003) uses crystallization as a metaphor to describe a multifaceted approach to qualitative research design, noting that like crystals, what we see when we examine the subject matter depends on how we are viewing it.

The first question I considered as I began the research process was: What data was already accessible and relevant to my study (Herr & Anderson, 2005)? I had an enormous amount of notes, papers, photos, agenda, minutes, and the like that I had collected over the nine years of my involvement with CHANGE. I also knew that had been significant media coverage of the organization and its work since its inception. With these sources in mind, I began to enlarge the scope of possibilities for data collection.

In order to learn more about CHANGE's impact on the community, it certainly made sense to talk with individuals who had been participating in CHANGE and could impart valuable information about how the organization had affected their personal lives

and perspectives. I would reflect upon my own experiences working with the organization as well, though my insider status and any biases that I might bring into the process would be interrogated thoroughly. Still, I felt these perceptions only would provide a one-dimensional view of CHANGE. Therefore, employing the crystallization metaphor, I gathered data from multiple sources in order to comprehend the different ways the organization is perceived by diverse bodies. I determined that a review of media coverage regarding CHANGE's efforts would supply useful viewpoints. Likewise, in order to unearth the kind of knowledge that would lend insight into the organization's work I concluded it was essential to gain a sense of how community leaders view CHANGE's work and perceived impact of the organization on decision-making processes and peoples' involvement in public life.

I elected to use three sites for primary data collection. The first site included surveys of individuals involved with the three main leadership bodies in CHANGE, the Metro Council, Clergy Caucus, and Strategy Team (these bodies will be described in the data collection section of this chapter) and a focus group comprised of Strategy Team members. The second site involved dissemination of surveys to public officials, namely the Winston-Salem City Council, Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board, and elected officials from the North Carolina General Assembly and United States Congress. The third data collection site entailed semi-structured interviews of local business leaders and public officials. Finally, I reviewed print media from two local newspapers to provide secondary data for this study.

These varied sites are reflective of methods used by social movement researchers, especially when semi-structured interviewing is involved. Blee and Taylor (2002) suggest a blend of data collection techniques is beneficial when doing semi-structured interviews, because interviews are situational exchanges that can be influenced by a variety of factors. For instance, interviewees may obscure or alter information or the lack of rapport between the researcher and interviewee may inhibit the ability to capture accurate data (Blee & Taylor, 2002). While I seemed to establish a connection with each of the interviewees, there is no way to know for sure if they withheld information or said what they thought I wanted to hear. Therefore, employing various approaches to data collection can offset issues that arise with any one method and can assist with capturing as full a picture of the research subject as possible.

Preparation for Data Collection

Design Collaboration and Process

As explained in the introductory chapter, this study originated during a significant organizational transition period. Moreover, the organization was in the midst of four major campaigns, including the passage of a legislative bill to change the school board election procedures and a house meeting process[7] which would supply data to inform the

---

[7] In his study of an IAF organization in South Texas, Dennis Shirley (2002) described house meetings as "small convocations of individuals in homes in which leaders learn to address the most grievous injustices in their communities and translate inchoate sources of anger into concrete issues that can be addressed in the political arena" (p. 6-7). CHANGE trains leaders to facilitate discussions within their respective member institutions about issues that are important to them. While the term house meeting is used to describe these gatherings, they actually take place in many different settings such as church fellowship halls. Participants in the house meetings vote on their top three to four concerns, and this data is tallied. Once submitted to the Metro Council, these issues presented are further discussed, prioritized and voted on

29

organization's actions for the next few years. Due to the participatory nature of this research project, I wanted to affirm that my thoughts about the timeliness of the study were accurate. I had preliminary discussions about my proposal with the Interim Lead Organizer of CHANGE, Gerald Taylor, (who is also the Southeast Director of the IAF), and the Strategy Team Co-Chairs with regard to how the study could impact the organization and other community organizing groups. I received the support of the Co-Chairs and Taylor, and we made plans for me to present my proposal at the December 2008 Strategy Team meeting.

When I was originally conceptualizing this study, I believed my relationship with the organization would provide a central advantage in terms of access to the organization's documents, meetings, and leaders. As I prepared to present the proposal to the team, I discovered that I also felt some anxiety due to this relationship. Even as I sensed that the Strategy Team members would most likely respond positively to my proposal and would have confidence in my work, I also had a seed of doubt. I recognized it was possible that members of the team may have critiques or concerns about my abilities that they had not been expressed when I was on staff. Thus, I tried to craft my presentation so that these perspectives could come to light in the discussion.

Due to the fact that the meeting agenda tended to be dense for these meetings and that it was the last meeting of the year, I agreed to provide a brief 10 minute overview of

---

to determine future campaigns. CHANGE held its first round of house meetings in 2002 with approximately 1,800 people in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. In 2005 the organization held its second set of house meetings with more than 1,000 people. The most recent round of house meetings in the spring of 2009 yet again reached over 1,000 individuals.

the project and address any queries. Given my experience working in the organization, I was aware that some of the Strategy Team members would have many questions. Since we would have limited time in the meeting to discuss the proposal, I made the decision to talk with these individuals prior to the meeting so they would feel comfortable and "in the loop." This proved to be a good choice as I had an opportunity to provide detailed information and address any concerns.

I presented my study proposal to the team and explained the goal of the research was to analyze the impact of CHANGE on power relations and public life in Winston-Salem, NC. My initial proposal suggested that this could be accomplished through three avenues: 1) interviewing local public officials and corporate leaders; 2) interviewing Strategy Team members and surveying Metro Council and Clergy Caucus participants; and 3) reviewing media coverage of the organization since its inception. I put forward that I believed this study could provide great benefit to CHANGE by providing a snapshot of how local power structures evaluate the organization's work. I also suggested that the findings may be helpful to other community organizing groups, particularly those working in communities similar to ours.

At every juncture of my research process I attempted to be attuned to the intentions of participatory action research. Dr. Sung Sil Lee Sohng (1995) reminds us that those of us who practice participatory research should be deliberate about fostering a partnership between the researcher and the group being studied. She suggests, "Both researcher and participant are actors in the investigative process, influencing the flow, interpreting the content, and sharing options for action" (p. 4). When I initially began

formulating this project, I had considered pairing up with CHANGE leaders to conduct the interviews with public officials. I felt that this would deepen the participatory nature of the research and that it would provide some valuable experiences for leaders who had expressed an interest in learning how to engage with "power-brokers."

Again, Sung Sil Lee Sohng (1995) asserts that participatory research is ideally reflective of experiential education and transformative pedagogy. By shaping the interviews as relational or one-on-one meetings, a central practice in community organizing, I felt that the interactions could serve as important knowledge-producing actions for the CHANGE leaders. However, after discussing the possibility of collaboration in the interview process with my dissertation committee and Gerald Taylor, we determined that having active CHANGE leaders present may interfere with respondents' willingness to be forthright. Thus, we concluded that I alone should contact potential participants and interview them by myself.

When I presented my proposal to the team, I was struck by the depth of discussion about who would have access to the results and the potential implications of the results on the efficacy of the organization. Although I attempted to stay within the 10 minute slot, the discussion actually lasted nearly 30 minutes because people had various questions about the process and how far-reaching the publication would be. With regard to the last concern, I injected some graduate student humor and indicated that if people beyond my dissertation committee and the CHANGE Strategy Team read my final product it would be a miracle of God. On a more serious note, I explained where

dissertations are housed and that once published anyone would have the ability to review the study.

The thoughtful deliberation indicated how seriously the leadership team took the organization's work and the potential consequences or fall-out that could occur as a result of this study. Gerald Taylor affirmed the members' concerns, but he also asserted that it was in their best interest to know how the organization's work was perceived. One of the members concurred that she thought the study would be helpful to the organization and that, in fact, she was glad I was the one doing the study instead of an outsider. As a researcher, this comment reiterated to me that my relationship with the organization may also prove to be a challenge because the organizations' members may consciously or subconsciously attempt to influence my findings.

Questions were also raised about how my historical role in the organization may affect the data collection. I agreed that there may be an impact on some of the public officials' participation and responses because I have interacted with those individuals in a variety of capacities, including as a CHANGE leader and staff member. Moreover, I advised that there may be individuals outside of the organization who might question the validity of my research due to my longstanding relationship with CHANGE (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007). With these considerations in mind, I asserted that my guarantee of confidentiality (to the best of my ability) hopefully would make participants comfortable enough to talk with me.

With regard to confidentiality, I affirmed that all participants' identities would be protected. Although one member said he didn't care if his name was used, another person

came to me after the presentation and indicated that confidentiality was a primary

concern due to potential issues related to the Patriot Act and loss of citizenship. I believe

it is notable that this leader felt that the organization's work was provocative enough to

potentially solicit that kind of backlash.

Although I gave hard copies of the draft letter of agreement and interview

schedules to the group, I also said I would email them to everyone so there could be

further discussion about the questions. This was not ideal, but since we were going into

the holidays everyone thought this was the best course of action. Furthermore, while I

thought I had drafted the letter of agreement in non-academic speak, per the discussion it

became clear that there was some verbiage I needed to revise to make the document

clearer. I advised that I would provide a revised letter of agreement to the co-chairs for

their signatures. I completed both of these actions immediately after the meeting. The

majority of Strategy Team members responded to my follow up email with affirmation of

the design of the interview schedules.

Overall, the group had a positive response to the idea of participatory action

research and providing feedback about the data collection in "real time" instead of

waiting for a report to come out a year later. They felt that the research design reflected

the spirit of the organization with regard to "acting with" versus "being acted upon."

Many expressed excitement about the study and how the findings could positively impact

the organization's efforts. One leader said she thought the study was well thought out and

would provide useful information for CHANGE and community leaders. In particular,

this leader suggested that the research would demonstrate the power of exploring leadership and relationship building for the purposes of guiding community action.

Fortunately, I found other ways to partner with the Strategy Team in as much of crafting the research design as possible. Along with working with the Strategy Team to tweak the interview schedules, I also wanted to elicit some feedback about individuals whom the team thought I should contact for interviews. I believed this was important, because there may be community leaders whom I had not considered but could provide some useful information.

The January Strategy Team was packed with business items, so I was given a brief amount of time in the meeting to address next steps with the group. I asked the members about working together to draft a list of potential interviewees. They concurred that a smaller group of Strategy Team members should work with me to develop the list and then we would bring back recommendations to the full team. At that time, others could offer up names that may not be on the list. Four individuals volunteered to meet with me in person and everyone else was encouraged to email me names to put on the list for deliberation when the group convened.

The advisory group comprised of four people, including the new Lead Organizer, Reverend Ryan Eller, and me, met in mid-February to discuss potential individuals for me to contact. One other leader had emailed names as possibilities. In my original draft research design, I had suggested interviewing 10 public officials and business leaders and 10 primary CHANGE leaders. The survey was going to be used to gather data from the broader CHANGE membership, specifically institutional representatives to the Metro

Council and Clergy Caucus members. The first thing that became apparent was the difficulty of reducing the list to 10 people. Using a white board we recorded a few names that all of the lists had in common. Then everyone contributed other names from their own lists. It immediately became clear that we needed to clarify the purpose of the interviews in order to pare down the list. One leader's list included "movers and shakers," some with whom the organization had never had any contact. However, this leader felt that reaching out to them could put CHANGE on their radars.

I asked for clarification about the process and what would be most useful to the organization. I inquired whether I should interview individuals whom we knew had some knowledge of the organization or whether I should interview individuals who were the power-brokers in our community with the recognition that they may not know of the organization (which would definitely tell us something). Reverend Eller suggested the former would be the best direction to go, because we wanted to gather as much information as possible. The leaders concurred that this strategy would be most helpful.

At this point I offered another path that would allow me to interview more external leaders, which was clearly the desire of the group. I suggested the possibility of using the survey with all of the CHANGE leaders, and separating out the Strategy Team, Clergy Caucus, and Metro Council surveys from one another in order to determine primary leaders and secondary leaders' responses. This would be important to know, because typically primary leaders may have a deeper understanding of the intricacies of the organization. Because the survey had a question which would indicate the level of leadership and training experience, this also might be essential for interpretation of the

data. For instance, a respondent who had attended training and had been in leadership may have differing perspectives about the organization's impact on the community versus someone who had been less involved.

The group felt that this was the best direction to travel. Thus, we moved forward with drafting the list. We tried to identify representation from the City Council, County Commission, School Board, the North Carolina State House and Senate, Chambers of Commerce and corporate sector, and higher education institutions. We reviewed the names on the white board and starred the ones that were definite selections. We also analyzed the list to confirm race, gender and political party diversity. We were unable to determine higher education representatives because the presidents of Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem State University, and Salem College were all relatively new to the community. The group recommended that I elicit recommendations from the rest of the Strategy Team with regard to those posts.

After the meeting I took some time to write field notes and think about the discussion. As I began to reflect, I realized that there may be a problem with the solution I had offered. I compared the interview guide and the survey for the CHANGE leaders and validated my concern. There were a few important questions on the interview guide that were not on the survey; thus there was valuable data that would not be captured solely with the survey. I began considering options, and in consultation with my dissertation committee chair, decided to add a focus group meeting with the organization's top leadership to the research plan in order to gather the information needed.

One other change in design was made after I met with Gerald Taylor one on one. I briefed him on the meeting with small group charged with helping me draft the list of interviewees, the names we had identified, and the plan for data collection within the organization. He felt strongly that I should distribute a survey to the City Council, County Commission, School Board, and local Legislative Delegation and then interview a sample of them. Otherwise, he thought that the data may be perceived as biased because people could question why certain individuals had been chosen for interviews. I outlined the dilemma about whether to interview people with whom we had had direct encounters and/or whether to interview powerbrokers who may have nothing to say about us. He asserted both were important and that if there were officials who didn't know CHANGE or the body's work, the organization needed to know. I reminded him about the low return rate on mailed surveys, but he felt that the lack of response may prove to be an indicator of the respondents' feelings about CHANGE as well. This would bear out with at least one public official and is addressed further in Chapter 6.

It is important to note that at this point in the research proceedings, there was some difficulty in making decisions. On one hand I needed to be thoughtful about qualitative methods in general. With regard to social movement research methods, Blee and Taylor (2002) suggest using Rubin and Rubin's (1995) sampling approach for qualitative interviews. This method is based on two principles, completeness and similarity and dissimilarity. The first principle, completeness, involves the continuous selection of knowledgeable respondents until the investigator reaches a saturation point; that is, she begins to identify the same types of themes and narratives in the interviews.

The second principle, similarity and dissimilarity, involves choosing a diverse group of respondents in order to see how similarly positioned interviewees compare to those differently situated (Blee & Taylor, 2002). In my study the diverse groups were CHANGE members and organizers, public officials, and business leaders.

While considering Rubin and Rubin's sampling approach, I also had to remember that this was a participatory action research project. Thus I had to balance the sampling method with the desires of the organization. I made the decision that even if I reached a saturation point but the CHANGE leadership believed it was important to interview particular individuals for more insight, I would work with the leadership to satisfy their needs while maintaining a pragmatic view about the project's timeline.

After the meeting with the advisory group and Gerald Taylor, I set a meeting with Reverend Eller to brainstorm about who should be included in the focus groups and the strategy and schedule for distributing the surveys. This was important because mailed surveys typically have the lowest response rates while face-to-face distribution and collection elicits higher completion. Thus, I requested that distribution occur at the meetings. We concurred that 20 minutes would be set aside in the upcoming Strategy Team, Metro Council, and Clergy Caucus meetings for the survey.

At the next Strategy Team meeting I presented the revised proposal and provided an overview of how decisions were made about interviewing and the use the surveys and focus groups to gather the internal information in the organization. The proposed interviewee list was distributed and members of the group recommended names for higher education representatives, as well as other community leaders that had not been

39

considered. The list exceeded 20 individuals, and I told the group I would review the

names and make a final decision about who to include. I advised them that I may need to

supplement the list and/or make substitutions based on additional information I might

come across, particularly in the event that some individuals refused to be interviewed. I

also reminded them that any data I collected from the participants in this study would be

confidential. I reiterated that I would not be able to share who I interviewed or any

information that would reveal the participants' identities.

I also expressed how important it would be for us to work together on interpreting

the data. This practice could provide insight into the current state of the community at

large, its leadership, and how CHANGE may frame its work in the future. The group

confirmed their understanding of the plan and expressed that they were excited about

seeing what came out of the interviewees, surveys, and focus groups.

Data Collection Process

Description of CHANGE Leadership Bodies

Before I describe the data collection process for each of the CHANGE leadership

bodies, I need to explain the make-up and purpose of these groups.[8] To begin, the

Strategy Team is one of three primary leadership bodies of CHANGE. Essentially the

Strategy Team serves as the Board of Directors for the organization. The team is elected

by the membership base of CHANGE and is comprised of 13 individuals who have

demonstrated active engagement by attending training and serving in leadership roles

---

[8] Throughout this study I use the words "members" and "leaders" interchangeably when referring to the
CHANGE participants.

such as an Action Team[9] Co-Chair. The Strategy Team meets monthly and is charged with strategic planning, financial management, and leadership development for the organization.

The Metro Council consists of at least two members from each member institution. The Council is responsible for ratifying and executing campaigns by enlisting people to work on Action Teams and coordinating turn-out for actions. Metro Council representatives are in charge of communicating CHANGE's work back to their respective member institutions and for identifying ways in which CHANGE can assist their congregation or organization. The Council recruits people in their institutions for training and meets every other month to discuss strategies and actions. Average attendance at Metro Council meetings usually ranges from 50 to 75 people.

The Clergy Caucus includes clergy and clergy-appointed representatives from each member congregation. The Caucus meets to share theological reflections about the relationship between faith and justice and how to frame CHANGE's within their respective religious traditions. The Caucus describes its purpose as "committing to being a voice for justice and a partner for the cause of justice in the community in which we live" ("Clergy Caucus Agenda", June 11, 2009). Average attendance at Clergy Caucus meetings ranges from 20 to 30 clergy and lay leaders.

The three groups described above work in tandem to oversee the internal organization of CHANGE and its external actions. There is also some crossover between

---

[9] Action Teams are organized around problems identified in the house meeting process or have arisen out of a particular political context. These teams study problems and conduct research in order to identify issues that are immediate, specific and winnable. Once an action plan is adopted by organization, the team takes the lead on implementation.

participants in each of these bodies; for instance, there may be a clergyperson who attends the Clergy Caucus and is a member of the Strategy Team. Any decision about campaigns typically is reviewed and affirmed by all three leadership bodies before they are implemented. This can be seem like a cumbersome exercise and is frustrating for some individuals who wish to act right away. However, the organization feels that such a process reinforcing the importance of reflection, dialogue, and democratic decision-making. On occasion, especially in the midst of a time sensitive action, the leadership groups may vote to give a particular body the power to make decisions immediately. The Lead Organizer and Strategy Team are responsible for making sure communication between bodies is occurring consistently, particularly regarding the aforementioned scenario. For a more detailed description of the Strategy Team, Metro Council, and Clergy Caucus, as well as the decision-making process in CHANGE, please consult Appendix B.

Survey Instruments and Interview Schedules

I utilized various approaches in developing the survey instruments and interview schedules. Based on my review of similar studies[10], suggestions from Gerald Taylor and my particular interests, I crafted the survey instruments using Likert Scales and open-ended questions (See Appendix A). I included demographic questions specific to age, racial and ethnic background, religious affiliation, and length of residency in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Once surveys started being returned, I realized that I had inadvertently omitted gender. I believe this was due to being initially more interested in

---

[10] See Chapter 3 for more information about these studies.

race and religious affiliation, although clearly there may have been important patterns related to gender that would have enhanced the data analysis. Thus, in the future I would incorporate various identifiers that at the outset I may not think are relevant.

Additionally, I did not include political party membership because I wanted to retain a greater probability of confidentiality for the respondents who were public officials. For instance, only one white Republican held a seat on the City Council and asking for party affiliation would have made identification easy. Despite not asking about political party, the reality is that indicators of party affiliation still were present for some survey respondents. For example, all of the African-American public officials in Forsyth County are Democrats. Moreover, while I did not ask about political party in the interviews, by virtue of being an active citizen and voter I was aware of the political affiliation of the public officials with whom I spoke. Nevertheless, in hindsight asking for this demographic information explicitly may have supplied interesting data and in future studies I would consider its inclusion.

In order to track the data more easily, I decided to title and color code the surveys for the public officials relative to the different elected bodies represented. Likewise, the surveys distributed to the various leadership bodies in CHANGE were titled and color-coded accordingly. I created separate files for each group and made notes about particular details, such as the meetings in which certain surveys were collected. This data management strategy was valuable because it aided me in the revision of the collection procedure.

Procedures

Public officials and business leaders.

Once I received IRB approval, I immediately started the data collection phase of this study. Given the small window of time with which I had to work, I had already prepared the envelopes, surveys, and letters that would be sent to the public officials so they were ready to be mailed. I mailed a total of 33 surveys to elected officials serving on the Winston-Salem City Council, Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education, North Carolina General Assembly local delegation, and United States Congress. The response rate was 48% with 16 individuals returning their surveys. Within the first two weeks of mailing, I received nearly all of the responses I would. Receiving a minimal response initially from two elected bodies, the Winston-Salem City Council and the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, I considered whether to do follow up phone calls and/or emails. One of the officials I interviewed suggested that the best way to reach his colleagues was to use email. I took his advice and emailed a reminder to the aforementioned public officials with the survey attached. I provided them the option of emailing the survey back to me or using postal mail. I received an additional three surveys with the follow up communication.

Along with the mailings, I also began calling potential interviewees to schedule appointments immediately. To my surprise the first person I contacted asked if we could meet the next day. On my first day of calls I was able to schedule the majority of my interviews. Individuals with whom I did not speak on the first day called or emailed me

back within a few days. In total I scheduled a total of 19 interviews over a period of 6 weeks.

My first interview proved to be invaluable with regard to logistical and methodological considerations. I had tested my digital recorder to ensure that I knew how to use it and to test sound capabilities, placement, etc. The latter was especially important, because I met Mr. Goins, a public official, at a local restaurant where an espresso machine and coffee machine steamer provided the background soundscape. I arrived early and spotted Mr. Goins sitting in the corner with another person, so I found a seat nearby and waited until our appointment time. I realized that he may not recognize me and made the decision to go introduce myself and let him know I was there. When I approached Mr. Goins, I recognized the person with whom he was meeting and we spoke. I knew her from my previous professional work as a victim advocate. This interaction was notable, because I would later realize that it established a particular context for my conversation with Mr. Goins.

After Mr. Goins and the woman concluded their meeting, I sat down with my first interviewee. I thanked him for his time and gave him the consent form to read and keep. Mr. Goins glanced at it, pushed it back across the table to me and said that he didn't need it - he trusted me. I did review the confidentiality section and the purpose of the study just to be sure he understood why we were meeting. It was evident that Mr. Goins was ready to talk about the subject at hand; I barely had time to turn on the digital recorder. We jumped into the interview schedule, and it soon became clear that Mr. Goins did not associate me with CHANGE but rather my work with the local domestic violence crisis

center. Therefore, I told Mr. Goins that for the purposes of full disclosure I wanted to make sure he knew I had a relationship with CHANGE, which was the impetus for this study, and at one point I had been on staff. This did not seem to faze him, and he continued talking.

I reference this first interview because of what I learned and then modified in my subsequent interviews. First, logistically the restaurant was not the best place to meet given the sounds and distractions. If another interviewee recommended a similar site, I decided I would request another setting. Secondly, I was reminded not to take it for granted that all of the respondents would connect me to CHANGE. After assessing this first interview with some of my dissertation committee members, I determined that disclosure about my connection to the organization should occur when I reviewed the consent form with the participants. In later interviews I would explain at the outset that my interest in this research grew out of my involvement with CHANGE as a volunteer leader and former staff member.

As a follow up procedure, I acted in reverence to my southern grandmother who had passed down a whole host of good manners to me and wrote thank you cards to all the interviewees. I took the opportunity to both thank them for meeting with me and to assure them once again about honoring their confidentiality. My sense that a personal note would reiterate the sincerity with which I was approaching this study was substantiated when I received a message from one of the participants who said, "Hey Sharee. What a classy thing of you to send such a nice note. In this day and age it's so nice to get a handwritten note. I really appreciate it" (R. Thompson, personal

communication, April 16, 2009). The lesson? In a world where emails and Hallmark e-cards rule the day, personal expressions of connection still matter.

CHANGE leadership bodies.

Clergy caucus.

I distributed the first group of surveys at the monthly Clergy Caucus meeting in March. There were 15 clergy and lay leaders (as well as 3 staff members) at the Clergy Caucus meeting, which represented a smaller segment of the membership than I was hoping to reach. Although I had been given 25 minutes on the agenda to present the study, I limited my time because the agenda was packed. I briefly explained the purpose of the study, reviewed the oral consent form, and disseminated the survey. At the end of the meeting, eight individuals returned their surveys to me. Another seven people had to leave early, took their surveys with them, and promised to return them; five of them would respond by a follow-up mail request and at subsequent meetings.

Due to the fact that there was an under-representation of clergy members, I talked with Reverend Eller about the best way to reach out to clergy who were not present. We determined that mailing surveys and a cover letter written by Reverend Eller would work best. He drafted his own letter based on a template I provided, and I made a few revisions before I mailed the surveys. I included an explicit reference to confidentiality; however unlike the letters I personally sent to the public officials I did not specifically address the return of the survey as an indication of the participants consent. Since Reverend Eller had crafted the letter to speak to why participating in the study could be helpful to the

organization from his own perspective and the letter was already a page in length, I felt that including any additional statements would be superfluous.

Based on a mailing list provided by the CHANGE office, I mailed 62 surveys to clergy excluding individuals from whom I had already received surveys. Given that the mailing occurred close to the week of Easter, responses were slow the first week after the mailing. Within three weeks of the mailing 11 respondents had remitted their surveys. Over a month later, I opened an email from one pastor with the subject heading, "yikes," lamenting that he had just found the letter and wondered if it was too late to send it to me. I assured him it was not and encouraged him to put it in the mail. Three more surveys trickled in over subsequent weeks.

In addition to the mailing, I attended one more Clergy Caucus meeting in April and collected five more surveys. Two pastors who were primary contacts for their congregations would respond to a Metro Council email blast, and their surveys would be recoded to be identified as clergy. One pastor apprised me that he had mailed me a survey but was concerned that he had already completed one prior to his mailing. Fortunately, due to his religious affiliation and where he grew up I was able to spot the duplication. In total I collected 30 surveys from clergy or clergy-appointed representatives.

Strategy team.

I was allocated a slot on the Strategy Team agenda to distribute surveys in their March meeting. Seven members were present in addition to the staff, one action team co-chair, and two leaders who were serving in an advisory capacity. All 12 individuals completed surveys at that meeting. I emailed the survey to the two members who were

not present and they were returned. Hence, I received completed surveys from all nine Strategy Team members (there were four vacant seats at the time of data collection).

As referenced previously, a result of retooling the research design meant that I would need to employ another strategy for gain the kind of in-depth information that I wanted from the Strategy Team. While the survey did capture useful information, I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the Strategy Team member's perspectives on CHANGE since they were the primary leaders in the organization. Therefore, I conducted one focus group after the April Strategy Team meeting. Eleven Strategy Team members were present at the meeting, and eight stayed after to participate in the focus group which lasted approximately one hour.

Metro council.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to the success of data collection. Timing, location, and weather are just a few that proved to be an issue when I began data collection in the Metro Council. To start, once I became aware of where the meeting was going to be held I immediately became concerned about attendance and diversity. This was the first time that the Metro Council was going to meet at a congregation located in the county. Based on previous experience as a leader in CHANGE, I knew that having to drive further out would impact attendance negatively. Furthermore, when the organization had held meetings at white congregations in outlying areas of the city African-American attendance was lower. Thus, one could presume that this would be the case with hosting a meeting at a white congregation in the county as well. In addition to location, the weather was rainy and gloomy.

Thus, I was not surprised when there was lower turn-out than usual at the Metro Council meeting. Approximately 15 member institutions were represented by roughly 30 individuals. Reverend Eller had set aside 20 minutes on the agenda as we had discussed, and he credentialed the project for the group. I explained the intent and process, as well as reviewing the oral consent form. Many participants expressed interests and requested extra surveys to take back to their core team members.[11] I received 28 surveys during the meeting and 11 more as a result of those individuals who went back to their institutions and solicited participants.

I also identified a few more sites for data collection within the Metro Council membership. Again, in consultation with Reverend Eller we determined that an email to Core Team leaders would be in order. However, he suggested that I send the email since some people may not respond to another CHANGE email blast. The CHANGE Office Manager provided an email list of 57 Core Team leaders, and I sent a message with a description of the study and the survey attached. I only received three more surveys from this approach.

The final site of data collection for Metro Council participants was a bus trip to Raleigh, North Carolina to meet with state legislators about CHANGE's School Board Election Reform Campaign. Five individuals filled out the surveys while we were traveling, and one person took extra surveys back to her congregational team which

---

[11] Core Teams are internal organizing bodies within each member institution. These teams are responsible for facilitating the participation of its institution inside CHANGE by communicating information about the organization's activities, fulfilling turn-out quotas, recruiting participants for Action Teams, and campaigns and making certain that its institution is in good standing with regard to dues and active participation.

produced four more respondents. In total, I collected 49 surveys from Metro Council members.

Organization and Analysis of Data

Due to the substantial amount of data accumulated in this study, it was essential that I develop an organizational system which would make analysis more streamlined. I pondered using the latest data analysis software to help sort, sift, and code the data. However, I am a tactile learner and found it to be a much richer experience to sit in the middle of the floor highlighting, cutting, pasting, and filing an assortment of puzzle pieces knowing that at some point I would be ready to put everything together. That being said, I did create files categorized by the particular areas of investigation, as well as sections related to ideas about specific chapters and quotations and themes from relevant research literature (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

Part of my analytical process was spurred by John Seidel's (1998) idea of the cyclical method of noticing, collecting, and thinking. He conceptualizes qualitative data analysis as iterative and progressive, recursive, and holographic. Iterative and progressive refers to how thinking about the data leads to noticing new things in the data which you then collect and think about and so on. There is an infinite spiraling effect. The recursive part of the process alludes to how one step can call you back to an earlier step; for example, as you are gathering data you actually may start noticing new data to collect at the same time. Finally, the holographic nature of the qualitative data analysis points to the idea that the entire process is nested in each of the steps. In short, when you become aware of things, you are already capturing and evaluating them.

Being attentive to my own process, experiences and observations was vital to this project, and I attempted to capture my reflections through journaling and maintaining field notes (Janesick, 2003; Glesne, 2006). I kept a notebook with me at all times and took notes as I thought about things I was and was not seeing and hearing in the data. I noticed when I had particular reactions to what I was learning and use those reactions as a source of data as well. During and following the interviews, focus group, survey distribution, conversations with various individuals, and meetings, I jotted down observations, thoughts, and feelings. As I began making connections, I found my field notes looking more like hieroglyphics with arrows, lines, and symbols depicting my thought process.

As described earlier in this chapter, I used a combination of semi-structured interviews, surveys, and textual analysis of print media to examine the subject of study. Likewise, I chose to use a multitude of approaches throughout the research process to analyze the data collected. A fundamental element of action research, as well as semi-structured interviewing, is the need to analyze data as it is being gathered. Based on information gathered along the way, I found that I needed to adjust some of my interview questions in order to clarify what I was hoping to learn from the respondents. Furthermore, it became clear after the first few interviews that I needed to ask about race relations directly.

Additionally, a chief component of participatory action research is maximizing the involvement of participants in the process. Although I was not able to do this to the extent I had hoped, due to time constraints and campaigns which required enormous

amounts of time by the members, I did find opportunities to dialogue with various people and receive feedback from them about the data. An exciting opportunity for collaborative interpretation emerged when the Lead Organizer asked me to present the data at the CHANGE Leaders Retreat in mid-summer 2009. The retreat was comprised of Strategy Team members, the CHANGE Finance/Fundraising/Sustainability Committee, and current and former CHANGE staff and interns. The agenda for the retreat was cast around translating the data from my study and using the information to frame a strategic plan for the organization.

So as to have a springboard for recognizing patterns in the data, I did outline some indicators on the front end that I could listen for as I was interviewing. For instance, with regard to assessing impact on governance I looked for references to credibility (being taken seriously) and effectiveness in leveraging power, people, and resources. This skeleton served as an initial stage of analysis with an understanding that more would be unearthed as I began noticing, collecting, and thinking my way through the reading and re-reading of interview transcripts and field notes. I utilized these same indicators while reviewing surveys and newspaper articles. In short, my analytical process hinged on listening and entering into dialogue with the various texts I had gathered. The themes revealed themselves accordingly.[12] In the next chapter I start with exploring themes related to perceptions of CHANGE's mission and work.

---

[12] The only significant challenge I ran into once I collected the data was securing a transcriptionist for the interviews. This took much longer than expected which somewhat disrupted my ability to look at all of the data simultaneously in the time frame I had hoped. Nonetheless, I adapted to the situation at hand, listened to the digitally recorded interviews repeatedly, and thanked the universe when I found another gifted soul who took on the project.

CHAPTER III

CONGREGATION-BASED COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND
THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS FOUNDATION

Before I present my research findings, I believe it is valuable to situate

CHANGE's efforts within the broader spectrum of community organizing and in relation

to other IAF affiliates. Primary to CHANGE's orientation is its congregation-based

approach, and more specifically its use of IAF practices. Therefore, in this chapter I

provide a general overview of community organizing and congregation-based organizing

groups, and then discuss IAF methodology more specifically. I conclude with a brief

history of the origins of CHANGE.

Efforts to provide a comprehensive review of congregation-based community

organizing and the IAF have taken me to book-length studies, numerous bibliographies

and footnotes in seminal texts, periodicals, newspapers, general databases such as

EBSCO Premier and Academic OneFile, and more specific social science databases.

Additionally, I have reviewed a variety of dissertations about these subjects. I chose to

limit my search to the years 1970 through the present as this period marks both the

growth of congregation-based community organizing and the modern period of the IAF.

The information about CHANGE's beginnings comes from my own personal

involvement in the creation of the organization, newspaper articles, conversations with

CHANGE leaders, and the group's archives.

Definition of Community Organizing

While there is no single definition for community organizing that encompasses the totality of the work, there are common characteristics that most efforts share. Beckwith and Lopez (1997) suggest,

> Community organizing is the process of building power through involving a constituency in identifying problems they share and the solutions to those problems that they desire; identifying the people and structures that can make those solutions possible; enlisting those targets in the effort through negotiation and using confrontation and pressure when needed; and building an institution that is democratically controlled by that constituency that can develop the capacity to take on further problems and that embodies the will and the power of that constituency. (para. 5)

Orr (2007) offers a condensed definition similar to Beckwith's, proposing that community organizing is a process in which people, communities, and organizations pursue social justice, increased individual and community power, enhanced quality of life, and political effectiveness.

Generally speaking, community organizers maintain their efforts are about bringing people together to work for the common good and social change (Szakos & Szakos, 2007). The IAF (1990), a national-level community organizing network, goes so far as to assert its work is fundamentally about power, action and justice and the "a commitment to, knowledge of, and ability to stand for the whole" (p. 1). In the next section, I review the various formations of community organizing models and how they live out the common characteristics aforementioned.

Overview of Community Organizing Models

Over the last three decades national-level organizing networks have seen a notable increase in membership in the United States. By and large there are two standard types of organizing models, one comprised of existing institutions and one comprised of individual members (McCarthy & Walker, 2004). Networks such as the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), Gamaliel Foundation, Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART), and Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) employ a congregation-based organizing approach and are intentional about working through existing institutions to build a base (Swarts, 2008). Once formed, the organizing bodies focus on fostering a collective culture and shared identity within their respective organizations. Conversely, groups affiliated with networks such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) mobilize individuals and are more task-oriented; they do not have, as a chief concern, building a common culture and collective identity within the individual organizations (Swarts, 2008).

Congregation-Based Community Organizing

Congregation-based, or broad-based, community organizing has seen a marked increase over the last 30 years. This particular model of organizing is distinguishable because of its emphasis on culture-building within respective organizations and political transformation in communities at large. There are multiple referents used to describe the congregation-based organizing model including the terms broad-based and institution-

based organizing.[13] Clearly, institution-based reflects the primary organizing strategy of

building an organization of organizations. The idiom, broad-based, indicates that these

organizations attempt to be diverse with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, class, faith

tradition, and geographical location. Many of these organizations also include other

community-based groups in their membership, such as schools, unions, and

neighborhood associations (McCarthy & Walker, 2004; Warren & Wood, 2001). Broad-

based organizations invest in the organization itself and tend to address multiple issues

rather being issue-based. This distinction is central because unlike individual membership

organizations which are often issue driven, congregation-based work is intentional about

building a relational culture within the organization and training leaders so that they can

tackle any issue that may arise. The belief behind this is that issue-based organizations

die because there is little internal organizational structure and bonds which hold people

together once their issue of interest has come and gone.

The emphasis on building a relational culture internally in these organizations is

directly connected to the idea of transforming the larger culture. Swarts (2008) suggests

that this model utilizes a cultural strategy, which accomplishes two things: 1) glues the

organization together through the use of common values (i.e. religious ideas, democratic

ideals, etc.); and 2) addresses the usual tensions in American political culture by bringing

people together across race and class fissures. This particular aspect of congregation-

based community organizing is pertinent to my research, because I am inquiring into how

---

[13] These organizations are sometimes referred to as power-based as well. Power-based organizing
originated with Saul Alinsky and is known for its often conflictual and aggressive tactics. While broad-
based organizations share the belief that common peoples' lack of power is a central cause of community
struggles, Alinsky-style tactics are not necessarily embraced by these groups.

CHANGE leaders characterize their work. Theoretically, congregation-based organizing brings people together around common values and build meaningful relationships in order to challenge the dominant culture's emphasis on individualism, consumerism, and the like. While community organizers often speak forthrightly about their work being synonymous with changing culture, citizen leaders in these organizations may view their efforts differently. For example, they may focus more on identified issues and actions (i.e. securing funds for schools, building affordable housing, etc.).

Comparison of Organizing Models

It is also helpful to locate congregation-based community organizing within the broader field of organizing efforts. Kristina Smock (2004) provides a useful comparison of the diversity of organizing models, methods, and strategies utilized and helps to situate congregation-based, or power-based, efforts within the larger realm of community organizing. As noted previously, there are significant differences between broad-based and individual membership approaches and these differences extend beyond general organizational structures. McCarthy and Walker (2004) argue that the respective models impact both the goals and tactics selected by the groups. In their comparison study of congregation-based organizations and individual membership organizations, McCarthy and Walker outline five specific distinctions between the two organizing models: 1) tactics; 2) issues addressed; 3) socioeconomic makeup; 4) funding sources and uses of

financial capital; and 5) extent of homogeneity within models.[14] McCarthy and Walker note that while congregation-based organizations concentrate more on developing leadership and organizing relationally, individual membership organizations are much more prone to employing a modus operandi of direct action to achieve their objectives.

Roots of Congregation-Based Community Organizing

Historically, congregation-based organizing can be traced back to the 1930s and the Chicago "Back of the Yards" neighborhoods where Saul Alinsky[15] created the Industrial Areas Foundation and started the work of building broad-based coalitions. Eventually an emphasis on leadership development and creating sustainable organizations comprised of existing institutions, particularly faith communities, became the hallmark of this model (McCarthy & Walker, 2004; Warren & Wood, 2001). In general, the other national-level networks reflect the IAF model and share similar characteristics which include being broad-based, multi-racial, multi-faith, nonpartisan, and locally focused. However, Swarts (2008) does suggest that the networks are becoming increasingly differentiated with PICO and the Gamaliel Foundation expressing more interest in creating alliances and launching national campaigns.

---

[14] The authors analyzed files of 211 congregation-based and individual membership based organizations funded in 1991-1993 by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, a primary funder for social justice and community organizing efforts.

[15] To learn more about Saul Alinsky and his contributions to the field of organizing, see Engel, 2002; Hercules & Orenstein, 1998; Horwitt, 1989; and Lancourt, 1979. Alinsky also wrote two books, *Rules for Radicals* (1971) and *Reveille for Radicals* (1974), which capture his classic approach to organizing. A concise review of Alinsky's life and related written and on-line resources can be found on the encyclopaedia of informal education website, http://www.infed.org/thinkers/alinsky.htm (Seal, 2008). An interesting review of organizing efforts in Chicago post-Alinsky can be found in Knoepfle (1990). This text includes a chapter, written by President Barack Obama when he was a law student, about the problems and promises of organizing dispossessed people.

A review of congregation-based organizing efforts in the United States yields impressive results. In a comprehensive study of congregation-based groups, Warren and Wood (2001) identified 133 congregation-based organizations in 33 states and the District of Columbia. At the time, these organizations were comprised of approximately 4,000 institutions, 87% of which were religious congregations and 13% of which were institutions like unions and public schools. Warren and Wood estimated that with the assistance of 460 professional organizers, these organizations were reaching roughly between one and three million people with approximately 24,000 core leaders engaged at any one time. The authors concluded that congregation-based organizing was a rapidly growing field.

Differences Between Faith-Based Organizing and Faith-Based Initiatives

The group that commissioned the Warren and Wood study, Interfaith Funders, is a network of faith-based and secular grantmakers whose mission is to advance congregation-based organizing. This group also has produced two publications highlighting "faith-based" organizing[16] on congregational development[17] (Flaherty & Wood, 2003; Flaherty & Wood, 2004). Interestingly, on their website Interfaith Funders makes a strong statement about congregation-based organizing, juxtaposing it against the "faith-based initiatives" of President Bush and casting a different picture about the

---

[16] While Interfaith Funders refers to congregation-based organizing as "faith-based", there are other terms which are often used to describe this work, namely broad-based, power-based and relational organizing.
[17] Slessarev-Jamir (2004) has written an insightful article as to why certain churches have become involved in organizing efforts. The study is based on data collected from interviews in three cities with pastors from 15 congregations that are actively involved in organizing, Pastors cited the emphasis of local issues, positive outcomes, and increased relationality across diverse congregations as primary reasons for engagement.

common intentions of congregation-based groups.

> Please do not confuse faith-based community organizing with the social service agencies described in President Bush's faith-based initiative! FBCO (CBCO) groups do not receive federal funds. They see as their role to develop leaders, build a strong web of relationships, and turn those relationships into a civic power capable of making change to promote public good. (Interfaith Funders, 2009, para. 3)

In another publication (Lee, 2003), Interfaith Funders asserts that the dramatic difference between faith-based initiatives and faith-based organizing is that such initiatives "emphasize compassion and service but avoid any political engagement with the forces and institutions that leave troubling numbers of people without food, without health care, without homes, and without work" (p. 8). In short, as noted by Interfaith Funders, congregation-based organizing primarily is about empowering ordinary people to collectively address the root causes of problems that plague our communities.

The Industrial Areas Foundation

Background

Of the four congregation-based community organizing national-level networks in the United States, the Industrial Areas Foundation is the oldest and largest. Currently, there are more than 60 IAF affiliates in 21 American states, Canada, Germany and Great Britain. Much has been recorded about the beginnings of the network and its founder, Saul Alinsky (Hercules & Orenstein, 1998; Horwitt, 1989; Slayton, 1986). In fact, McCarthy and Walker (2004) observe that out of all the national-level networks we know most about the IAF due to the disproportionate amount of research that has been done on

IAF organizations. While the IAF began over 60 years ago, there are some marked

differences between the IAF started by Alinsky and the modern day IAF crafted by

Alinsky's protégés, Ed Chambers and Dick Harmon (Chambers & Cowan, 2003). Some

of the primary differences include how IAF affiliates are built and the attentiveness to the

development of professional organizers and local leaders. For the purposes of this review,

I will focus my attention on scholarship describing the "modern IAF," which began

shortly before founder Saul Alinsky's death in 1972.

Relevant Studies

Over the last 20 years, a variety of case studies have been published on the work

of IAF affiliated groups in Texas (Osterman, 2006; Rogers, 1990; Shirley, 1997, 2002[18];

Staudt & Stone, 2007; Warren, 2001[19]), Maryland (Greider, 1992; Orr, 1999), and New

York (Freedman, 1993; Rooney, 1995).[20] Dissertations researching IAF organizations

tend to fall into two categories: religious and theological aspects of IAF methodology

(Bevan, 2003; Byrd, 1998; Kooperkamp, 2002; Parra, 1993) and analyses of how

individual IAF organizations may effect personal and social change (Gray, 2001;

Johnson, 2002; Krantz, 2003; Ross, 1996; Scott, 1991). For those interested in learning

more about the IAF's organizing model as a vehicle for education reform, Sobel (2004)

discusses the experiences of Latino mothers working with Austin Interfaith in Texas.

---

[18] Shirley's focus is specifically on the work done by the Southwest IAF on school reform.
[19] Warren's book is a revised version of his 1995 dissertation which delved into the Texas IAF network.
[20] A particularly noteworthy piece about the IAF is one produced by the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California (Gustafson & Miller, 2000). The publication is comprised of a series of interviews with IAF leaders on the west coast and depicts the powerful relationship between religion, civic engagement, and the empowerment of oppressed communities.

Filback (2007) explores the pedagogical aspects of community organizing through his examination of One LA, an IAF affiliate in California.

A handful of IAF organizers have chronicled their work (e.g., Drake, 2001; Gecan, 2002), including the current Executive Director, Ed Chambers (Chambers & Cowan, 2003). Ernie Cortes (1993, 1998), Director of the Southwest IAF, has also written a few brief pieces about the IAF and its role in "reweaving the social fabric" in communities, while still a few other IAF organizers have published detailed accounts of specific organizing tools used in the IAF model (Buckwalter, 2003; McNeill, 1995; Penta, 1999; Pierson, 2001).

Additional studies review the beginnings of the IAF and the network's philosophies and common strategies at length (Altemose & McCarty, 2001; Boyte, 1989; Osterman, 2003; Reitzes & Reitzes, 1987). These strategies, referred to as "universals," include the following characteristics:

- Building an "organization of organizations" that is broad-based, i.e. networks of diverse institutions including faith institutions, unions, civic clubs, schools, etc.

- Securing ownership of the organization by the leaders by focusing on "organized money"[21]

---

[21] Organized money ("hard money") comes from dues-paying institutions. While IAF organizations seek grants for start-up and continuing support, they do not accept government funds and will negotiate a clear relationship with businesses before they accept money (i.e. selling advertisement space for businesses to support an Ad Book, a fundraising strategy).

- Teaching skills of public engagement using tools such as relational meetings (one-on-ones) and house meetings and distinguishing between public and private relationships

- Emphasizing how relationships are built by sharing stories, not by focusing solely on tasks or issues

- Organizing people around their own self-interests[22]

- Teaching about power and that power should precede program[23]

- Employing the ritual of Research, Action and Evaluation, also known as the IAF liturgy (McNeil, 1995)[24]

- Maintaining the Iron Rule: "Never never do for others what they can do for themselves. Never."

Exemplars of IAF Organizing

Perhaps the most extensively chronicled IAF efforts have been on organizations in the Southwest network, which is comprised of approximately 20 groups in Louisiana, Arizona, Texas and New Mexico (Industrial Areas Foundation, 2004-2008). Rogers (1990) and Warren (2001) both explore the basic histories and principles of IAF

---

[22] According to Lawrence Engel (2002), Alinsky's belief in building a "people's organization" centered around the self-interests of the people was influenced by his mentor, Ernest Burgess, a professor at the Chicago School of Pragmatism. Burgess wrote that organizations were built on the "basic interests, the driving wishes, and the vital problems of the men and women, the youth and the children, living in the community" (as cited in Engle, 2002, p. 61). Contemporary IAF organizations still teach about the importance of recognizing self-interest in their trainings.

[23] The IAF teaches that power is a neutral term that means the ability to act. This is discussed in more detail later in Chapter 6.

[24] At the IAF National Training I attended, Ernesto Cortes referenced John Dewey's idea of continuous education that involves constant disruption, construction, and transformation. This is the basis for the IAF ritual of research, action and evaluation that reflects organizing as a space for experiential education in the public sphere.

organizing, highlighting the work of Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio and Senior Organizer, Ernesto Cortes, Jr. Two of COPS' most successful efforts have been the creation of an award-winning job training program called Project QUEST (Gray, 2001; Warren, 2001) and the Alliance Schools Initiative (Glickman & Scally, 2008; Shirley, 2002, 2001), which brings together parents, school staff, and other community leaders in a concerted effort in increase student achievement in low-income areas. Over the years COPS has secured millions of dollars in funding for undertakings such as neighborhood infrastructure, college scholarships, and literacy programs. The impact of COPS can be summed up in the words of former San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros in 1988, "I can say unequivocally, COPS has fundamentally altered the moral tone and the political and physical face of San Antonio" (Garr, 2009). Founded in 1974, COPS continues its work of organizing disenfranchised populations in Texas today and is considered a flagship of the IAF network.

Critiques of IAF Model and Tactics

Along with positive accounts of the IAF's efforts, there is no shortage of critiques about the group's structure and methodology. Warren (2001) provides a broad critical analysis of the IAF's methods and strategies in the last chapter of *Dry Bones Rattling*, as does Robinson and Hanna (1994) in their discussion of the IAF in the context of social work. Both reviews address the fact that IAF organizations work primarily through religious congregations which sets them up for critique in terms of the kinds of people that can and will be involved in these groups.[25] People who are "unchurched" or are in more

---

[25] Dennis Shirley (1997) shares this perspective in his discussion about the Southewest IAF's efforts to reform Texas schools.

conservative congregations may not feel welcome. This may also be true for people, particularly gays and lesbians, who either feel like there is no acknowledgment of the oppression that they face and/or feel uncomfortable working with religious entities, largely because of the discrimination exercised by so many faith communities.

One general critique of the IAF is that it does not play well with others, meaning that the network avoids cooperation and collaboration with other networks (Robinson & Hanna, 1994). Shirley and Evans (2007) present a specific example of this in their discussion about efforts to reform schools in Texas in the face of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. While three different organizing networks were working on education issues and even represented the same constituencies, there was little evidence that these groups collaborated with one another.

The IAF also elicits criticism from both the left and right. Early disapproval of the IAF emanated from a fear that Alinsky was too radical. He and the organizations with which he worked were often targets of red-baiting. This is certainly a perspective that continues today from conservatives as evidenced in the recent presidential election and discussions about President Barack Obama's connection to Alinsky and organizing. Current critiques from the left center on the IAF not being radical enough because of the willingness to enter into compromise and negotiation with "the enemy." Fisher (1994) addresses such critiques of the IAF's move to moderation and the tendency to focus more to reform than radically restructuring oppressive systems. In fact, Fisher suggests that the IAF chooses moderation in an effort to make community organizing a valid endeavor for the powerless *and* the powerful. Such a stance encourages the creation of working relationships between these two groups, as well as with the state and market sectors.

Additionally, because a central cornerstone of IAF organizations is a commitment to bring people together across dividing lines, IAF groups do not take on "hot-button issues"

(i.e. gay marriage, abortion, death penalty, etc.). Often times these groups do not even discuss them in an attempt to divert any conflict that may disrupt the organizations' collective work. This has been a chief source of dismay by those on the left (Altemose & McCarty, 2001).

Similarly, the IAF does not engage in identity politics which it sees as potentially distracting. While the IAF is committed to dismantling racism and classism, organizations are not built on racially driven politics (Márquez, 2003). The IAF believes broad-based organizations that bring groups together across dividing lines are much more effective in challenging the "Powers That Be" by confronting their assumptions about the ability of diverse groups to work together. This rejection of identity-based politics is a site of critique, because it infers that marginalized groups must put aside what they may perceive to be the root of the problems (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.) (Robinson & Hanna, 1994). Likewise, other critics challenge the whole idea of multiracial organizing and charge that groups like the IAF do not adequately address race as a central issue in their work (Warren, 2001).

Where Does CHANGE Fit In?

As evidenced in this brief review of relevant literature, the last 30 years has seen significant growth and interest in congregation-based community organizing and the work of the IAF in the United States. Interestingly, there have been no seminal studies of such work in the southeast beyond Michael Byrd's dissertation (1997) focused on an IAF affiliate in Tennessee, Tying Nashville Together (TNT), and his research interest was limited to the IAF's treatment of religious beliefs and the need for a more finely

developed discourse ethics of community organizing. Thus, my study of CHANGE

contributes to body of scholarship on two fronts. It is an examination of another

organization in the southeastern IAF network, and it is focused on contextualizing these

kinds of community organizing efforts within the larger frames of governance and power

relations rather than on solely issue oriented outcomes. In the following section I will

describe the naissance of CHANGE and briefly look at the organization's first major

campaign that earned CHANGE political capital and set the stage for future actions.

The Birth of Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment

As I briefly described in the prologue, the organization that would become known

as CHANGE was born out of dialogue between individuals involved with the Interfaith

Partnership for Advocacy and Reconciliation (IPAR). IPAR had developed out of a

merger between two groups, Visions of Hope and Religious Leaders for Reconciliation,

in the late 1990s. Visions of Hope had been founded in the aftermath of a wedding

director being murdered outside one of the large downtown churches. Religious Leaders

for Reconciliation was an interracial group of clergy that came together because of

concerns about reported abuse of African-Americans by local police.

At one point a number of ministers and lay leaders were involved in both groups

and thus a decision was made to join the two bodies. While IPAR had succeeded in

helping to establish a summer feeding program for low income children and had held a

number of community religious services, including one after the massacre at Columbine

High School and one on the first anniversary of September 11th, there was a sense among

some that they primarily had just been talk. According to one individual involved with

IPAR during that period,

> . . . at the same time as continuing those activities, various leaders were collecting information on various types of community action agencies around the country that could help us <u>act</u> to fix the various problems around Winston. The IAF emerged as the strongest candidate, and that's when we invited Gerald Taylor [Southeast Director of the IAF] to make a presentation. We were impressed. And the rest is history. (B. Conn, personal communication, October 14, 2008)

Building on Saul Alinsky's precept of creating alliances across dividing lines, the modern IAF does not partner with local organizations that have not recruited congregations representing all major racial and ethnic groups (Altemose & McCarty, 2001). Accordingly, in the spring of 2000 IPAR leaders met with representatives from other organizations in Winston-Salem to discuss their interest in jointly supporting the proposed initiative. In July of that year, IPAR, a predominately white ecumenical organization, and the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, a primarily African-American Christian organization, officially invited the IAF to come to Forsyth County and work with them to build a new broad-based, multi-racial citizens' organization (Greater Winston-Salem Sponsoring Committee, 2002).

Notably, the community did have certain assets that made building an organization like CHANGE easier. There were existing relationships across race lines, as well as a track record of working together on various problems. The issue was that many of those efforts had been minimally successful and frankly people were tired of losing. The organization's first Lead Organizer, Chris Baumann, articulated this when I asked him about why he thought the IAF was invited to Winston-Salem,

> Leaders you know from different racial backgrounds and different faiths, they were kind of fed up with the way life was in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. And uh you know they wanted a way to fight back and make some real change. And uh you know I think a lot of relationship building had happened before we got there which helped uh and I think part of it was the size of Winston-Salem, that it wasn't too big and you know a lot of people knew each other already and already had relationships and had worked together you know had tried different things with some success but not . . . not the level ya'll wanted to be. . . . a lot of people were at the table. The challenge was the power structure of Winston-Salem . . . (C. Baumann, personal communication, July 10, 2009)

Baumann pointed to power structures as the central challenge to developing an effective community organizing effort in Winston-Salem. After experiencing numerous failures, people had come to realize the root issues were fundamentally about shifting power relations and were ready to learn another way to transform the culture. IAF was the answer.

The Greater Winston-Salem Sponsoring Committee (GWSCC), the birthing vehicle for CHANGE, was formed in September 2000 and was open to individuals who were committed to recruiting new leaders and institutions to the organizing effort, participating in leadership training, and raising money for the new endeavor. Over the next two and a half years IAF staff guided the group through a painstaking process of developing relationships and leadership training. Throughout this period, the GWSSC gathered with leaders from more than 100 institutions in the White, African-American, and Latino communities. The Committee also convened with leaders from various groups, including neighborhood associations, schools, and other non-profit organizations. One of the first successes during this time involved training more than 500 clergy and lay leaders from over 75 institutions in the fundamentals of broad-based community

organizing. Approximately 100 individuals completed more intensive training on the IAF universals.

Upon securing funding, the GWSSC employed its first full-time community organizer, Chris Baumann. Baumann, who had been an organizer with the Charlotte IAF affiliate, was one of the IAF point people involved in the original conversations with IPAR and was able to hit the ground running once he was hired. A document reviewing the timeline of the early GWSSC efforts notes that in approximately a six month period Baumann conducted over 150 individual meetings with religious leaders and organization presidents to confer about their interest in participating in the organizing venture. The same document suggests these meetings were vital to the GWSSC's initial work because they wanted to ensure that as many people as possible were at the table before developing an agenda, name, and leadership structure (Greater Winston-Salem Sponsoring Committee, 2002).

The newly formed organization held its first Delegates Assembly in September 2002 where more than 270 people were in attendance. These individuals represented four faith traditions and more than 40 religious institutions. The central action at this assembly was obtaining commitments from those present to reach 1,200 Forsyth County residents through house meetings. The information collected from the house meetings would be used to help the GWSSC develop an action agenda. Over 100 leaders were trained to conduct house meetings and during the fall of 2002 approximately 1,800 people participated in the house meeting process. Based on the data, five priority areas were identified: youth and education; jobs and economic development; quality affordable

healthcare; quality housing and neighborhoods; and "reinventing local government" (an umbrella term for governmental reform).

The organization officially went public in March 2003 at its second Delegates Assembly. With attendance in excess of 350 people, the group ratified a proposed agenda and adopted the name, Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment or CHANGE.[26] The assembly elicited the first media coverage of the organizing effort. A *Winston-Salem Journal* article entitled, "'Sounds of New Wings': Group of People of Faith Stepping Into Local Issues," explained that the group had been organizing under the radar for three years. Interestingly, the article points out that while some of the faith communities present were known for their activism, many others were not. Likewise, the article noted that "a few of the speakers were activists . . . But most were people not often in the news" (Railey, 2003a, p. B1). This kind of diversity seemed to be a striking shift from business as usual in Winston-Salem. One public leader I interviewed referenced his experience at this particular delegates assembly reflecting, "From the first meeting I went to, I had never seen this many types of people under one roof coming together for a common cause and keeping politics out of it" (R. Thompson, personal communication, April 1, 2009). Such an observation is of interest, because it reveals disparate definitions of politics at play. I explore how these varied readings impact the ways that CHANGE's work is interpreted in Chapter 6.

---

[26] There is a humorous story about the process of choosing the name for the organization. Nominations were accepted and one of the suggestions was "Forsyth United." This was quickly nixed when one of the leaders, who was a PR person, realized the acronym that might flash up on the television screen would be FU. Considering whom our adversaries might be, some of us joked that the acronym could well be quite appropriate.

On the heels of the March 2003 assembly, CHANGE trained over 140 leaders to participate on action teams related to the priority issues aforementioned. The teams were charged with meeting regularly to do research and craft campaign recommendations. The IAF model encourages new organizations to choose an initial campaign based on the house meeting results that is specific and produces immediate results. It is not unusual for an IAF group to employ a neighborhood audit as a vehicle to get people's feet wet in terms of the research, action, and evaluation process and to credential the organization in the eyes of public officials. This is, in fact, what CHANGE chose to do. The first action campaign related to quality housing and neighborhood conditions is essential to review, because it served as a conduit for building solid relationships with key public officials and powerbrokers and positioned the organization as a new player in local political life.

In the neighborhood audit campaign, more than 125 people conducted assessments in 15 areas of Winston-Salem and documented over 1,000 items like pot holes, abandoned cars, and drug corners that needed to be addressed by the city. At the May 2003 Delegates Assembly, CHANGE obtained a commitment from Major Allen Joines to take action on the 1000 items within 120 days. Monthly meetings with Mayor Joines and city staff were held to monitor the audit's progress. While there were some issues that were not within the city's jurisdiction, approximately 96% of the items were taken care of within the outlined timeframe (CHANGE, 2005).

Figure 1. Neighborhood Audit Form. This is an example of a completed audit form. Over 1,000 items that needed repair were noted by auditors through this process.
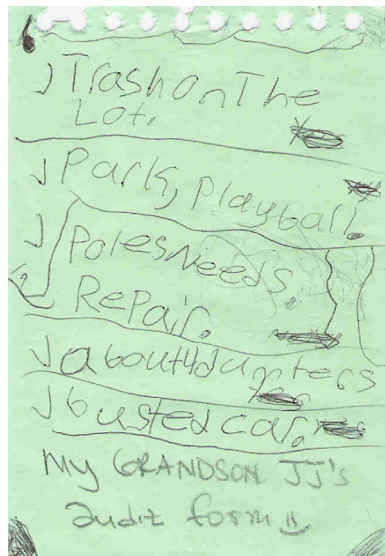
Figure 2. Grandson's Audit Form. A CHANGE leader's grandson participated in the neighborhood audit and made notes about his observations.

Figure 3. Neighborhood Auditors. Two CHANGE leaders are shown walking through one of the 15 neighborhoods included in the audit.

One important outcome of this campaign was that the City of Winston-Salem institutionalized the neighborhood audit process and placed a link on the front page of the city's website so that residents could report problems and request services. The organization's work also spurred city staff to publish a booklet, "Who Do You Call? A Citizen's Guide to City Services." The campaign proved to be a win-win for all parties involved, particularly because it was perceived as a non-adversarial action. (As will be evidenced in other chapters, this would not always be the case.) An editorial in the *Winston-Salem Journal* declared that the audit and accompanying interaction with local public officials "reflected public engagement in social and civic affairs done right" (Gates, 2003, p. A6). The editor concluded that most issues which place citizens and government in conflicting positions can be resolved through compromise and that "CHANGE is helping show the way" (Gates, 2003, p. A6).

After working for three years on the ground quietly and one year visibly, CHANGE held its founding convention in October 2004. Like most IAF affiliated groups, CHANGE's founding convention was intended to officially announce the organization and founding institutions adopted the charter which formalized their commitment to become dues-paying and voting members of the body. The first class of Strategy Team members was ratified as well. (I was a part of this initial core team and served as a co-chair of the Strategy Team for one year.) More than 650 people were present at the founding convention, including several elected officials and candidates who publicly consented to meet with CHANGE within 90 days of the 2004 election.

Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment

814 McCreary St. Winston-Salem, NC 27105 / 336-661-6353

FOUNDING CHARTER

We the undersigned do hereby commit to be founding members of this new multiracial interfaith broad-based citizens organization in Forsyth County to work to improve the quality of life for all people. Our mission is to build a powerful broad-based organization so that our families can be involved with and impact the political and economic decisions that affect our lives. This organization is a vehicle for us to act on our faith in the broader community. We commit our institutions, our people, and our dues to ensure the success of our new organization. CHANGE follows a deep commitment to train leaders to be able to speak up and act on their own behalf. We follow the Iron Rule: Never do for others what they can do for themselves. Never! Let this new organization be here for generations to come and provide lasting impact in all aspects of our lives.

Institution Name	Signature	Date
Waughtown Street Neighborhood Assoc.	*(signature)*	10/24/04
St Anne's Episcopal Church	*(signature)*	
	Sid Kelley	
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship	Carla Sherf	10/24/04
Wake Forest Baptist Church	*(signature)*	
Parkway United Church of Christ	Jean Zook	
Emmanuel Baptist Church	Hebert Jones	
Fanning Road Assoc.	Joyce McCadden	
St Paul's Episcopal	*(signature)*	
Shiloh Baptist	Justina Garrett	
North Winston Baptist	Anita D. Gilliam	
West End Assoc.	Jeff Smith	
Temple Emanuel	*(signature)*	
Grace Presbyterian	William Thomas	Pisgah Forest Baptist
St. Mark Baptist	Sarah L. Norris	
Home Moravian Church	Carol Cutter	
West Salem Neighborhood Association	Sam W. *(signature)*	
Phillips Chapel Baptist		
Union Chapel Baptist	*(signature)* Woodruff	10/24/04
Green Street Methodist Church	Shaun Summerville	Delta's 85
Christ Moravian Church	Neil Roth	
Trinity Presbyterian	Margaret P. Elliott	
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church	Katie *(signature)*	
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church	Patricia Y. Toney	
Lloyd Presbyterian Church	Laura M. Spangler	10/24/04
W-S Community Mosque	*(signature)*	

Figure 4. CHANGE Founding Charter. Representatives from member institutions signed the founding charter of CHANGE at the convention on October 24, 2004 at Emmanual Baptist Church.

The founding convention did not go without a hitch, though. While as a rule great

preparation is done for public assemblies including rehearsal and vetting of speeches, one

pastor's talk slipped through the cracks and was not scrutinized. After all of the great care

taken to build CHANGE as a broad-based, non-partisan organization,

many of us were shocked to hear his address. The pastor's oration was fiery and

provocative like his sermons, but it was also wreaked of partisanship. As a result, the

organizers had to do some major damage control. One correspondence captured the

feelings of some of the participants,

> J. and I thought this afternoon was a great afternoon except for one thing -- Rev. _____'s clearly partisan closing. We pretty much agreed with all he said and if we had been at a Democratic Party rally would have stood and cheered, but it went against one of CHANGE's strong policies of being completely non-partisan. M. and I, and others as well, have worked hard to get our congregation interested in CHANGE and the one thing that is holding some members back is that it seems too political. We have assured these people that this is not the case – that it is political but completely non-partisan. We were essentially made liars today and we probably took several steps back with our congregation – it even made us glad that some folks had not come. I'm not sure what can be done about this, but I surely hope it won't happen in the future! I think we talked with most of our folk who were there and let them know that this was highly unusual, and they were all understanding and were generally amazed at the cross section of people working together for CHANGE in W-S. Our pastor, _____, was there and he said he'd never seen anything like it in all his years here. So thanks so much for your good work – we look forward to continuing to work together. (CHANGE leader, personal communication to CHANGE, October 24, 2004)

It is important to note that in the evaluation session immediately following the assembly,

the issue was addressed directly and the pastor was present to hear the scathing critiques.

He openly listened and apologized to the group for violating the organization's

principles. Furthermore, there was considerable dialogue later between CHANGE leaders

about how to ensure that this kind of straying from the organization's principles did not happen again.

Given the delicate nature of organizing work, such a faux pas easily can be the death knell for a new organization. Fortunately for CHANGE, local media coverage focused on the meat of the meeting and not the last five minutes. The communities two major newspapers, The *Winston-Salem Journal* and *The Chronicle*, mostly highlighted the enumerated agenda items that CHANGE would address in forthcoming months, including affordable healthcare services, educational equity, economic development, and voter turn-out.

Regarding the convention, *The Chronicle* noted that while CHANGE had been at work for more than a year, "in the sanctuary of a packed church the grassroots group was born again" (Walker, 2004, p. A5). Even more noteworthy was that for the first time, the *Winston-Salem Journal* explicitly suggested that CHANGE had power. An editorial entitled, "Answering to CHANGE," proclaimed,

> When the grass-roots group CHANGE began to form here a few years ago, few elected officials noticed. But the fact that several candidates for national, state and local seats waited their turn Sunday to address the group was evidence of the strengths it's built in Forsyth County. (Railey, 2004b, p. A16)

The editorial concluded saying that even as the group had maintained its bi-partisan character on the whole, most likely they would have to work hard to sustain it.

A conservative periodical, *The Yellow Jacket*, wrote a similar editorial as well, albeit with a slightly different bent. The editor noted that while the preliminary work of

the organization was impressive, "the danger is that this idealistic and hopeful organization will be captured by a less-than-moderate cadre of 'leaders' who will radicalize Change, espousing programs far beyond the intentions of the original organizers" (Malcolm, 2004, p. 2). The author goes on to suggest that his fears may have already started being realized with the ratification of "a pre-ordained 'strategy team'" and his observation that there had been no discussion, nominations from the floor or clarification about the Strategy Team's mandate to act on behalf on the membership (Malcolm, 2004, p.2). The editor also noted that the questions asked of public officials regarding job training and living wages for military may be a forewarning of the subversion of the organization.

Based on my analysis of the abovementioned editorials, the CHANGE leader's email, and the data collected in my interviews and surveys, I believe CHANGE has had to contend with two central issues since its inception: 1) articulating the organization's identity, structure, and purpose (particularly in a community overflowing with "traditional" non-profits); and 2) negotiating the complicated and interwoven discourses of politics and partisanship. The next chapters elucidate these issues further.

CHAPTER IV

TO GIVE PIETY SOME LEGS:
PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE'S IDENTITY AND MISSION

Figure 5. CHANGE Press Conference. CHANGE leaders held a press conference urging the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners to maintain funding for the Downtown Health Plaza, which provides services for uninsured residents (May 2005).

"I never felt connected to a part of my community until CHANGE. I have fallen in love with my town, my diverse neighbors, our difficult but hopeful future."
~ Comment written by a CHANGE leader as a final note on the survey

A central part of my research was focused on trying to understand how elected

and appointed public officials, business leaders, and individuals involved with CHANGE

interpret the organization's identity and mission; that is, what is CHANGE, who comprises its constituency, and what does it do? I used a variety of questions to gain an understanding of the respondents' views of CHANGE's identity and mission. The surveys given to CHANGE leaders and the focus group questions for the Strategy Team asked them expressly to describe the mission of the organization. In the interviews with public leaders I asked them to describe CHANGE's work. I did specifically use the word mission when it seemed the respondent was not sure about the question. Unfortunately, the survey I sent out to the broader group of public officials did not include a specific question related to their take on CHANGE's mission. Given the last minute addition of this survey and my focus on gauging CHANGE's impact on decision-making, the lack of including this question was an omission that I would correct in future research.

In analyzing the data I was particularly focused on how perspectives may converge and/or deviate based on the various positionalities of the respondents. For instance, did CHANGE participants and external community leaders define the organization's work similarly or were there striking differences? Was race a determinant in their answers? How did CHANGE members think the "powers that be" viewed the organization and its work? Did leadership positions and length of time involved in the organization affect the ways in which individual actors in CHANGE verbalize the mission? A final overarching question was whether the respondents indicated that the organization's mission was to transform larger political and cultural dynamics or do issue work or both. This chapter focuses on how the respondents in this study understand

CHANGE's mission and the perceived effectiveness of the organization's efforts to increase participation in public life.

For the Common Good: Articulations of Mission by IAF Affiliates

To begin, I believe it is important to outline how CHANGE articulates its mission and identity. Placing CHANGE's representation of its own work within the broader context of IAF affiliated organizations is also useful. In order to create a framework for my data analysis, this section addresses the various ways that other IAF affiliates convey their missions and how CHANGE identifies itself in written materials.

An on-line survey of the IAF national website, as well as affiliated organizations' websites, reveals recognizable IAF vernacular and comparable interpretations of their respective missions. Repeatedly there are references to building relationships, renewing citizen participation in public life, and training leaders to work together for justice and the common good. For example, Greater Boston Interfaith Network states,

> Our primary goal is to develop local leadership and organized power to fight for social justice. We strive to hold both public and private power holders accountable for their public responsibilities, as well as to initiate actions and programs of our own to solve community and economic problems. (Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, "Our Mission," 2009)

Similarly, the Southeast IAF, a geographical network of IAF affiliates which includes CHANGE, more overtly details its shared work as partnering with religious leaders and congregation as well as other allied community groups. It also identifies the organizations' efforts as assisting local leaders with crafting successful campaigns and

developing leaders. Furthermore, in describing how the Southeast IAF organizes, the website states, "The process allows ordinary people to discover and act on their faith in democracy, civic participation and working on behalf of the common good" (Southeast IAF, 2009).

The national IAF website describes the larger network as being "proudly, publicly, and persistently political" and using "a radical tactic: the face-to-face, one-to-one individual meeting whose purpose is to initiate a public relationship and to re-knit the frayed social fabric" (Industrial Areas Foundation, "Who Are We?", 2009). All of the organizations characterize their work as broad-based, non-partisan, and across racial, socioeconomic, and religious lines.

Some of the organizations use the language of "relational power," a common IAF term, in their mission statements. For instance, Arizona Interfaith Network states that they build "relational power for collective actions in the pursuit of justice and the common good" (Arizona Interfaith Network, "Mission," 2003-2009). Likewise, Bay Area Industrial Areas Foundation asserts that they "work to create relational power that can build and strengthen each member institution as well as shape public policy for the common good" (Bay Area Industrial Areas Foundation, 2008, para. 1). These mission statements reflect a clear connection between the intentional commitment to build relationships across diverse groups and the ability to give rise to more just communities.

Early pamphlets of CHANGE speak to organization's goal of creating what Harry Boyte and Sara Evans (1992) refer to as "free spaces," arenas where people can come

together to engage in public discourse and contextualize their lives in the larger world. A 2005 annual report remarks that the organization "seeks to provide a space for residents of Forsyth County to participate in our democracy and public life" (CHANGE, 2005c, p. 1). Notably, the report also asserts that CHANGE "is not a movement, a protest group, a political action committee, or a service organization. We do not run programs, endorse candidates, or take government money" (CHANGE, 2005c, p. 1). A 2008 annual report spells out that CHANGE is committed to:

- Building a stronger community by developing relationships across racial, ethnic, economic, political, social, and religious lines.
- Cultivating the skills of leaders inside our member institutions.
- Identifying shared concerns and needs.
- Acting together for the common good. (CHANGE, 2008c, p. 6)

Recently, the language in written materials has become more explicit about the role of power and participation in decision-making in the organization's work. In concert with some of the points above, a handout used for the latest house meeting process states, "Our mission is to build a powerful interfaith, multiracial, broad based organization so residents can impact the political and economic decision that affect their lives" (Eller, 2009, p. 1). After explaining that CHANGE is not a protest group, service organization, and will not do for others what they can do for themselves, the handout concludes:

What CHANGE will do is organize people in a strictly non-violent way to win power so our democracy can be realized for all persons. We make decisions through our member organizations as a grass-roots community. CHANGE will train leaders, research, consult, participate in congregational development, strategize, build relationships, provide accountability and act collectively for the good of all members of our community. (Eller, 2009, p.1)

At one Clergy Caucus meeting I attended, the Lead Organizer referenced the statement above and suggested that in other written materials about CHANGE it seemed that there was great intention about identifying the organization by what it was not. He felt that there should be more attention given to what the organization *is* about, which prompted an interesting dialogue between the attendees about the purpose of the organization. One pastor said he thought that even though the description said CHANGE was not a protest group or movement, he actually thought it was all of those things. Another pastor referenced C.S. Lewis', *The Great Divorce*, in which hell is characterized as the place where people quarrel and move further apart. Conversely, he said he saw CHANGE's work as trying to bring people together and build as many relationships as possible.

As the reader will learn, many people who participated in this study identified CHANGE's mission in terms of drawing people together across various dividing lines. A notable number of newspaper articles have characterized the work this way as well. However, there were some individuals I interviewed who expressed skepticism about the reality of said purpose and some who outright refuted it. After defining the character of CHANGE, the remainder of this chapter considers these various viewpoints.

Who is CHANGE?

The Industrial Areas Foundation model of community organizing enjoys ambiguity. An organizer once told me that the model keeps the media and public officials on their toes. With various people who share responsibility for the organization and the

ability to address multiple issues, it can be perplexing to outside observers as to who "the leader" is or to pigeonhole the group's work. And this is the point. Dr. Leo Penta (1999), an IAF organizer in Germany, explains,

> Broad-based organizing neither espouses a single "cause," nor does it seek to enlist a loosely-knit, mass following that can be quickly mobilized in protest or in support of the central issue. Organizing stresses collective leadership over charismatic, and persistent and direct mid-level action over more heavily media-reliant lobbying or symbolic action at the macro-level. (p. 3)

In the absence of such understanding, however, onlookers often struggle to name the organization and frequently use traditional frames to classify these groups. This appears to be especially true for the media.

A clear theme that came to light in my interviews was that the print media plays an important role in shaping public perceptions of CHANGE's work. The next segment offers a reading of the ways in which local print media has characterized the CHANGE's identity and mission over the years. I also briefly discuss what the respondents gleaned from media portrayals of the organization and its efforts.

Print Media Coverage

Early on in designing this research study, I had decided to explore local newspaper coverage of CHANGE; a decision that was reinforced by the fact that a number of community leaders whom I interviewed referenced media as a source of their understanding of CHANGE's work. Thus, I reviewed media coverage since the inception of CHANGE to see how the group has been tagged over the years. The majority of

reporting has been done by the *Winston-Salem Journal*, the main daily newspaper, and *The Chronicle*, a weekly paper that concentrates on issues and events in the African-American community. Since CHANGE went public in 2003, there have been approximately 100 articles in the *Winston-Salem Journal* that make some reference to CHANGE. *The Chronicle* has published approximately 25 articles during that same time period.[27]

In general, there have been somewhat consistent references to the multi-racial, multi-faith composition of CHANGE in both newspapers. *The Chronicle's* treatment of CHANGE also focused on its grassroots makeup and for the most part this has stayed consistent over the years. Early *Chronicle* reports on CHANGE described it in such terms as "a multi-racial coalition made up of members of dozens of local churches" (Walker, 2003a, p. A10) and "a racially diverse grassroots group" (Walker, 2003b, p. A1). Likewise, the *Journal's* first article highlighted the grassroots nature of the group, its multi-racial and multi-faith constituency, and its use of the IAF model (Railey, 2003a, p. B1). A few weeks later another article identified CHANGE as "a multicultural group" (*Winston-Salem Journal*, 2003, p. B2). After that, for well over the next year the *Journal* and *Chronicle* coverage appears to have settled on describing CHANGE as a grassroots organization or group.

As CHANGE's work began to broaden from neighborhood clean-up efforts to education, economic development, and healthcare issues, descriptions also began to shift.

---

[27] Unfortunately, there is no on-line database which stores *The Chronicle's* articles. Therefore, I reviewed microfiche copies of the newspaper in the North Carolina Room at the Forsyth County Public Library's central branch. While I diligently looked through every edition of the paper, it is quite possible that I may have overlooked an article or two.

In a July 2004 *Journal* article covering CHANGE's support of the proposed Dell computer plant, the organization is referred to as "a local community-development group" (Craver, 2004, p. D1). Then a November 2004 piece about CHANGE's voter turn-out effort depicts the organization as "a local advocacy group" (Giunca, 2004, p. B1). *The Chronicle's* portrayals of the group begin to be altered as well during this period. A 2005 *Chronicle* piece uses the language of "a grassroots social and economic empowerment group" when discussing CHANGE's efforts to ensure there would be broad-based access to jobs at the new Dell plant (Walker, 2005a, p. A11). Later, in July, 2005 another *Chronicle* article about Dell names CHANGE as a "grassroots community advocacy group" (Walker, 2005d, p. A9).

With the ramping up of CHANGE's work regarding a proposed public school bond in 2005, we see a notable reference to the organization as a "large community-action group" in the *Journal* (Deaver, 2005a, p. B1). All the more interesting is an item written later about the same issue as it became more contentious. When the School Board decided to pull the bond proposal because of community pressure, this article pointed out that the bond had faced opposition by "community activist groups" including CHANGE, the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, and the NAACP (Deaver, 2005c, p. A1). Markedly, *The Chronicle* invoked the language of activism when talking about the school bond issue too. A *Chronicle* article discussing a public forum on the 2005 bond proposal, for the first time, describes CHANGE as "a grassroots community activism organization" (albeit going further in terms of detailing the group's

constituency) (Walker, 2005c, p. A5).

The importance of this particular reference to activism cannot be overstated, because both the Ministers Conference and the NAACP are outspoken, predominantly African-American organizations with leaders who have been historically demonized by many in the white community. These same leaders and organizations, for the most part, have been held in high esteem by African-Americans in the city. In short, in black and white communities the language of activism and references to particular groups may be read very differently. In current lexicon, the term "activism" has become synonymous with liberal, as evidenced in discussions about Supreme Court justices. One must question whether such a descriptor applied to CHANGE was intentionally employed by both newspapers, or at the very least interpreted, as political code language.[28]

In the last few years, the *Journal* has returned to a more generic intonation of grassroots as CHANGE's moniker. The one deviation from this arose during the organization's push for school board election reform this past year when CHANGE was described as "a self-styled community political organization" (Sexton, 2008, p. B1). The *Journal*'s characterization of political work was not lost on one interviewee. When asked what he knew about CHANGE, Mr. Smith, a white male business leader actually spoke to the influence of the media in terms of his understanding of CHANGE's work. Based on some of Mr. Smith's comments in the interview, I asked him to tell me a bit more about his sense of CHANGE being liberally or conservatively oriented. He expounded,

---

[28] Anecdotally, there has been speculation among some citizens that the *Winston-Salem Journal's* coverage of community issues leans toward fueling controversy instead of "responsible" journalism. One can only conjecture about the author's intentions in her article.

> It would be unfair for me to give a characterization of that partly because of the way our media always reports things in the Winston-Salem paper. It loves to categorize things and so I would say that our media from time to time has probably enjoyed capturing the political dynamic of it but people who I know who have worked with CHANGE say there's much more work than that going on within it. It's just that what the media loves to report on is the political dynamic of it. (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

At the time of my interview with Mr. Smith, the *Journal* had written a fair amount about the organization's push for non-partisan school board elections but had minimally reported on CHANGE's other campaigns. Hence, as Mr. Smith suggested, it was easy to see how readers could walk away with a one-dimensional picture of the group in mind.

Notably, Mr. Goins, a white elected official, who had multiple critiques of CHANGE's undertakings, indicated that he felt the *Journal* had had a motivating effect on CHANGE. Leaning forward and resting his clasped hands on the table, he exclaimed,

> You know what feeds their [CHANGE's] ego? The *Winston-Salem Journal*. The *Winston-Salem Journal*, for whatever reason, editorially has *always* liked CHANGE. They print letters to the editor positive to CHANGE, but I've never seen the *Journal* write an editorial criticizing CHANGE. I've never seen the *Journal* publish a letter to the editor criticizing CHANGE, CHANGE doesn't like criticism. And the *Winston-Salem Journal* does it. And that feeds them enough confidence to feed their efforts in their community. But the *Winston-Salem Journal* doesn't contribute a dime to their [CHANGE's] existence. All they do is just say, "Hey, you're doing a great job. Keep up the good work." (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

For the record, a *Journal* reporter with whom I spoke contested Mr. Goins's charge. The reporter maintained that the paper had not given a pass to CHANGE, and in fact had pointed out the organization's need to expand and diversify its constituency more. That

being said, after making this point the reporter did confess, "Otherwise, what's bad to say?" (R. Thompson, personal communication, April 1, 2009).

Clearly, the media actively constructs the news by determining what is newsworthy, both in terms of coverage and placement of articles in the paper (Lester, 1980; Maney & Oliver, 2003). Likewise, regional news media plays a sizeable role in shaping local political discourses by framing stories in particular ways (Oliver & Myers, 1999). While globalization and technology have drastically shifted the ways in which news is produced and disseminated, one cannot underestimate the influence that local media still plays in molds people's outlook on community issues, events and institutions. There is an increasing feeling that local papers are less invested in advancing community interests than in "if it bleeds, it leads" kind of journalism.[29] In recent years the *Journal* has seen a decrease in circulation, but it nevertheless has a fairly steady readership in Winston-Salem. Recognizing that the *Journal* continues to be a primary local news source, CHANGE has struggled off and on since the beginning to negotiate a relationship with the paper, which the organization feels at times has been inconsistent and biased in its coverage. On the other hand, CHANGE has always had a positive relationship with *The Chronicle*, which regularly has reported on CHANGE actions in ways deemed for

---

[29] With the rise of media conglomerates taking ownership of locally owned papers and dictating stories and even editorials, such sentiments are warranted. Ironically, the *Journal* appears to have caught on that there is some skepticism about its commitments to the community. In recent months the paper has started publishing a daily statement on its editorial page. The statement, which is identified as being printed in the first edition of the paper on April 3, 1897, states, "Our whole time, attention, energy and limited ability shall be unsparingly drawn upon to promote and protect the interests of Winston and Salem and to assist the prosperity of a great city whose every interest is united into a harmonious whole" (*Winston-Salem Journal*, 2010, p A28).

the most part accurate and fair by the organization's leadership. These dynamics are certainly worthy of future study.

The rest of this chapter scrutinizes how the respondents in my study typify CHANGE's identity and efforts by addressing themes that arose out of the surveys and interviews. Furthermore, in light of CHANGE's assertion that a part of its mission is to increase participation in public life, an analysis of the apparent effectiveness of this intended mission is presented. I have chosen to interlace the responses of all participants throughout rather than discussing the respective groups' answers in separate sections. I believe the reader will be able to make connections more clearly as a result. Moreover, when appropriate an analysis of Winston-Salem's history and cultural dynamics is included as a way to provide a richer appraisal of the data.

Overview of Data

With regard to the positionalities of the respondents, to my surprise I could find no appreciable differences amongst CHANGE members' answers based on race, leadership positions, or duration of involvement in the organization. However, participants did offer multiple understandings of the mission, highlighting issue work as well as changing political and cultural dynamics. Answers included: bringing people together to build relationships; improving quality of life; identifying and taking action on shared problems; affording opportunities for participation in the public realm; providing a voice for the voiceless; empowering individuals to act; and claiming and using power to influence decision-making processes. Of course, it is important to consider that an answer

I might interpret to be issue-oriented may be viewed by the respondent as ultimately changing community dynamics long-term.

I also examined the respondents' answers to the question about CHANGE's biggest contribution in order to shed another light on perceptions of the mission. This proved to be an insightful exercise, because these answers generally reflected the same themes found in the responses to the mission question. Out of 106 responses[30] to the query about the organization's biggest contribution, approximately 50% pointed to work around issues such as education, housing, neighborhood improvement, employment, and healthcare access. Roughly 51% of respondents made reference to practices like bringing diverse groups together (including citizens, public officials and business leaders), empowering the civic sector, impacting governance and getting churches involved in social justice efforts. I view these types of actions as more concerted efforts to make lasting broad political and cultural changes in the community. Assessments of the mission are illuminated below.

Perceptions of CHANGE's Mission

A simple, yet pointed statement – "to give piety some legs." This is how one of the CHANGE clergy members responded to my question about the mission of CHANGE. Over the years I've heard similar sentiments suggesting that CHANGE helps its members put "feet to their faith." Overall, descriptions of the organization's mission internally and externally fell into four main categories: 1) bringing people together; 2) developing relationships between diverse groups of people; 3) giving a voice to the voiceless by

---

[30] In some cases there were multiple responses per person.

empowering citizens to effectively participate in public life; and 4) building power so the grassroots (common citizens) can influence decision-making by public officials and institutions. These same themes appeared in several responses to the organizational survey question about CHANGE's biggest contribution to the community, also. I begin with looking at the themes of bringing people together and developing relationships across dividing lines.

Roots of Race and Class Divisions

There has long been a sense of division in Winston-Salem, particularly with regard to race and socioeconomic status. Even though demographics suggest that Winston-Salem exhibits a reasonable amount of income and race diversity, neighborhoods still tend to be homogenous. To reiterate the divisions there are even visible demarcation lines, such as Highway 52, that reiterate the partitioning of the community. A friend once compellingly expressed, "Highway 52 provides both a visual and visceral reminder of the deep divisions in our community." Another example of these lines can be found on a street in which the name literally changes in the middle of the road as one passes from a working class, African-American neighborhood into one of the wealthiest areas in Winston-Salem.

In order to understand Winston-Salem's peculiar pattern of residential segregation, one must look to the economic drivers of the community at the turn of the 19th century. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and Hanes Knitting Company had a significant impact on housing patterns in the city. Reynolds generated a notable migration

of African-Americans, so much so that by 1940 Winston-Salem had the largest

population of black citizens in North Carolina. Additionally, more African-Americans in

Winston-Salem had manufacturing jobs than anywhere else in the South (Korstad, 2003).

On the other hand, like many textile mills in the South Hanes was dominated by white

workers. Michael Shirley (1994) suggests that this was due to the mill owners' prejudices

and need to control their labor force. The owners often used threats of replacing their

white workers, known as "lintheads," with black ones as a way to ensure submissiveness

of their employees.

Housing patterns in the city mimicked the demographics of the respective

companies' workers. Thus, while in most Deep South cities "pocket neighborhoods"

comprised of African-American day laborers would spring up next to the neighborhoods

of their white employers, this was only minimally true in Winston-Salem. Korstad (2003)

notes that the combination of Reynolds' supreme presence in Winston-Salem's economy

and the formal and informal practices of Jim Crow yielded a compactly populated black

working-class community which spread north and east from the factories. This area

would come to be known as East Winston and as mentioned earlier, is demarcated by

Highway 52.[31]

The white migrants who worked for Hanes lived in an unincorporated company-

owned village on the west side of town. Right outside the city limits and fairly insulated,

they had their own schools and churches and were nominally involved with city life

---

[31] For more detailed information about the African-American neighborhoods and housing patterns in
Winston-Salem, the reader is encouraged to consult Chapter 3 in Korstad's text.

(Korstad, 2003). White tobacco workers lived mostly in the south, although they were more scattered throughout the city. A fair number actually lived in rural areas to the north and west and commuted to the factory. Unlike their African-American counterparts who often migrated from other urban areas, Whites frequently came straight from farm communities and stayed connected to their rural roots (Korstad, 2003).

Working class population increases in the city spurred tension between Whites and Blacks. Victims of poverty and discrimination, black citizens were relegated to environmentally unsound areas north and east of the tobacco factories. Especially disturbing were real estate agents who took advantage of racist fears and hoodwinked white homeowners into selling their properties based on suspicions that black neighbors would depreciate their property values. Once the properties were acquired, the agents would then resell them to other whites as rental property or Blacks who could afford them. In 1912 as a way to counter such block-busting practices, the Board of Alderman passed a residential segregation ordinance making it unlawful for someone of a different race to move onto a block with a majority of another race (Korstad, 2003). Although this ordinance was overturned in 1914, the stage was set for white flight as Blacks moved further into East Winston. In a one year period a huge number of Whites left the area, and by 1942 East Winston was more or less completely black (Korstad, 2003).

Over the years, some neighborhoods in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County would become more diverse but not to any great extent.[32] Even black middle and upper class neighborhoods that would arise mostly stayed contained within the East Winston

---

[32] Growing up in the 1980s and 1990s I often heard East Winston referred to as "Black Town."

area. Blacks and Whites (and in time a new immigrant population)[33] would interact regularly in the marketplace and may attend schools together, but on the whole would continue to live parallel and unequal lives.

Bringing People Together

Given the history and prevailing sense of racial segregation in Winston-Salem, it is not surprising that many people have been awed by CHANGE's ability to gather Blacks, Whites, and Latinos together. It should be acknowledged that there had been previous efforts to build multi-racial organizations in Winston-Salem, but none to the scale of CHANGE. Again and again amongst the public officials and business leaders I interviewed, as well as CHANGE members, the sheer ability to draw diverse people together (even in the same physical space) seemed to be an extraordinary feat. A resident in the community for more than 20 years, an African-American administrator whom I interviewed talked about going to a 2006 CHANGE delegates assembly where more than 1,200 people had congregated,

> . . . there were people from every walk of life, every kind of religion, they were there. At this meeting! So yeah, I mean you have to say they [CHANGE] have done a lot to pull us together in this community. Which has been one of the big issues you know . . . you're over there on the other side of 52, "We have nothing to do with you until we have to. And we're here. And you're not going to come here" . . . but we're together now. Not as much as we need to be. But I can see it moving. (F. Butler, personal communication, April 17, 2009)

---

[33] Of course, Latinos would end up being clustered residentially as well. Currently, the Waughtown neighborhood on the south side of the city is replete with Mexican owned businesses and the area is frequently referred to as "Little Mexico."

Another interviewee, a white male administrator, pointed to this same assembly as a seminal moment for CHANGE "in terms of bringing together groups and giving people a sense of identity" (C. McNeill, personal communication, March 25, 2009).

Sometimes CHANGE's role in bringing people together is as a facilitator. In the focus group with CHANGE Strategy Team members, one person described how the organization "gets groups that never talked to each other talking to each other." He pointed to a recent campaign focused on lead poisoning prevention in which CHANGE orchestrated a meeting between the head of the public health department and the head of the housing department. Both of these entities were covering the same issues but had never talked with one another. The Strategy Team member reflected, "It's like the community's fractured in all these little pockets and CHANGE is sort of like the mother hen getting all the chicks together and getting them to talk with one another." Thus, CHANGE's function as a bridge-builder goes beyond bringing together diverse individuals within the organization; it brings together community institutions which often fail to connect with other establishments outside their own walls.

Recognizing the isolation among various groups and the present day visual reminders, one can see why CHANGE's commitment to bring people together across typical dividing lines is powerful. Nowhere is this more evident that in a statement made by an elderly African-American leader that in all the years she had lived in Winston-Salem, the first time she had ever been inside a white church was when she started doing work with CHANGE. That being said, the ghosts of neighborhood segregation are still

very much alive. While CHANGE is able to bring people together across separating lines to work on issues, physically crossing into different areas of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County is still challenging for some individuals. It is not unusual for the organization to have a lower attendance of African-Americans when meetings are held at predominantly white churches in certain areas of the community.

Beyond building bridges across dividing lines, there was a clear sense among many of those surveyed and interviewed that CHANGE brings people together for a purpose – to find solutions to shared problems and to act for the common good. For instance, a Metro Council respondent from a Catholic congregation suggested CHANGE's mission was to build relationships between congregations and community groups in order to work toward actions that would better the community. In general, according to the responses "the common good" seems to be defined as ensuring the equitable distribution of resources and power. Of course, the common good is often defined differently based on one's positionality. This becomes more evident in Chapters 5 and 6 given the responses from some public officials about what CHANGE's role *should* be in the community are discussed.

By and large survey responses from CHANGE members which fell into this category alluded to *how* the organization goes about its work. References to gathering people together in order to identify shared problems, research them, and then craft pointed actions were common. One example of this type of answer came from an African-American Metro Council participant who has been involved in CHANGE since

its establishment. This person articulated that CHANGE's mission was "to help enrich the lives of the people in Winston-Salem . . . help us learn to work together for the good of us all and change the things we can." Interestingly, another African-American Metro Council leader employed stronger language to make her point. She indicated CHANGE's mission was to solicit challenges, collect input research, and then confront for solutions.

No one else in the study used the language of confrontation; however, it bears deeper examination. The employment of public and often dramatic confrontation is an IAF strategy that dates back to Saul Alinsky. As senior IAF organizer, Mike Gecan, explained in a 2003 *Shelterforce* article, "Public confrontation is at bottom an attempt to engage and relate . . . Most activists fail to appreciate this. Bureaucrats seek to stifle it" (Atlas, 2003). Current IAF organizers would note that most often confrontation is a tactic used in tandem with negotiation. Nonetheless, public officials and community members who hold a "go along to get along" ethos frequently resent community organizing efforts like CHANGE and see such groups merely as troublemakers. At times, some CHANGE participants even struggle with the use and usefulness of confrontation. The organization's effort to secure school board election reform is a prime example of this and is detailed further in Chapter 5.

As indicated earlier in my discussion about the way IAF affiliates speak to their respective missions, the idea of working together for the common good is central to organizing philosophy. Moreover, the common good can be interpreted as enhancing the quality of life for all citizens. There were respondents who directly cited bettering the

community and improving the quality of life as their understanding of CHANGE's mission. Mr. Graham, a white elected public official who is quite knowledgeable about the organization, suggested the basic mission was to improve the quality of life "for I guess everyone in the city but particularly maybe those who might be a little more disenfranchised, maybe not part of the quote establishment, maybe not have the power to address their own concerns" (J. Graham, personal communication, April 2, 2009). Mr. Graham's assessment was reiterated by a few of his colleagues who also connected enhancing quality of life with strengthening the voices of the less powerful in the community.

Likewise, a white Clergy Caucus member expressed the idea of community improvement in terms of mobilizing people of different faiths and heritage "to work together to make the community more supportive of all people." He went on to say that in order to improve the quality of life for citizens CHANGE organizes people so they can articulate their needs more successfully. Of course, communicating needs (and wants) more effectively and actually securing the changes required to attend to those needs are two different matters. Themes related to these challenges are addressed later in this chapter.

Developing Relationships Between Diverse Groups

Generally, bringing people together means building bridges between diverse communities. Some survey respondents expressed that their involvement in CHANGE stemmed from the group's emphasis on bringing different racial groups together to work

on common problems. In various ways, several CHANGE constituents as well as a few

public officials and corporate leaders specifically identified strengthening race relations

as the organization's charge. A white CHANGE congregational core team leader

unpacked this perspective in his survey response, suggesting that the organization's

mission is to build social networks among people who are different. He declared,

"CHANGE is the only entity which brings together ordinary folks who are not alike.

That's a big deal. I have more contact with people of different ethnic and income

backgrounds than I otherwise would." A white Strategy Team leader went further stating,

"This organization *empowers people through the process of creating relationships* [my

emphasis] with folks we don't necessarily typically spend time with in our community."

For many CHANGE members the relational aspect of the organization's efforts is

central to its mission. It's not simply about bringing people together in one space. A long-

time CHANGE leader noted that the mission is "to draw people into a powerful network

to develop relationships, themselves and our community in ways we can agree on."[34]

Other Strategy Team members echoed these sentiments suggesting that through the

process of building relationships we realize that we have so much more in common. In

short, one leader affirmed, "The whole organization reminds us that we need each other."

A Voice for the Voiceless

Another resounding theme in the responses to my question about the mission of

---

[34] While no other CHANGE respondent explicitly identified self-development as an organizational mission, this is often referenced in IAF circles. Natasha Freidus (2001) specifically addresses the importance of individual development in transforming institutions and communities using the Texas IAF affiliate, Valley Interfaith, as a case study. Friedus's study makes a strong assertion that the IAF model's emphasis on the development of leaders yields powerful individual and organizational results.

CHANGE was its role in providing a voice for people in the community. In IAF terms this means being a voice for the civic sector, as noted by one CHANGE respondent who wrote, "CHANGE seeks to provide a voice for people in the community in conjunction with the government and the business community." A member of a local Catholic congregation, one of CHANGE's Hispanic participants went further saying the mission was "to be *the* [my emphasis] voice of the community." Another Catholic leader asserted a slightly different perspective saying CHANGE's mission was "to joyfully bring the entire community together to help them care about and become a voice for justice."

Undoubtedly, most people speaking about voice meant a voice for those who historically have been dispossessed and disempowered in our communities. While nearly no one cited exactly who constitutes the disenfranchised individuals represented by CHANGE, these descriptors seem to function as coded language for people of color and the poor. Only one public official, Mr. Goins, directly addressed the membership of CHANGE as predominantly African-Americans. His comments are explored later in this chapter with regards to CHANGE's impact on increasing participation in public life.

Over again CHANGE members suggested that the mission was to provide a voice for those who need it in the public square. Some public officials also recognized CHANGE's mission in a comparable way. Mr. Goins expressed that CHANGE's purpose as he understood it,

> . . . was to take neighborhoods that were not as well off socially, financially, and otherwise, and try to raise the level of the citizens' quality of life by helping them meet the problems, needs, and interests that they face every day. (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

Mr. Goins then adamantly asserted that CHANGE had not lived up to its mission because

it had failed to realize that it needs to reach out to a broader constituency to effect its

goals. Goins linked this shortfall to his sense that the organization was a front for the

Democratic party.

> But, the problem I have is . . . [that] CHANGE politically supports members of the Democratic party; they do not support members of the Republican party. And, I have yet, in all the years that CHANGE has been here, I have yet to see CHANGE endorse – they don't endorse, but they do endorse obliquely – a candidate of the Republican party. It's always the Democrat. And, it's politically best for them to support, for example in District A, which is primarily black, a black candidate, but you will not find them advocating for someone from the financially, socially better off Buena Vista section of Winston-Salem. Now, if their mission is to truly meet the needs and interests of lower income people in our community, they need the community. They can't just say to the community that is not as well off, "We'll help you pull yourselves up by your bootstraps." If you leave that to those folks by themselves, it will never happen. CHANGE has to get their money, they have to get their support from a broad spectrum of the community; and from my perspective, they're not doing it. They never have and I don't have a great deal of hope that they ever will . . . And so my impression of CHANGE is that CHANGE is an organization that has become more concerned with itself and not its mission . . . (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

An appointed public official, Mr. Fisher, identified CHANGE's mission similarly

to Mr. Goins, although he used the language of organizing and advocacy somewhat

interchangeably. In his words,

> I think it's a grassroots organization, you know it's a kind of organizing thing, and its whole role is to try to improve the quality of life I think in the community, and to certainly advocate for you know less advantaged . . . you know under-represented . . . you know . . . to see that everybody has a voice. (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009)

Like Mr. Fisher most of the public officials and business leaders referenced CHANGE's

efforts to provide a voice for the grassroots, which seems to mean common citizens. In a

world of political experts and pundits, it is somewhat an anomaly for thoughtful,

informed, invested citizens to raise their voices together for the universal betterment of

the community. It is even more unusual to put words into collective action. Participation

in public life and governance in communities can be complicated and challenging, but

such engagement is necessary to affect the kind of transformation that groups like

CHANGE seek. The perceived mission of CHANGE as a source of empowerment and a

mechanism for successful citizen participation in public life and decision-making is the

movement of voice into action. Action requires power.

Power to Influence Decision-Making

For many people the reference to voice was also an allusion to power. CHANGE,

an acronym for Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment, appears to sum

up the organization's mission appropriately. One pastor explained this in these terms,

"Just what the name says - Helping the people of WS, FC [Winston-Salem/Forsyth

County] gain empowerment i.e. a meaningful voice in the community." Furthermore, a

common thread through people's responses was the idea that CHANGE provides a way

for people, who historically have been powerless, to collectively act on issues of equity.

Again, an African-American pastor suggested, "CHANGE is about the business of

empowering often neglected segments of the community to equitably share in the rights

and privileges of goods and services in society." More specifically, a Caucasian Metro

Council leader explained that CHANGE is a "grassroots organization empowering people who have issues not addressed by the business or government entities." A Clergy Caucus member pointed to CHANGE being the "voice & power for the grassroots peoples left out of decision making."

Notably, whereas none of the public officials or corporate leaders used the word "power" in their descriptions of CHANGE's mission, many of the organization's survey respondents and focus group members named the role of power explicitly. A white Clergy Caucus member stated in her survey that CHANGE "provides the opportunity for citizens to claim & use their power as the political & business communities do." A white Metro Council member asserted that the mission was to better the community by bringing about a more just sharing of power. Providing a *balance* of power and decision-making in the community was referenced by a white Catholic Metro Council participant, while a white Presbyterian Metro Council pointed to organizing congregations and neighborhoods to *build* power in order to influence public officials and institutions.

Without a doubt, power is a concept that can be interpreted by people in a multitude of ways. In the aforementioned examples, we see readings of power as a noun and verb. However, power can also be used as an adjective. For instance, one Baptist Metro Council member wrote that through "thoroughly accountable organizing" the mission was to become a *power player* in order to improve the lives of community members. Similarly, when I asked the focus group participants how they articulate CHANGE's mission, an African-American group member said he tells people, "We

provide the common people an avenue to be a *powerbroker* with the big boys." Being a

powerbroker or power player plainly conveys an understanding that to influence

decision-making one must secure a seat at the proverbial table. One way to do that is to

organize a vehicle through which residents can become more meaningfully engaged in

public life and become agents of change. A CHANGE Strategy Team member portrayed

this point in our focus group meeting when he declared, "Before I found CHANGE, I'd

read the paper and get depressed. But now I feel hopeful because there's a way for

average people . . . to get involved and do something about it." The final part of this

chapter examines CHANGE's effectiveness in expanding the number of citizens involved

in public affairs.

Impact on Public Life

The term "public life" has been bandied about a great deal over the last few

decades. Perspectives on the loss of civic engagement ranging from depressed

participation in bowling leagues to low voter turnout have been the hand-wringing focus

of scholars and politicians alike. Harry Boyte (2004) suggests that decreased involvement

in political or governmental activities such as participation in public meetings, is

connected to a professionalization of politics that resigns citizens to mere spectators (p.

xi). He proposes,

> When politics becomes increasingly professionalized, the property of professional
> politicians, activist lobbies, or ideological mobilizers of the people, most people
> are shut out of the serious work of deciding about and creating the world. Citizens
> are reduced to righteous demands, complaints, or peripheral acts as helpers.
> (p. 31)

Broad-based citizens' organizations are challenged with upending these versions of public life so that common people are moved from being passive characters into powerful democratic actors.

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, CHANGE's written material identifies the group's primary mission as creating a space for people to participate in our democracy and public life. Based on this assertion, I was curious about the extent to which members of the CHANGE felt it had impacted their involvement in public life. Equally, I was interested in whether external community leaders detected any significant effect on movement of citizens into the public sphere based on CHANGE's presence.

Overwhelmingly, CHANGE leaders who responded to my survey affirmed that the organization had affected their participation in public life. While 89% of these individuals said that CHANGE had had a positive or somewhat positive impact on their involvement, only 10% suggested that the group had had neither a positive or negative effect. No one indicated that the group had negatively influenced their participation in public life.

When asked about their assessment of CHANGE's impact on public life, the public officials and corporate leaders with whom I spoke had answers across the board. For the most part, business officials felt that they could not make a judgment about this question because of their limited interaction with the organization, although one did say that in the beginning the organization "seemed to galvanize a part of our community that historically has not been involved in the mainstream of the community" (J. Smith,

personal communication, April 1, 2009). A few respondents suggested that CHANGE

had not had a dramatic impact up to this point but did have the potential to make a big

difference in the long run.

There were a handful of elected and appointed public officials who had strong

opinions about CHANGE's impact on public life. John Graham unequivocally stated

that there had been marked increase in engagement. Mr. Graham remarked,

> No question – no question in my mind it [CHANGE] has tremendously ratcheted up level of the participation throughout community . . . Yeah I don't know the exact numbers of the churches that are members and the neighborhoods that are members of it. We've always sort of had organizations . . . the Neighborhood Alliance and the neighborhood organizations that we have worked through our code enforcement department but CHANGE to me has been the most organized and the most direct engaged community going all the way down to the house meetings . . . so if you think about from a very basic house meeting of a half a dozen – dozen people – up to the next level then to the delegate assembly it's pretty amazing with the level of involvement. (J. Graham, personal communication, April 2, 2009)

On the other hand, Mr. Goins had a scathing response. When asked if he had a sense that

CHANGE had impacted public life, Mr. Goins quickly quipped,

> I have a sense that they have hoodwinked many people in the black community just by the name. Neighborhoods working together? Well, that's all well and good, but if you go back several years, I would challenge you to show me a number five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten positive things that improved the quality of life for people who life in that community; and I don't think you'll find it. Another reason I say it is because they never come to me and say, "Come, see what we've done." Never. (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

What is particularly striking about Mr. Goins's comments is that he has never acted in an

adversarial way toward CHANGE publicly, and the organization has had no reason to believe that he harbors such skepticism.

As a white official, Mr. Goins's evaluation was in stark contrast to that of Mr. Charles Simmons, an African-American elected leader. Mr. Simmons argued that CHANGE's relationship with the black community has been quite effective. In reaction to my inquiry about the group's impact on public life, he asserted,

> Oh, I see people come to these rallies at the church that never would have been involved with politics, probably never would have voted. CHANGE . . . I know a lot of people, CHANGE got a lot of people out to register and vote, particularly our black folk. Now, I don't know if CHANGE had any impact on the white community, and I know it hadn't had any on the Hispanic community because even though some of them registered to vote, they won't vote. I guess they's afraid to come out. So, I know the black community, they've got a lot of respect for 'em 'cause they have instilled in them "don't have any fear, we're with you." And that's what has happened. (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009)

Throughout his interview, Mr. Simmons was adamant that CHANGE had positively contributed to the African-American community on every front.

In the juxtaposition of Mr. Simmons's reply and that of Mr. Goins we begin to see a conspicuous pattern of responses, particularly by public officials, which seemingly fall along race and political party lines. These patterns become ever more observable in the interviewees' thoughts about the ways in which CHANGE carries out its mission and whether the organization has had any influence on governance. These areas of inquiry are the subject matter of the following two chapters.

CHAPTER V

KIDS NOT POLITICS:
PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A SITE OF CONTESTED POWER RELATIONS

Figure 6. CHANGE Public Education Hearing. CHANGE conducted a public hearing focused on issues related to alternative education and the disciplinary policies of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System (November 2008).

"You tell them [students] 'you are hungry, you are ignorant, you are from a single parent home' . . . what do we expect?"
~ Comment by a CHANGE participant about low achieving students, resegregation, and the increase in Title I schools at a March 2009 Metro Council Meeting

As in many communities, public education has been the source of great tension, turmoil, and activism in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In particular, evidence suggesting economic and racial resegregation during the last two decades has spurred debate about equity and access. Thus, it is not surprising that public education has been the top priority area of concern identified by CHANGE constituents in all three of the

organization's house meeting processes. There does seem to be a sense among CHANGE

members that the organization perseveres in actively tackling education related issues. Of

the CHANGE survey respondents who pointed to issue-related work (i.e. economic

development, healthcare access, etc.) as the organization's biggest contribution, 57%

identified CHANGE's efforts around education.

Along with insights into the relationship between the corporate and governmental

structures in the community, CHANGE's initial power analysis highlighted specific

issues pertaining to the way the local school system was set up. Chris Baumann,

CHANGE's first Lead Organizer, described his understanding of what was happening in

the public schools when he first came to Winston-Salem,

> . . . you know the whole structure of the school board and how they set up the
> apartheid system, uh you know, which was a kind of sophisticated way to, you
> know, give white people control of the suburban schools and uh . . . take away
> money from the inner city schools um . . . you know the whole way they had set
> up the school system which was out of whack . . . you know you had a very (. . .)
> school board, again you know with the whites in the suburbs you know
> controlling the way the schools were restructured and givin' the African-
> American community . . . basically taking any power away from the city and
> making sure that whites who went to the suburbs that they could control their
> destiny . . . (C. Baumann, personal communication, July 10, 2009)

Tension surrounding inequitable resource allocation amongst urban and suburban

schools, as well as a belief by many that there was a racial angle to the redistricting of the

school system became a central focus of CHANGE's efforts. As is evidenced in the rest

of this chapter, such concerns continue to drive the education-focused work of the

organization.

This chapter begins with a general overview of IAF organizations' various efforts to address public education in their respective locales. This information is relevant because some of their methods have informed CHANGE's approach to this issue. I then briefly outline the history of public education in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County since Brown v. Board of Education and CHANGE's specific campaigns addressing educational policies and practices. Finally, I detail education related actions during the time of my research and the organization's upcoming work.

The IAF and Public Education Reform Efforts

According to Glickman and Scally (2008), community organizing approaches to education reform tend to focus on issues such as school conditions, student achievement, curriculum and instruction, greater governance and accountability, and equity in resource distribution. Of the studies that examine the IAF's involvement in urban school reform, the work in Texas and New York has gained the most attention from scholars. While the aforesaid themes are present in these affiliates' efforts, it is their commitment to engage the broader community, especially parents, in the process that stands out.

Dennis Shirley (1997, 2002) has written extensively about the Alliance Schools Initiative in Texas, which started in 1992 with the purpose of improving student achievement in low-income areas by uniting parents, school personnel, and other community leaders. The Alliance Schools network grew out of successful collaborations between IAF Texas affiliates and local schools in the 1980s. Today there is a network of more than 150 Alliance Schools in Texas and throughout the Southwest (Glickman & Scally, 2008).

In his analysis of education reform Shirley (1997) suggests there is a marked difference between *accommodationist* and *transformational* forms of parent participation in schools, citing the Alliance Initiative as the latter. The Interfaith Education Fund (2003), a partner in the Initiative, explains what makes the Alliance Schools different,

> . . . the Alliance Schools Initiative . . . is not just about improving the existing system of public education, but is instead about changing the culture of schools and of entire neighborhoods. Similarly, the Alliance Schools Initiative is not just about parental engagement, but is also designed to engage all of the stakeholders in public education. We are not merely trying to engage parents as agents of change, but also teachers, principals, and other members of the community. We are no more interested in educators passively maintaining the existing school culture than we are in having parents "participate" on those grounds. (Interfaith Education Fund, 2003, para. 3)

Shirley (2002) concurs suggesting that arguably the most important achievement of the Alliance Schools Initiative has been the creation of social capital between various individuals and groups. As a result of linking schools to religious institutions and political processes, the Alliance Schools have developed a powerful relationship with the Texas Department of Education (a.k.a. Texas Education Agency).

The IAF affiliate, East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC), in New York became involved in education organizing in 1990 when it helped support the formation of the Bushwick Parents' Association. A primary issue for this group revolved around the way bilingual education was being enacted in the local district. This group filed a lawsuit, which was ultimately denied, arguing that the bilingual programming was actually leaving their children illiterate in English and other subjects (Steinberg, 1996).

Similar to the Alliance Schools effort, in 1992 two New York IAF affiliates decided to organize three alternative high schools. However, Glickman and Scally (2008) suggest that the New York efforts differed strategically from the Southwest IAF's work. Rather than organizing parents in high schools, which they viewed as more challenging than the Southwest IAF's outreach to elementary and middle school parents, the IAF-East chose to focus on hiring exceptional principals who could transform schools from the inside.

A primary contribution of the New York IAF groups to education organizing is a 1997 publication called *Futures Denied* which was developed by POWER (Parents Organized to Win Education Reform), a collaboration effort between IAF – Metro New York, the Public Education Association and the Parents Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. The report documented the relationship between low-performing schools and economically depressed neighborhoods, which it called "Educational Dead Zones." The report gained significant media attention and was the impetus for the New York State Education Commissioner to require that all teachers working in low-performing schools be certified (Mediratta, 2001).

Although efforts by Charlotte Helping Empower Local People (HELP), the first IAF affiliate in North Carolina, have not been chronicled by scholars, the organization's approach to education organizing provided an important model for the work done by CHANGE. Chris Baumann, HELP's original organizer, brought his experiences to Winston-Salem when he was hired as CHANGE's Lead Organizer in 2002. That year CHANGE held its opening round of house meetings. Of the 1,800+ people who participated, over 1,400 identified youth and education as the first priority area that CHANGE should tackle (CHANGE, 2006a). Baumann guided the newly minted Youth

and Education Action Team in devising a strategy, an audit of the local public schools, as an initial step to get to the heart of educational equity issues. The audit and ensuing actions are discussed later in the chapter.

Primary Events in Local Public Education After Brown v. Board

Desegregation and Student Assignment Plans

The Winston-Salem and Forsyth County school districts were still two different systems in 1954 when Brown v. Board of Education was decided. Like most southern communities the two systems set up committees to study the issue of segregation immediately after the decision (Dunston, 1981). Winston-Salem would be the first of the two districts to officially take steps toward desegregation with the token admittance of a junior high school student, Gwendolyn Yvonne Bailey, to Reynolds High School on September 5, 1957. For the most part the experience was a quiet affair with the exception of some racist slogans that were painted on the sidewalks the night before. White students who were members of the Service and Key Clubs removed the graffiti before Ms. Bailey arrived. Law enforcement was on the scene but short of stares from the crowds looking on, everything went smoothly (Dunston, 1981).

Strides toward desegregation continued the next year with the enrollment of three black elementary school students. Unlike Winston-Salem, Forsyth County made no effort to desegregate its schools during the 1950s. Reviewing this history we can see the vestiges of tensions between the city and county that continue to plague the local system today, especially with regard to racially balanced representation on the board. Up until 1962 there had never been black representation on the Forsyth County School Board

whereas Winston-Salem had at least token representation with an African-American man seated in the early 1950s.

In 1963, after first proposed eight years earlier, the Winston-Salem and Forsyth County School Systems consolidated, creating the second largest district in North Carolina (Fries, Wright, & Hendricks, 1976). Throughout the 1960s the system saw a nominal increase in integrated student bodies. Nonetheless, by 1967 the reality was that less than one-third of schools actually had been desegregated (Dunston, 1981).

The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund filed a lawsuit (Scott v. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education) in October 1968 contending that the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System was operating in a racially biased manner. Despite the clear racial imbalance in several of the schools, the district court felt the system had drawn the attendance zones in good faith and approved the board's strategy for continued desegregation for the 1970-1971 school year with a few modifications. At the behest of all parties, the case was sent to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1972).

Soon after the 1971 Supreme Court case, Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the Court of Appeals annulled the district court's decision and charged the system with creating a new student assignment plan. While the board did create a new proposal (a 4-2-2-2-2 plan), ironically it also filed a resolution asking the court to decline the plan because,

> . . . though the proposed plan was the least expensive, least burdensome, and
> most equitable plan that could accomplish racial balance in the schools, it was not

a sound or a desirable plan because the residential pattern of Forsyth County would make its fulfillment impossible without massive and expensive busing. (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1972, p. 25)

Ultimately the board's effort to delay implementation of the new plan failed, because they did not provide ample evidence to support their claims about the burdens of busing. Later, the board would suggest that the 4-2-2-2-2 plan was the best way to meet the terms of the court order without constructing new facilities (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, 1984).

The reference to residential patterns is notable, because even today various school officials suggest that it shouldn't be up to the school system to address integration; rather the community should focus on changing the face of neighborhoods. Michael Fisher, a white public school official, noted in our interview,

> . . . If you had integrated neighborhoods, you'd have integrated schools 'cause then . . . people'd be going to that and there wouldn't be any thought about it, and people'd grow up, they'd play with each other, they'd know others and it wouldn't be this class-conscious sort of, you know, stuff that we deal with . . . (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009)

Though there is some validity to this argument, history tells us that racial and economic integration of neighborhoods is a monumental challenge especially in the South. The question is what communities do in the meantime to ensure that children are learning how to interact with people who are different than them.

Unfortunately, school officials created the final 1971 school plan without extensive dialogue with community groups. Thus, many Whites and Blacks were critical

of the plan. The United States Commission on Civil Rights noted that white resistance to desegregation had been strong for many years. Throughout this period a group called "The Silent Majority" followed by "Citizens Against Busing" attended school board meetings and used media to garner community support for resisting the changes. White parents seemed particularly concerned about their children having to travel long distances on buses to black areas of the city (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1972). Not surprisingly, this same period saw the establishment of a number of private schools that were clearly responses to the integration of the public school system.

Black opposition focused on the long distances their children had to travel and the belief that there should be more equity in busing patterns. Black children were being bused out of their neighborhood eight of their 12 years, while white children were being bused only 4 of their 12 years. Some black community members also lamented the loss of their all-black high school that had been a locus of activity for the black community. However, much of the black opposition ceased after the beginning of the new school year because many of the formerly black schools had seen improvement in facilities as a result of the plan (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1972).

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System remained fairly racially balanced for the next two decades. The Scott lawsuit was dismissed in 1981, so approval from the courts was no longer needed when making changes to the student assignment plan. There was a recognition that any changes that led to one race schools would likely be considered a violation of constitutional rights (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, 1984). Therefore, the new pupil assignment plan created in 1984 established a

three level structure (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) with a commitment to advancing integration by maintaining a goal of a ±5% racial ratio per grade level (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, 1984). According to a school publication announcing the new assignment structure, the impetus for the change came from a 1977 community survey that indicated dissatisfaction with the 4-2-2-2-2 system. The board took five years to develop a more acceptable plan (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, 1984). Nonetheless, under the surface there was a since that equity for all students was still lacking. Things would come to a head in the early 1990s.

The nine-member Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board was elected on an at-large basis through the early 1990s. In the November 1990 election all three black candidates lost, thus creating a board with all white members. Not only that, but eight of the nine school board members lived on the western side of the city and county and one lived northeast of Winston-Salem in Walkertown. There were no representatives who lived anywhere near the predominantly African-American neighborhoods in East Winston (Hoeffel, 1990).

A closed session of the Board occurred soon after the election where members discussed how to handle an obviously sensitive situation. Board member, Gerald Hewitt, made a motion to institute a research committee to explore possible election processes that would ensure minority representation. His motion was defeated seven to two with the opposition suggesting various reasons such as slicing the board into districts might lead to "squabbling and bickering" like the city's Board of Alderman (Hoeffel, 1991, p. C8).

Hewitt, himself, suggested that a district system might not be the best for the black community. Although they would have increased representation, Hewitt conceded, "If we drew two black districts, it could be to the detriment of the black community, because that may be the only representation they got" (Hoeffel, 1991, p. C8). Upon reflection, Hewitt's concern is exactly what has occurred since the districts were created in 1992. The idea of permanent minority representation became an impetus for CHANGE to investigate the idea of redistricting in 2006. I discuss this in more detail under the forthcoming section about school board election reform.

In 1990 the NAACP filed a lawsuit charging that at-large elections diminished black voting power thus creating a situation where black representation was difficult to secure. Considering that one-quarter of Forsyth County's population was African-American and 38% of the school system's population was black, the lack of elected representation was a major concern (Otterbourg, 1991). In response to the situation local state representatives Annie Brown Kennedy and Warren C. "Pete" Oldham, both Democrats, submitted a bill in the North Carolina Legislature to address the problem. The final bill established a two-member majority black district, a four-member majority white district, and three at-large seats. It also required all school board members during off-presidential years rather than staggered terms.[35] Critics charged that the changes to the election cycle would benefit the Democrats, although the Democrats maintained that partisanship did not play into the decision (Otterbourg, 1991).

---

[35] The plan had been placed in front of the school board numerous times by the NAACP and a few Democratic board members, but the Republican majority had rejected it.

The most contentious issue arose when the School Board decided to proceed with the creation of new student assignment plans in June 1992. A few school board members and community leaders questioned the judgment of adopting new plans when ". . . the board's racial, political, and philosophical makeup is expected to be vastly different after the election in November" (Hoeffel, 1992a, p. E1). The fact was that two white Republicans most likely were going to be replaced with two black Democrats, which also would shift which political party controlled of the board. Detractors argued that it was pointless to adopt plans that might be rejected six months after they were instituted. Moreover, black parents probably would be more amenable to a plan that was supported by black representatives. As it stood the board had lost the confidence of many black parents after it refused to approve an election plan that would ensure black representation the previous year (Hoeffel, 1992a).

At the March 1992 school board meeting, discussions about redistricting continued. Member Candy Wood requested that the board commit to keeping the proportion of black and white students in every school within 15% of the overall ratio. The four most conservative board members were committed to ending busing and instituting neighborhood schools, although such a decision likely would lead to the resegregation of the schools (Hoeffel, 1992b).[36] Wood's proposal would have removed the neighborhood school plan from the table because under such a plan three-fourths of

---

[36] The 1994 election provided the conservative majority needed to implement these board members' wishes. As was predicted, local schools have increasingly resegregated along race and class lines since the decision to move to a "Controlled Choice" plan.

122

schools would have surpassed the 15% limit. Even school attorney, Doug Punger, agreed that a nearest-school plan would turn one-third of the schools into one-race facilities and "that it could be unwise for an all-white board to approve such a plan" (Hoeffel, 1992b, p. A1). Nevertheless, Wood's proposition was rejected, as were two attempts to postpone a decision about new attendance zones until after the November election. The *Winston-Salem Journal* concluded, "The city-county school board declined to renew the school system's commitment to integration yesterday" (Hoeffel, 1992b, p. A1).

Regardless of the opposition, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board voted six to three in June 1992 to push ahead with redistricting plans. *The Chronicle* captured the reaction best with its headline read, "Community outraged over all-white board vote" (McKenzie, 1992a, A1). Geneva Brown and Walter Marshall, who had won a June runoff election for the new district, would not be seated until November and they would be the only two black representatives on the board. Brown and Marshall held a press conference in which they accused the board of fueling tensions between the white and black communities. The board had invited them to join the meeting, where the redistricting plans were discussed, as non-voting members but both refused. Marshall said of the invitation, "They've invited us to dinner and let us sit at the table, but didn't give us a plate . . . It's an insult to the entire black community" (McKenzie, 1992a, p. A2). Community leader, Reverend William S. Fails, charged, "It was pure blatant racism. We've waited 300 years. If they wait six more months, it won't make a difference" (McKenzie, 1992a, p. A2). The stage was set for confrontation.

At the July 1992 board meeting outbursts from the gallery stunned the elected officials and led two members to hastily leave the room. "We will not allow this board to make a decision without black representation. It is illegitimate. It is not courteous. It is not right. You are not our masters and we are not your slaves," chided Reverend Carlton Eversley (McKenzie, 1992b, p. A1). He continued, "We will not sit by idly and allow six people to make our destiny. We are men and women. We are not children. We will not go away and will fight to our dying breath for democracy" (McKenzie, 1992b, p. A1). The board attempted to continue its discussion but another outburst from Eversley led to a quick vote to table the issue until the next meeting.

Eversley's act of civil disobedience elicited chanting and cheers from allies in the audience. School board members were not so impressed. Jane Goins (who joined the board in 1985 and still serves currently) said she felt they had be treated unfairly and that she was appalled. "We're not there to be antagonizing. If (Eversley's) got the love of God in his heart, then we can do this peacefully," said Goins, "I wouldn't call what took place an act of democracy" (McKenzie, 1992b, p. A2). Regardless of people's feelings about what occurred at this meeting, what is notable is that no major action was taken on implementing a new student assignment plan for the next few years. The election of 1994 would end up providing the majority needed to push through a plan that moved the system to neighborhood schools.

Controlled Choice Plan and Equity Committee

    Controlled choice plan.

    In 1994 a significant shift occurred in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. Dr. Donald Martin was hired as Superintendent of the system and the School Board experienced was has been termed the "Republican Revolution." Six new board members were elected to the board after running on a neighborhood schools platform (Wake Education Partnership, 2003). The reconstituted board began exploring a new student assignment plan and eventually decided to follow the model of Controlled Choice plans in Florida and Massachusetts (Jones-Sanpei, 2006). According to Dr. Hinckley Jones-Sanpei (2006), "The aim of the plan's architects was to integrate all students in the district on a voluntary basis by using parental choice and involvement as a means to make systemic changes and improvements in the overall quality of education provided by WSF" (p. 43). The Controlled Choice plan, which is still in place, divided the county into attendance zones. Under this plan students are not assigned to a particular school; rather they are allowed to choose a school within a geographical area. Within each of these zones there are theme or magnet schools that are designed to attract students such as science and math programs or arts focused programs (Jones-Sanpei, 2006).

    Implementation of the plan started with one elementary zone in the 1995-1996 school and all zones were in place by 2000. Some attention to maintaining a racial balance in the local schools was given at first. However, the school system stopped this practice

in 2001 as a result of federal court decisions that came down barring the use of race as a determinant in what schools students attend (Jones-Sanpei, 2006).

Immediately concerns arose about the potential resegregation of the schools under the Controlled Choice plan. One year after adopting the choice plan, the School Board established an Equity Committee to track racial and economic disparities within the school system. In a recent paper discussing segregation patterns in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, Dr. Steve Scroggin (2008), an economist and CHANGE leader, offers two graphics illustrating a comparison of six urban school systems in North Carolina from Jones-Sanpei's study (2006). The charts, which are shown on the next page, suggest fears about resegregation were well founded. Beginning in 1994, the year the controlled choice plan began, one can see that there is a significant increase in racially and economically homogenous schools, more so than in any of the five other districts (Scroggin, 2008, p. 22-23).

An interesting argument about the controlled choice system was provided by one of the school officials whom I interviewed. From Mr. Fisher's perspective, critics of the choice plan were acting in a paternalistic manner toward African-Americans,

> See, that, for an African American family, the assumption is they're not, they're not smart enough to make a, to make a choice. Well, now, now what kinda, what kinda bias is that placing, that they're not capable of making a choice? I mean, you talk about lookin down your nose at somebody. That's lookin down your nose at somebody to think they're not capable of making a choice about their child and where they need to go to school. You know, they're not educated enough so some, so this White person needs to make that choice for 'em? You know, over here, or the school board needs to make that choice for 'em? Well, the deal is, we guarantee people in our choice [system], which is really unique. (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009)

126

Figure 1: North Carolina Racial Dissimilarity
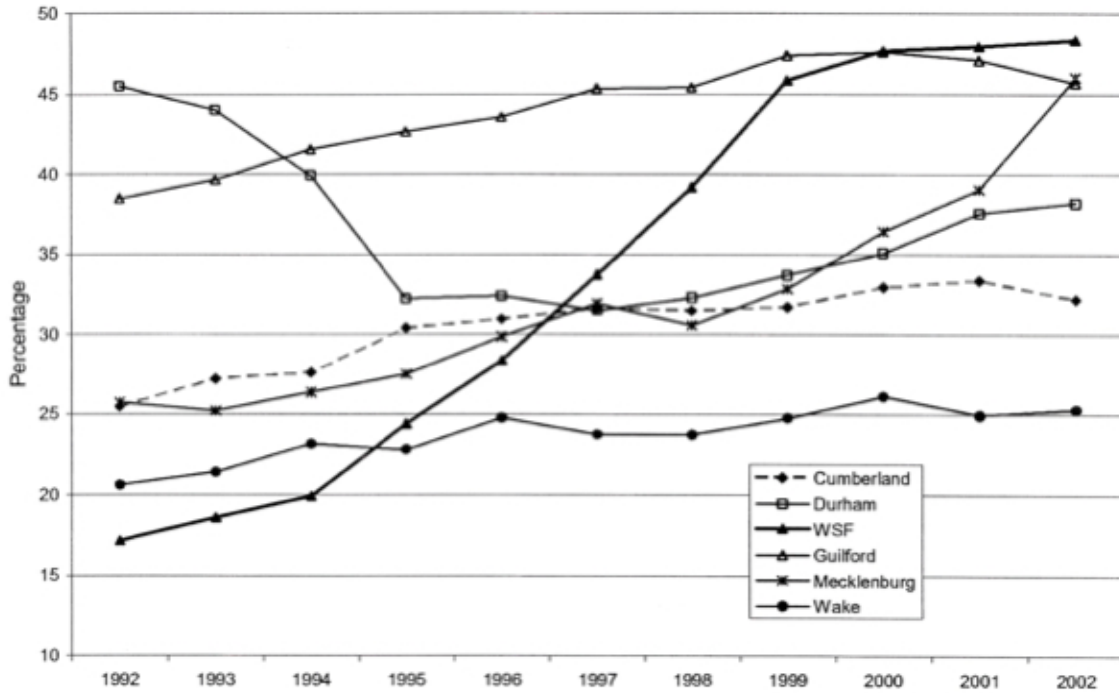
Figure 2: North Carolina Income Dissimilarity
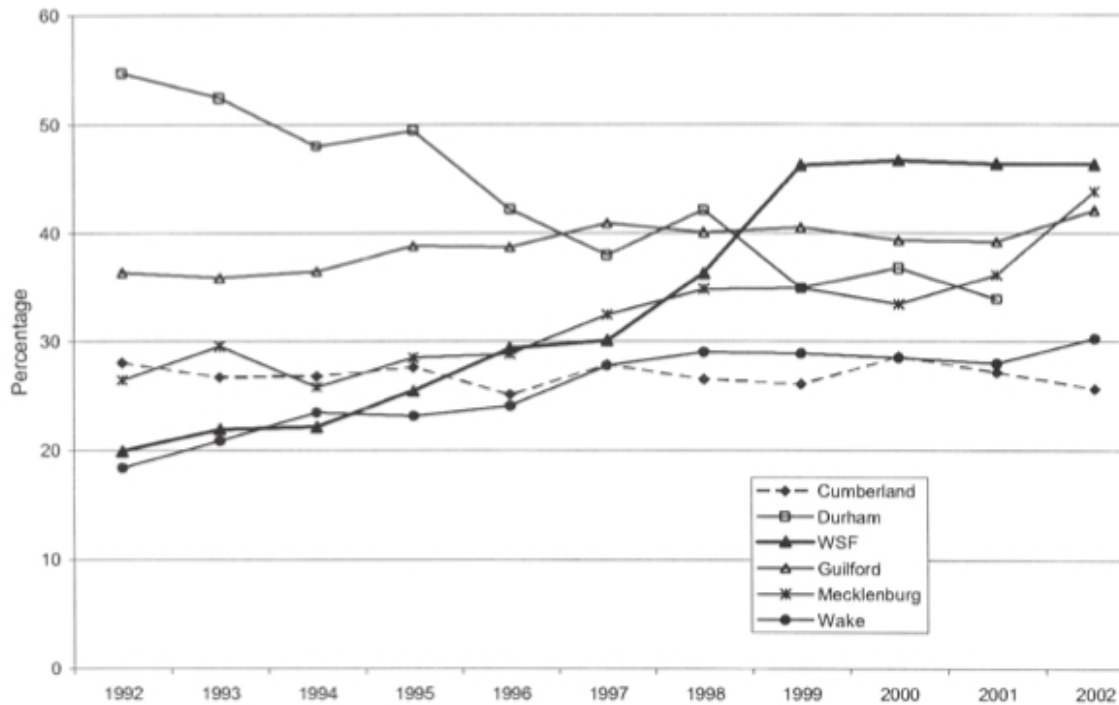
Figure 7. Race and Income Dissimilarity in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. These charts depict the increase in race and income dissimilarity since the creation of the Controlled Choice plan in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School District (Jones-Sanpei, 2006).

127

Mr. Fisher acknowledged that African-Americans moved more voluntarily than whites, although he noted that they are often going to other predominantly black schools. Mr. Fisher said that blacks and whites frequently have the same reasons for choosing neighborhood schools, notably daycare and attending a school close to their home (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009). "I do think the part that we cannot replicate is how do you get along with people and respect 'em better," he conceded, "And, I think that part . . . is the missing part in terms of what we, of what we're offering. I think, and that's hard to overcome" (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009).[37]

There are people besides those involved with community groups like CHANGE and the NAACP who are concerned about the resegregation of the schools. Anne Shumate, a business leader, had strong personal feelings about the issue. She spoke in great detail about the stark differences between schools in terms of racial and economic disparities. Of the resegregation she lamented,

> Yeah, I think it . . . I think it is *a tragedy*, what's happened. I don't have the, I don't know what the answer is right now. Personally, if I had to do it, I, I

---

[37] Notably, the findings from Dr. Jones-Sanpei's 2006 dissertation suggested that while the choice plan has created racially segregated schools, it has not affected students' performance. This elicited strong responses both from Dr. Donald Martin and community members. Dr. Martin indicated that the report affirmed his assertion that students were not at a disadvantage in racially homogenous schools (Deaver, 2007). Conversely, community groups such as the NAACP and the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity viewed the study with skepticism and maintained that it still did not speak to essential educational issues. Dr. Carlton Eversley, a spokesperson for the Ministers Conference, declared there were more important points to consider. Beyond examining the nature of the achievement gaps between white and minority students, Eversley questioned, ". . . is there a social value to having all of the children educated in the same place at the same time" and then he offered a stinging appraisal, "What Forsyth County has to wrestle with is the glaring, sinful disparity between white folks and everybody else. That's what the study or the school board or senior administration seems unable to face" (Deaver, 2007, p. A1).

wouldn't build any schools except in the inner-city, and I'd tell everybody they had to move, they had to come into the city, rather than build all these suburban schools, which I know is not what people, what a lot of people want. But, to me, it's a fundamental challenge because, basically, it's doin the same thing that the way the rest of the community is stratified. Okay, if my kid goes to _____, they got everything they need; the school's wonderful; I hang around with parents that are like me; my kids are like me, et cetera, et cetera. Then I go over here to poor, little old _____ that doesn't even hardly have a PTA, let alone anything else, you know. There's . . . and, and nobody knows what's going on there 'cause nobody "important" ever comes over there because, you know, their kids aren't there and whatever. So, I think it's, yeah. And, then, then you know, you ask these . . . then you have these kids who aren't exposed to anybody other than people like them. So, I think it's a huge issue, but I don't think our school board's gonna take it . . . I don't think they care. I think they like it the way it is, unfortunately. (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009)

I inquired about the role that the business community might potentially play in influencing school issues like the resegregation and Mrs. Shumate immediately responded, "They care about test scores." She expounded, ". . . the business community would be, is afraid to be called racist, and that fear would prevent them from doing very much, in my opinion." "Anything?" I queried.

Yeah, in any arena because, you know . . . they just, they don't wanna be labeled as racist, and I think that they don't, they would not care about one race schools as long as the test scores were okay. That's my opinion . . . So long as the test scores were okay, they'd be okay with them [one race schools]. They, they wouldn't . . . I mean there's some enlightened people, but for the most part that is what is, you know, is the driver: the test scores, the test scores, the test scores. (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009)

As an educator, I winced at Mrs. Shumate's general assessment of the business community's perspective on education and its emphasis on test scores. However, it

provided great insight into how some leaders in the corporate sector fail to see the larger implications of misguided educational policies.

Equity committee.

The Equity Committee was created in 1995 in response to concerns about the possible resegregation of public schools under the choice plan. The 18-member committee, which included community representatives and educators, was charged with gathering data related to teacher quality, student achievement, and similar indicators at schools with disproportionate numbers of low-income students. Based on site visits, interviews with school personnel and quantitative indicators, the committee produced an annual report with its findings and recommendations. A primary concern of the committee was that there had been a steady increase of the number of Equity-Plus schools since the implementation of the Schools of Choice plan. Equity-Plus is a state designation that refers to schools with a specific percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches (75% for elementary schools, 50% for middle schools and 25% for high schools) (Ziegenbalg, 2002a).

The Equity Committee's 2002 report seemed to be the tipping point for the Board of Education. The report contended that there was a correlation between the number of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools that had elevated numbers of low-income students and those that had less experienced teachers, poorer student achievement, and not as much community and parental support. The report recommended that school attendance zones should be redrawn and a plan developed to ensure more balanced enrollment patterns in terms of race and class (Ziegenbalg, 2002a).

130

Although the system had been responsive to recommendations in previous reports, the committee felt that there were still some issues that needed to be addressed. Superintendent Martin and some school board members took exception to the report. Martin maintained that the committee was overstepping its bounds by questioning the virtues of the choice plan (Ziegenbalg, 2002a). He not only refuted the report in a formal response, he proposed that he assume responsibility for assembling future reports (Ziegenbalg, 2002b). Despite objections from various community groups including the NAACP and the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, predominately an African-American ministers group, the board voted unanimously to accept Martin's proposal. Regarding the decision one white board member, Jeannie Metcalf, said,

> We have nice schools, and we're doing all we can to get good teachers there . . . I think we need to be focusing on the good things we're doing and not continually be wringing our hands at the color of the kids sitting next to each other. That's not something we can control (Ziegenbalg, 2002c).

Interestingly, Vic Johnson, one of the school board's two African-American members, also supported the decision because he said he believed that black students were succeeding more now than when they were in more integrated settings.[38]

At a June 2002 meeting, the School Board decided by consensus to temporarily dissolve the Equity Committee. Board member, Rick Bagley, stated, "It's obvious to me that the Equity Committee has had a hidden agenda and that's to destroy neighborhood

---

[38] Geneva Brown, the School Board's other African-American member, was absent when the vote was taken to give Dr. Martin the power to oversee the equity reports. At a subsequent meeting, she opposed the disbanding of the Equity Committee.

schools. I think it's time to disband the Equity Committee" (Fernandes, 2002, p. B1).

Another member, Buddy Collins, asserted, "I think it's [committee] been living in the

past. It's a committee that's living in the mindset of the '60s. We need to move past these

issues" (Fernandes, 2002, p. B1). Not surprisingly this temporary action became

permanent and ultimately proved to be the death knell for what had been deemed an

important watchdog group by many in the community.

As fate would have it, during this same period CHANGE was being organized.

The group's house meeting process revealed that educational equity issues were of clear

concern to CHANGE's constituency. Some of the individuals who had been directly

involved with the Equity Committee or had offered public critiques of the School Board's

decision became engaged with CHANGE. This did not go unnoticed by various public

officials. David Dalton, a school board member whom I interviewed, spoke at length

about the Equity Committee and its perceived influence on CHANGE,

> Well, I think that one of the issues that CHANGE has had to overcome in dealing
> with the School Board was that for many years, we had what was called the
> "Equity Committee," which was a community-based committee that the purpose
> was, as we developed our Controlled Choice plan we would not to lose sight of
> the importance of diversity; and we would make sure that decisions were made so
> that there would be equity in schools, however you may want to define that, that's
> a pretty broad category. And over the years, we found that the Equity Committee
> evolved into a committee of opposition to the Controlled Choice plan and really
> became very, not very useful in dealing with the equity decisions. Every year
> there were reasons for you to disagree with our plan; that's fine. This is the plan,
> it's not going to change just because you're coming back and saying you don't
> agree with it; that's fine. I'll give you an example: I had, I remember one Equity
> Committee report was complaining that the PTA at Thomas Jefferson raised, I
> don't know, $45,000, and the PTA are Forest Park raised 5; and that wasn't
> equitable. And I pointed out to them that the Title I money going into Forest Park
> was $1.5 million; Thomas Jefferson had none. So you know, yes you're right:

they got more money for playground equipment at Jefferson, if that's the issue. But, if the issue is which, where are the resources being spent, it's there. We have, we had discussions like that where we've had to go back and show, "Well, look, we're spending $4,000 a child at Vienna Elementary and $10,000 at Kimberly Park," which is the disconnect on where true equity issues were. So, we, we abolished that committee and a number of those folks ended up on the CHANGE committee. (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009)

According to Mr. Dalton, the individuals who served on the Equity Committee were

volunteers whom the Board asked to participate. He continued,

They were volunteers that we asked to be involved and over time just kind of filtered out because it became less and less of an issue and so it ended up as a kind of the die-hard folks who were opposed for a lot of reasons, to what we were doing. And so that's initially I think that's what CHANGE had to overcome, was are you really an organization that wants to help education or do you, are you an organization that wants to change what we're doing. In other words, are you gonna be, are we gonna join hands and work together on the things that we can work together with, or you going to be involved in the things just to oppose us? And, I think that, even to this day, there's a lot of skepticism regarding CHANGE with respect to education, whether or not, what's the real motive. And I think within the organization, there may be different minds . . . In other words, is CHANGE really a grassroots community organization wanting to make the community better or is it really a cover for a political organization that wants to change the political makeup of the particular government agency that they're looking at? And if you look at the make up of CHANGE, it would raise that question. At least the people up front. They're, they're generally more liberal . . . and they're generally dealing with issues that maybe are in opposition to what the voters voted in, as far as leaders. (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009)

Certainly, the questionable dissolution of the Equity Committee influenced

CHANGE's preliminary focus on examining issues of equity in the public schools.

However, CHANGE leaders would argue that it was the overwhelming expression of

concern in the house meetings about equal access to quality education regardless of race

or economic status that was the central catalyst for the Youth and Education Action
Team's work.

Achievement and race.

Before turning to CHANGE's work around public education, it is necessary to
address the issue of achievement gaps and race because a few of the white public officials
and business leaders shared their concerns about the struggle of African-American males.
I have chosen to highlight the perspectives of a school official and business leader as both
provide a similar frame. Public school official, David Dalton, spoke specifically about
education not being just the school system's responsibility. "I've often said that the very
best education that your child will get in public schools absent your involvement is
mediocre," he began. Mr. Dalton continued,

> With your involvement as a parent, and actively nurturing and supporting and
> following up, doing the kind of things parents do on a regular basis, your child
> can receive as good an education as they could in any institution anywhere in the
> world, and we've certainly got kids who've shown it. So what happens with
> African American males? I think that's the question that I think the entire society
> has to ask. I think a lot of it has to do with demographics, single parent families,
> the absence of males early in children's lives, a culture that celebrates failure, . . .
> so I think that you, you have any number of demographic factors that set African-
> American male children up for failure. Probably at no time in our history both
> white and black children are being raised by a matriarchal family, and, and any
> brain research, psychological research regarding raising children tells you that the
> absence of a positive male role model in the lives of both girls and boys will have.
> Add that to mobility, poverty, and then your solution is throw 'em in a
> government school and hope, hope that mediocre works; it doesn't. (D. Dalton,
> personal communication, March 31, 2009)

Mr. Dalton concluded by saying that public schools still should be able to teach African-
American males how to read, and that inability of the system to do that had been his

"single greatest embarrassment" as aN elected school board member (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009).

James Smith, a white business leader, also brought up the achievement gap and drop-out rates of African-American males in our interview. He referenced his experience working with the PTA at his children's public school, which was approximately 58% minority.[39] Mr. Smith said that he and his wife were shocked to see that at this largely black school 90% of the volunteers were Caucasian. "There is nothing we can do. I mean I . . . we thought of a million ways, giveaways!, to get everybody to to come out, just not interested," he contended, "And it was *their* school. Our kids we wanted to be there to have a more diverse experience and it was just shocking to find . . . It's not a cultural good that has been held up" (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009).

Mr. Smith passionately spoke the drop-out rates of black males, and I believe his analysis of the issue exposes a deeper perspective about race. He declared,

> For me, it is immoral that 57% of African-American males drop out of school, don't finish high school. If I was an African American adult, I would be down in front of the county commissioners every single day, every single meeting, saying you know the sin of the generation is gonna to show up here. I read a thing the other day that something like 90% of kids, African-American males, who drop of high school never read a book again the rest of their lives. 'Cause it's an illiterate world they live in, it is not a culture that's held up for reading. So you know, you just basically condemn somebody to a horrible life, a near third world life. And it's just unimaginable to me that they're [African-Americans] are not in front of thaat school board every month. And *why* are all the folks that are pushing for change Caucasians who are saying this is wrong? We don't have obviously the same strength to say that. (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

---

[39] When I asked him why he sent his children in a public school, given that many of his counterparts opt for private schools, he explained, "They went to private school until a certain age, and once we felt confident they had gotten the basics, we wanted them to have a diverse experience of life. Once we were confident they had learned the basic things" (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009).

Viewing these statements through critical race and feminist theoretical lenses, it appears

that Mr. Smith's and Mr. Dalton's comments (while offered as expressions of concern),

are unconscious reflections of patriarchal and white privileged systems still operating in

this community. One can understand, then, why discourse and decision-making related to

public education are contested spaces in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County.

CHANGE Education Campaigns

Audit of Public Schools

Through the fall of 2003 and the winter of 2004, 150 CHANGE members

conducted audits visited the schools in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County system and met

with most of the principals. The original goal was to audit at least half of the 66 schools

in the system (CHANGE, 2003). Due to the number of participants CHANGE was able to

examine every school, which was a notable feat given that this was the first IAF affiliate

in the country to audit every school in their local system.

Audit teams documented the conditions of thousands of items associated with

physical conditions of the schools, such as plumbing problems and dilapidated trailers. In

one school, located in an economically depressed neighborhood, the smell of mold and

mildew was strong that the staff had placed buckets of coal in the halls to soak up the

smell (see Appendix C). Additionally, surveys measuring 120 statistical indicators such

as test scores and distribution of experienced and certified teachers were distributed to

principals in each of the schools (see Appendix C). Sixty-three of the 66 surveys were

returned and summary findings included data which suggested that while there was clear

136

dedication of school staffs and students, gaps remained between schools (CHANGE, 2004a). For instance, schools with lower test scores tended to have teachers with less experience and disparities in PTA fundraising between low, moderate, and upper income schools were evident (CHANGE, 2004a).

Strategically, the school audits proved to be an excellent choice for a first action. The organization was able to gain credibility in the community and develop a positive working relationship with Superintendent Donald Martin, something that had been deemed nearly impossible by some of the CHANGE participants who had been involved in other education-related groups. A few of these individuals had been involved with the Equity Committee dispute that was described earlier in this chapter.

One story that has become lore in the organization over the years is a recitation of the first public engagement with Superintendent Martin at a March 2004 Delegates Assembly after the audits. Prior to the assembly representatives from the Youth and Education Action Team briefed Superintendent Martin about the results of the audit and five commitments he would be asked to make at the assembly. The commitments were comprised of the following: 1) fix 56 health and safety items identified in the audit; 2) meet monthly to track the results of the audit; 3) develop baseline standards for physical facilities, equipment and technology; 4) commit at least 50% of funds from the forthcoming bond package for renovation and replacement of older schools and; 5) create an independent bond oversight group to track how bond money is spent (Helm, 2004).

Going into the meeting Superintendent Martin had committed to three of the five items. As the story goes, Dr. Martin entered the sanctuary of Temple Emanuel and

practically stumbled back like Fred Sanford clutching his heart. He seemed shocked to see the more than 500 Black, White, and Latino delegates seated in front of him. When he was asked to come to the microphone and respond to the proposed commitments, the Superintendent practically cut the CHANGE member off exuberantly noting how happy he was to see so many people present and that he would commit to all five of the requests presented. As with any story, the possibility of exaggeration increases as the years do. Notwithstanding the tall-tale effect, this experience was important because it firmed up a positive working relationship between the Superintendent and CHANGE.

Over the next few months 20 Youth and Education Action Team leaders met regularly with Dr. Martin to track the progress of audit items. In June 2004 the team released the second part of the audit, which was comprised of the abovementioned statistical indicators. In response to the survey data Dr. Martin said the findings were similar to the school system's own equity report. He encouraged the group to take action on the data by lobbying for future bond packages and becoming involved with the district's volunteer program (Helm, 2004). Little did Dr. Martin know that based on the audit data CHANGE would end up publicly contesting the substance of the forthcoming school bond.

House Meetings with Parents, Teachers, and Students

Using the audit data as a springboard, CHANGE collected data from than 700 parents, teachers, and students from 45 congregations in order to identify the organization's next areas of work to improve public education (CHANGE, 2006a). This was done through house meetings and surveys (see Appendix C) throughout April and

May 2005. The plan was that the information gleaned from the education house meetings would guide CHANGE's actions over the next few years. The data also would assist CHANGE in developing a vision paper outlining the organization's work around education issues for the next five years (CHANGE, 2004b).

The action proposals coming out of the public education seminars included conducting surveys and house meetings with teachers and school staff to elicit answers to the following questions,

> How effective is the process for hiring, mentoring, and professional development for new teachers in our schools? What do new teachers need to help them succeed and stay in their profession?
>
> What are the reasons why teachers stay or leave the profession? Is there a difference in the way teachers [and school support staff] are supported across race, faith tradition, gender, and sexual orientation?
>
> What are the reasons why teachers with more experience and certification are not teaching in equity plus schools? What incentives or policies would need to be in place to get experienced teachers to go to work at equity plus schools? Should the school system assign experienced teachers and staff to initiate these new campaigns? (CHANGE, 2006b)

Additionally, a continuation of the equity audits was recommended. Next steps would involve an analysis of: the 2005 bond proposal; school zones; tracking; standard course of study and multicultural curricula; student assignment strategies; and special education programs (CHANGE, 2006b). Parent advocacy training focused on helping parents understand their rights under No Child Left Behind and how to organize, as well as exploring the possibility of an Alliance School type approach in Forsyth County were proposed as well (CHANGE, 2006b).

School officials completed the initial set of baseline standards (a measure of minimum expectations for school facilities) in 2007. The Education Action Team chose to do a second round of audits to as a way to evaluate the baseline equity standards and checklist provided by the school system as well as identify any existing problems found in 2004 CHANGE school audit. A smaller audit of 14 targeted facilities comprised of new schools, which served as a control group, and older schools was conducted. Griffith Academy, the alternative placement site for students, raised concerns for the auditors and led to a campaign focused on addressing school discipline policies.

2006 School Bond

The first major item on CHANGE's action list focused on analyzing the School Board's bond proposal in 2005. CHANGE's preliminary action was to make sure that at least one of the sites for hearings on the bond proposal was in East Winston, the predominant African-American part of the community, since no school in that area of the city was on the original list. CHANGE began working on turnout for those locations and crafting a response to the proposed bond.

The audits had revealed schools that needed major renovations and others that were plagued with overcrowding. CHANGE determined that a fair solution for dealing with these issues was to formulate a bond that provided 50% of funds for the renovation of older schools and 50% for building new schools. The original $80 million bond proposed by the school system not only allocated $51 of the $80 million for the construction of new schools, it only set aside $8 for schools inside the city limits. Of the

19 schools that would have been delayed until a 2009 bond, 14 were in the city proper (Deaver, 2005a; CHANGE, 2005a).

For weeks school officials held a series of public hearings about the bond. The largest attended was one at Carver High School, where CHANGE members comprised the majority of the 400 person audience. CHANGE leaders had already met with Superintendent Martin three days prior to the meeting where they shared concerns about the allocation structure (Walker, 2005b). The hearing proved to be a heated environment, particularly by those who recalled a last bond debacle. *The Chronicle* pointed to the fact that many people in the African-American community were skeptical about the bond after feeling misled about a 1996 bond. After working hard to secure support from the black community, the school system then failed to deliver on a promised multi-million dollar renovation for Atkins Middle School located in East Winston. The system found money two years later to complete the renovation, but many people were disillusioned by the experience (Walker, 2005b).

I was present at the Carver High School bond forum. The audience was a sea of CHANGE members marked with neon stickers with slogans like "Don't forget city schools" and "Money for all students." The tension in the room was palpable. The ghosts of our segregated community were present and could be seen in the expressions of various faces in the room. A particularly intense part of the evening occurred when the Superintendent said that race and socioeconomic disparities were not issues that should be considered in structuring a bond. This statement was troubling to me, and I felt moved

to stand up and speak. Some of my comments were included in a newspaper article the next day (Deaver, 2005a).

In the midst of the contentious environment, a powerful moment occurred when a young, female, African-American teacher stood up and addressed Dr. Martin. Lamenting the one-race schools that had been created in the district, she told him that every day she stood at the front of her classroom and saw only little black faces. She said that sometimes her children would ask her if they should trust a white person, and then with a calm resolve tinged with sadness, this teacher stated to Dr. Martin, "When I stand here and listen to you, I wonder what I should tell them." I remember gasping out loud both because I was astounded at her courage, considering the potential ramifications of her statements, and because of all the emotions and history that were contained in her words. This young teacher cut through all the rhetoric and made it clear that this was not just about the bond but rather what the bond seemed to represent. I wept.

Not surprisingly, CHANGE decided it could not support the proposed bond because it did not meet its standards for a 50/50 split and concerns about the disproportionate amount of money going to suburban schools. At a subsequent School Board meeting, CHANGE representatives informed officials that the organization would not support a bond that ignored the needs of city schools while investing in new schools in the suburbs. The representatives declared,

> The African-American, Latino, and White community in the city should not carry the burden of waiting for their needs to be met while we deal with overcrowding in the mainly white suburbs. Historically, the African-American community has always carried the burden of waiting for their needs to be met. Its time we share

the burden as a community. Bonds should at least reflect a balance between renovating and building new schools. We should share the resources between the African-American, Latino, and White communities . . . We should share the resources between city and suburban schools . . . We should call on the school board tonight . . . take action . . . show some leadership . . . give the voters a bond that is fair and equitable . . . (CHANGE, 2005b)

The NAACP and the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity had already refused to back the bond. Without the support of these two community groups and CHANGE, it was arguable that the School Board was going to have an uphill battle to secure a bond referendum. Summing up the situation with a humorous tone, *The Chronicle* observed, "The proposed 2005 school bond referendum was as popular as a tone-deaf singer on 'American Idol'" (Walker, 2005c).

Citing the possible approval of the statewide education lottery and negative public opinion, the Board decided to shelve the bond (Deaver, 2005b). Shortly thereafter, Dr. Martin contacted Lead Organizer, Chris Baumann, and conceded that the system needed CHANGE's support in order to pass a bond. CHANGE developed a counter proposal and offered it to Dr. Martin, who went back to the drawing board. A markedly different $250 million bond allocating approximately 48% of funds for renovations and 52% for new construction was the result (Walker, 2006a). Though not an exact 50/50 split, CHANGE felt it had effectively negotiated a more equitable proposal and thus decided to publicly offer support. The group especially was pleased that some of the older schools identified in the audits would be slated for renovation or replacement in 2007-2008, whereas they would not be been addressed until 2009 in the first proposed bond. The Ministers Conference, which had not supported the last few school bonds, also decided to back the

143

new proposal while the NAACP maintained its opposition.

CHANGE announced it would partner with the school system to turn out the vote for the bond at an October 2006 Delegates Assembly. The organization's members volunteered to participate in phone-banking and canvassing. CHANGE also partnered with other voter engagement groups to lead an "All Souls to the Polls" march to the local board of elections. More than 250 people participated in the march and early voting, including some elected officials and candidates. For those of us who were there, seeing Dr. Martin sing "We Shall Overcome" as we marched through downtown Winston-Salem was quite memorable. The bond passed with 65% of the vote (Forsyth County Board of Elections, 2006).

Figure 8. "All Souls to the Polls" March. CHANGE members marched to the Board of Elections where they took part in early voting (October 29, 2006).

Once the referendum was passed, CHANGE's next challenge would be the creation of a community bond oversight committee. When I came on staff as the Associate Organizer in December 2006, one of my first assignments was to pull together

a committee comprised of various community groups concerned about education. One year after the bond passed, the committee requested for school officials to present a progress report on bond expenditures at a public forum. CHANGE turned out more than 100 people for this event. One of the issues that came to light was the small percentage of minority contractors used by the school system. There have been some difficulties securing a consistent group of partners to address the bidding process and track the progress of bond expenditures. However, in June 2009 CHANGE did hold another follow-up forum about the bond's progress with school officials and confronted the minority contracting issue head on (Hinton, 2009). Discussions between CHANGE and the school system about this issue continue.

In brief, the successful negotiation and passage of a more equitable school bond was an important step for change in terms of the organization positioning itself as a powerbroker. The analysis of the original bond proposals also revealed systemic problems that would lead CHANGE to push for school board election reform. This topic is discussed at the conclusion of this section.

School Discipline Policies

Public education is always a difficult subject to tackle, because there are so many different problems to examine and levels of bureaucracy to engage. Establishing baseline equity standards is a place to begin, but guaranteeing that facilities are meeting minimum standards does not attend to the breadth of disparities in public schools. One of the most complex components of community organizing is figuring out how to make an issue actionable, especially when it comes to school reform.

As explained earlier in this chapter, the way in which Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools was addressing school discipline became an issue for CHANGE as a result of the second round of audits. CHANGE leaders visited Griffith Academy, a placement site for students who have been suspended from their home schools. While reviewing the condition of the facilities, these leaders were distressed to see the disproportionate number of minority students in attendance and the second-rate learning environment. There was no media center, the bathrooms were locked and had to be opened by the janitor, the furniture obviously had been discarded from other schools, and the home economics area had no way to sterilize any of the utensils (Neal, 2008, p. 79-80) The Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem, which was partnering with the Academy to mentor students, had expressed strong concerns as well.

The first step CHANGE chose to take was to hold a public hearing on alternative education in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. School system officials were asked to participate in the full day summit, along with various community leaders from groups like the NAACP and the Ministers Conference and a parent whose child had been suspended. The statement of purpose for the hearing affirmed,

> CHANGE is conducting a Public Hearing to focus on the issues relating to disciplinary policies and programs of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County System/Alternative Education. The goal is to develop recommendations to improve those policies and programs insuring all students with access to a sound and basic education enabling them to liven into the fullness of their potential. (CHANGE, 2008a)

To convey the serious nature of the forum, a transcriptionist was hired to capture the testimonies and discussions.

CHANGE leaders spoke about touring Griffith Academy during the audit. Katie Ess, a white leader, passionately recounted her experience,

> You know, CHANGE went to Glenn High School and Carver High School and Griffith High School in the spring. . . . And to make this real personal, I went to those three schools and I didn't sleep that night after I went to Griffith. I was so upset with what I saw there. It just – the sense was a hopelessness. (Neal, 2008, p. 28)

Ess reviewed the clear resource disparities in the school, while others like Bishop Todd Fulton, a volunteer at Griffith, addressed disproportionate minority representation in the school's population. African-Americans represented 71% of the student body at Griffith during the first quarter of the 2008 school year (Farmer, 2008). One of the primary discussions centered on the process of expelling students on the front-end. Questions about how teachers are prepared for disciplinary work, as well as issues of cultural competency were foregrounded.

Pursuant to the public hearing, CHANGE drafted recommendations related to professional development, culture and climate, staffing, monitoring and assessment, and curriculum and instruction. CHANGE also recommended establishing a non-traditional high school of choice and increasing collaboration among schools and community stakeholders (CHANGE, 2008b). Over the last year CHANGE has met with school officials to discuss and negotiate the implementation of these recommendations. It appears the public forum did provide an momentum for hiring more employees at the

school, albeit they are still not close to staffing capacity. Overall, progress on the

recommendations has been slow and officials are still emphasizing student behavior and

mentoring issues over administrative responsibilities. There has been little to no

conversation or forward motion on the recommendations related to cultural competency

issues and need for training (R. Eller, personal communication, January 7, 2010).

At first glance it appears that the impact of the school discipline campaign has

been more profound internally for CHANGE than externally. Lead Organizer, Ryan

Eller, indicated that it had given CHANGE leaders an opportunity to research in a new

way and had grounded them in terms of research significance. They had moved beyond

audit type work and into a different vein of research, which ended up bringing leaders

with specific academic training to the table (R. Eller, personal communication, January 7,

2010).

Perhaps more noteworthy is the fact that the campaign provided an avenue for

members of the organization to discuss race in a way that they had never discussed it

before. Eller said that it had "swung open the doors for our leaders to admit that race was

a specific issue. They knew that it was but we had never directly talked about it" (R.

Eller, personal communication, January 7, 2010). This had not gone unnoticed by some

in the community. At the public hearing Reverend Carlton Eversley expressed,

> I'm also very proud of CHANGE, which really has made a shift under the
> leadership of Reverend Parrish on this school [Griffith Academy]. And the reason
> it's a shift is because unlike the Ministers Conference, which is predominantly
> black, CHANGE is much more diverse and heterogenous and for the first time has
> a focus on these matters, race, ethnicity, gender, and is focusing on Griffith (Neal,
> 2008, p. 172-172).

Although race typically is inferred in most discourses about inequities in public education, particularly when rhetoric about resegregation is employed, naming and confronting it squarely can be complicated. While the IAF has been committed to dismantling racism and classism, organizations purposely have not been built on racially driven politics. There is an understanding that Whites can become alienated by racial discourses. Therefore, a focus on racial and cultural nationalism can often be counterproductive because homogenous groups cannot acquire the power needed to appreciably change the systems that continue to oppress minorities (Márquez, 2003). Hence, discourses around race have to be strategic and thoughtful. This is particularly true in the South where some people still refer to "the war between the states" and as Eller noted, "There are wounds that go deeper in certain communities, more so than any campaign can address through language" (R. Eller, personal communication, January 7, 2010). With these considerations in mind, CHANGE's decision to address school discipline issues has moved the organization into new territory and the consequences of this action, if any, will be important to monitor.

School Board Election Reform

Arguably CHANGE's effort to effect school board election reform has proven to be its most challenging education-related campaign. The experience with the school bond was eye-opening for the organization in that it brought to the surface questions about decision-making and governmental structures. For instance, why did suburban needs take priority in the initial bond in the first place? To understand the set-up of systemic and political landscape better, the Reinventing Local Government Action Team partnered

149

with the Education and Youth Action Team to take a deeper look at how decisions were being made.

Two main issues were identified. The first had to do with the way the school board districts were set up. As referenced earlier, the 1992 districting plan was created to ensure African-American representation on the school board. However, the reality is that they have a permanent minority status. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible for a Republican of any race to be elected in District 1 (the predominantly black district with two seats) or a Democrat of any race to be elected in District 2 (the rest of the city and county with four district seats). The situation in District 2 was true for the at-large seats as well (refer to the map of the districts on the next page).

CHANGE came to the conclusion that the implications of this system were evident in issues like the 2005 school bond. Based on their research, CHANGE deduced that over the last 30 years more and more resources had been going to schools in the suburbs when only 40% of students lived in the county. Yet, 90% of new school construction in the 2005 proposed bond would have occurred in the suburbs. In addition, historically the arrangement of the system had led city residents to have minimal input into the school bond packages even though they paid 41% more local taxes than suburban residents (CHANGE, 2006c).

Secondly, the partisan nature of school board elections was seen as deeply problematic because as a *Winston-Salem Journal* reporter surmised, "One thing is clear: The composition of the local school board has been steeped in politics for many decades"

(Romoser, 2009b, p. A1). CHANGE conducted a review of the history and found that in 1970 a state law was passed mandating all county-wide school boards to be elected and for those elections to be non-partisan. Forsyth County was one of a handful of counties allowed to remain partisan. There was an effort to remedy this in 1987 when school board
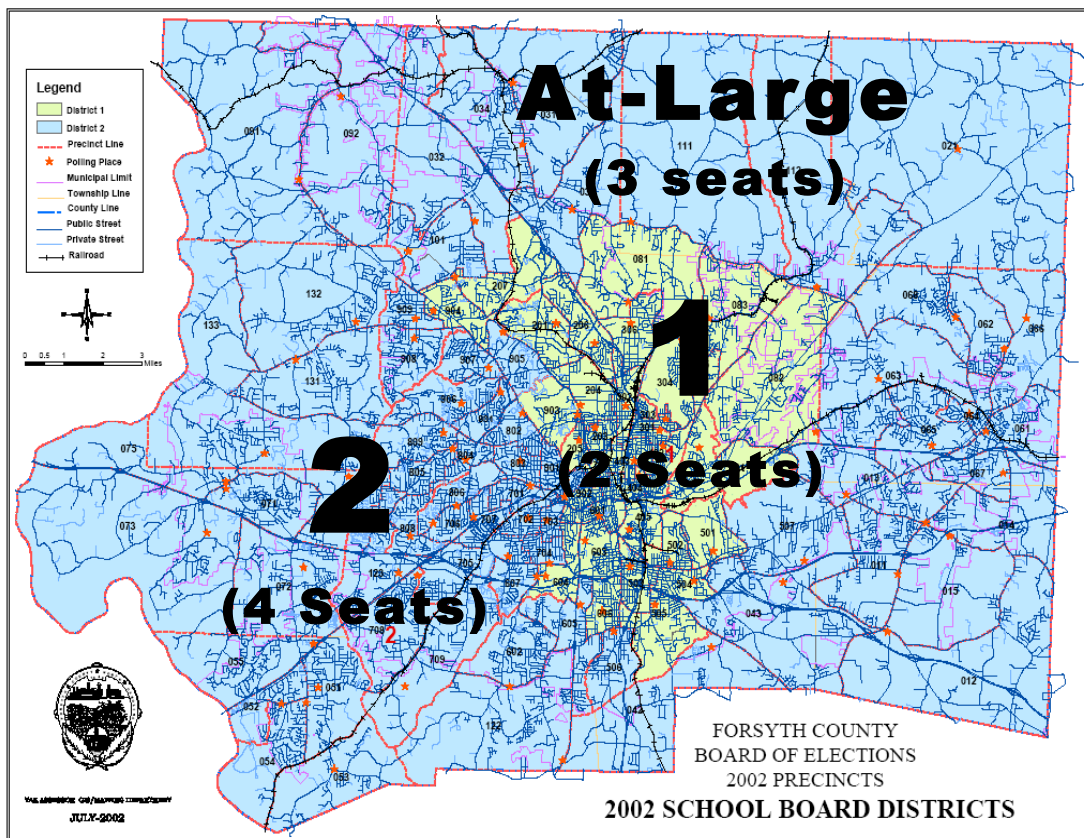
Figure 9. Map of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board Districts. Adapted and reprinted with permission from the Forsyth County Board of Elections.

members agreed to support the change. A bill was introduced in the state legislature but failed in committee. At this time Republicans were in favor of the effort, while many African-American leaders and Democrats were not (Youngquist, 2007; Hoeffel, 1990). In

151

2009 Forsyth County was only one of 15 school board districts out of 100 in North Carolina that was still elected on a partisan basis (See Appendix D).

Partisan elections created a situation in which straight-ticketing voting contributed to an average margin of victory in District 2 of 15,000 votes. Not only that, but if someone wanted to run as an unaffiliated candidate she or he would have to collect more than 7,000 signatures to get on the ballot. As a result, 58% of school board seats were uncontested and many incumbents did not even run a campaign. Thus, electoral politics and incumbent dominance had shaped the composition and decisions of the board for years (Romoser, 2009b).

At an October 2006 Delegates Assembly CHANGE recommended that if the community wanted to increase voter participation, districts should been drawn in such a way that made races more competitive and was inviting of more candidates (Romoser, 2009b). Looking back, CHANGE leaders admit that coupling the discussion of non-partisan elections with redistricting muddied the issues and that they should have been discussed either separately or at least more clearly. The result was that during the school board election reform campaign there were people who were confused about how non-partisan elections would impact the districts. This was of particular concern for some African-American residents who said they had worked hard to secure the representation they had and were afraid that making elections non-partisan would impact those seats. One of the opponents was Vic Johnson, an African-American Democrat who has held one of the school board seats created in District 1 since 1997. Johnson said he did not understand how moving to non-partisan elections would help secure more representation

152

for blacks and that he was concerned the shift would actually lead to a loss of elected seats for the African-American community (Romoser & Underwood, 2009).

Although CHANGE leaders felt strongly about the need to redistrict, the consensus was that non-partisan elections were "low-hanging fruit;" that is, it was more likely that the organization could win on that issue than on redistricting. The analysis was that a win on the non-partisan campaign ultimately would provide the political momentum needed to address redistricting. Bill Tucker, a public official who supports redistricting, said that he wished CHANGE had addressed both issues rather than going after what was seen as the easier one. He questioned, ". . . well if you can't get that [redistricting] ask yourself why the other is more achievable . . . why you expect to get less resistance from the power structure to the other goals." He lowered his voice and then pointedly said, "Because they [the power structure] know that they can still control who gets elected as long as you don't change the districts" (B. Tucker, personal communication, April 6, 2009).

After the assembly in October 2006, CHANGE engaged in deeper dialogue about potential modifications to the current electoral system within the member organizations. CHANGE conducted bi-partisan relational meetings with school board officials, local legislative delegation members, and other community representatives, including principal African-American leaders. This period was used to collect further data and get an initial gauge of reaction to possible reform. CHANGE officially launched the "Kids Not Politics" campaign for school board election reform at its May 2007 Delegates Assembly.

The first major action of the campaign was a petition drive to assess public support for the move to non-partisan school board elections. The internal goal for signatures was originally 14,000, which was 10% of the turnout in the last presidential election year. Upon review this number was changed to 10,000 to reflect a goal of 10% of the turnout in the previous midterm election in which school board members were chosen. A few weeks before the petition drive kick-off CHANGE discovered that a local reporter had learned about the event because it had been advertised in his congregation, which was a member of CHANGE. He wanted to run a story prior to the action. This was disconcerting because the action team was still trying to secure relational meetings with some key community leaders and was concerned that the spin of the story could impact their thoughts about the matter.[40] I was a staff member during this period and wrote the following journal entry in response to my frustration with the incident,

> This work continually exposes the complicated relationships that individuals and institutions have in communities. Because one of our member institutions is the congregation for the editor of a local newspaper, he sees "a story" and wants to "get ahead of the news." However, in doing so he creates a space for those invested in the status quo to have a platform and to sway public opinion. What is the role of the newspaper and the role of journalism in communities? How often does breaking the news turn into creating drama and spectacle, and in the process counter any progressive movement in a community by mis-educating the public? (personal journal entry, May 26, 2007)

---

[40] An example of misinformation provided by the local paper was the idea that CHANGE had pursued election reform after one of its members, Sandra Mikush, ran as an unaffiliated candidate in the 2006 election and lost (Youngquist, 2007). In fact, CHANGE does not run candidates and Mrs. Mikush was not even involved with CHANGE when the discussions first began about possible reform. A state legislator used this information to undergird his argument about CHANGE's motivation for the pursuing the bill.

This small experience raised much larger questions for me about a variety of issues. I became more intrigued about the extent to which local media shapes the culture and political discourse of a community rather than just reporting on it. Furthermore, for community groups like CHANGE that have member institutions, thinking strategically about people's multiple roles and how those influence the way they view the organization's work is vital. For instance, the newspaper reporter saw a "story" rather than a CHANGE-related action for his congregation.

The petition drive kick-off event in June 2007 was the beginning of what would prove to be a much longer campaign than ever expected. More than 50 people came together on a Saturday morning to receive instructions about how to communicate the purpose of the petition to the general public. Specifically, the arguments offered for the change were: 1) education issues are about the best interest of children and thus by nature are non-partisan; 2) non-partisan elections would remove requirements for candidates to tow a political party line therefore increasing the draw of applicants for whom education is a top priority; and 3) instead of relying on party labels voters would become better informed about education issues ("Non-Partisan School Board Fact Sheet", 2007).

Participants also were trained about voter registration and were given forms in the event they met people who were not registered to vote. Small groups went out to targeted locations like grocery store parking lots and Little League ballparks to collect signatures and then came back to debrief about the experience in terms of lessons learned. By and large there was a very positive response to the action and within just a few hour period nearly 1,000 signatures were collected (see Appendix D to view documents used in the

petition drive effort). The affirmative experience spurred CHANGE to move forward with the reform effort.

The petition drive did elicit reactions in the community especially from some elected officials. One school board member, Jill Tackabery, wrote a letter to the paper in which she suggested that the current system worked because a first-time Democratic candidate had defeated an incumbent Republican for an at-large seat in the 2006 school

Figure 10. Petition Drive Kick-Off. CHANGE leaders were instructed about how to conduct the petition drive and register people to vote at the petition drive kick-off (June 2007).

Figure 11. Gathering Signatures. CHANGE leaders approached people in various locations to gauge opinions about the "Kids Not Politics" campaign (June 2007).

board election.[41] Tackabery asserted,

> It would seem to me that, in terms of direct impact on Forsyth County's school children, a better use of the time to gather 14,000 signatures would be: to find 14,000 mentors for our drop-out prevention programs; to find 14,000 new PTA members; to gather 14,000 books for the Imprints program; to offer 14,000 volunteer hours for our schools (Tackabery, 2007).

---

[41] Of course, many people would argue that this was an anomaly in terms of election history as it was the first this had occurred since the change to the two districts in the early 1990s.

156

The perspective offered in the above letter is important, because it gives a taste of the differing opinions about what CHANGE's work, as well as any community work related to public education, should be. This is addressed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Throughout the rest of the summer and into 2008, CHANGE continued with relational meetings, research and the petition drive while simultaneously working on other issues. CHANGE used the May 2008 primary and November 2008 general elections as opportunities to send teams out to polling sites and collect thousands of signatures from people with varied party affiliations. For these actions CHANGE decided to use individual petition cards instead of paper petitions. This would come in handy when leaders went to Raleigh to speak with legislators. The pile of signature cards testifying to the thousands of people in Forsyth County who wanted election reform was good political theater.

During this stage the action team learned there was a gentleman's agreement that the local legislative delegation would only submit bills that garnered their consensus during the General Assembly's short session. Since the delegation was split about the non-partisan school board election issue, the only plausible situation was to secure co-sponsors who would be willing to present the bill in the long session which would not begin until 2009.

In the interim a number of important events occurred. At an October 2008 Delegates Assembly local legislative delegation members were asked whether they would support the bill. The answers affirmed that the delegation was split on the matter. In spite of this, Democratic Representatives Larry Womble and Earline Parmon offered to file the

bill in the North Carolina House of Representatives. Based on further meetings after the assembly with various community leaders (including some school officials), CHANGE made the decision to name the legislation the "School Board Election Reform" bill and to add staggered terms.

Ironically, the effort to remove partisan politics from the picture ended up becoming colored by deeply partisan rancor. Although CHANGE had attempted to secure bi-partisan sponsorship for the bill, Democratic officials in both the House and Senate ultimately sponsored it. The first expression of partisanship came when House Bill 833 made it through the first hurdle of the House Committee on Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform in April 2007. Nearly 30 CHANGE leaders traveled to the state capital for a "Relational Day" where they met with various House members to advocate for the bill. The next day a smaller group went back to be present for the committee meeting. A few representatives from CHANGE who claimed diverse political party affiliations testified to the committee in support of the bill. The committee passed the bill in a 15 to 1 bi-partisan vote. By the time the bill made it to House Local Government 1 Committee for approval the next week, efforts clearly had been made to shore up the ranks on both sides of the aisles. The bill barely passed in a 7-6 party line vote. Whereas the Democrats had opposed a similar effort in 1987, the Republicans were now in opposition.

Republicans from the local legislative delegation argued that the method of submitting the bill was not appropriate. Representative Larry Brown said that such a decision should go to the citizens of the county in a referendum (Romoser, 2009a). CHANGE had already researched this possibility and decided to object to it. The

organization's argument was that: 1) a referendum could be expensive; 2) no other county had had to hold one; 3) a referendum was only advisory and a bill would still have to be submitted to the legislature; and 4) a referendum would delay any election reform until the next school board election cycle in 2014. In response to Brown's contention that such a decision should go to the people first, CHANGE argued that this had not been a stealth campaign. They had gone public in 2007 with the petition drive and had collected more than 10,000 signatures calling for the reform.

I traveled with CHANGE to the Capitol on both of these occasions and the experiences provided much food for thought. One morsel, related to the complexities of being an action researcher, is described in Appendix E, entitled "The Tale of the Legislator and His Yoda." Another morsel came on the second day we went to Raleigh when a woman (who turned out to be a lobbyist) stopped me in the bathroom and asked, "Who exactly *is* CHANGE?" She said she had seen what seemed like scores of people walking around wearing the brightly colored CHANGE tags. When I told her we were a citizen's group who had come down to build relationships with the state legislators and educate them about school board election reform, she appeared pleasantly surprised. She explained that she was at the Capitol regularly and we were an anomaly. I inquired further and she bluntly said, "Because most people who came to talk with legislators are lobbyists." The conversation reiterated Harry Boyte's point that political culture is built around professionals, not citizen engagement.

The situation became increasingly complicated as time wore on. The African-American Caucus of the Forsyth County Democratic Party issued a statement opposing

the bill because they feared in could impact black representation. Seven of nine school board members signed onto a resolution opposing the bill, and the effort was led by one of the African-American Democrats on the board, Vic Johnson. Dale Folwell, a Republican legislator, commented to the *Winston-Salem Journal* that the school board resolution crossed gender, race, and party lines. He concluded, "I don't know how much more nonpartisan you can get . . . I just think that with all the crisis in public education, especially on funding issues, should we really be spending our time on this?" (O'Donnell, 2009, p. A13). Interestingly, at this point the *Winston-Salem Journal* threw its two cents in and wrote an editorial calling on the legislature to pass the bill (Railey, 2009b).

When it came time for the House to vote, an unusual lengthy and heated debate occurred. The deliberation included rhetorical questions about the supposed constituency of CHANGE, the validity of the signatures on the petitions and exactly what decisions by the local school board had been made on a partisan basis. The bill finally passed with a vote of 67-49 on party lines. The IAF teaches that one of the purposes of an action is to get a reaction and that the test of an organization's power is whether decision-makers recognize the group. Looking down on the debate about CHANGE's merits from the gallery, CHANGE leaders could argue that for better or worse they indeed had been recognized.

CHANGE traveled to Raleigh for a second "Relational Day" with State Senators on June 2, 2009 and witnessed the passage of House Bill 833 in the Senate Committee on State and Local Government. The next week the bill made it to the Senate floor for final approval. In an unexpected twist, Senator Pete Brunstetter attempted to block the bill by

proposing an amendment that would make city council elections non-partisan as well (Winston-Salem is one of nine municipalities that still has partisan elections and has a Democratic majority). Democratic Senator Linda Garrou, who had shepherded the bill through the Senate, countered that if Brunstetter wanted to co-sponsor such a bill she'd be happy to do that. Brunstetter subsequently withdrew his amendment and the Senate passed House Bill 833 (Romoser & Underwood, 2009).

Figure 12. "Relational Day" at State Capitol. CHANGE leaders posed for a picture with State Senator Linda Garrou during a Relational Day at the Capitol (June 2009).

During my study a number of public officials and business leaders directly referenced the school board election reform campaign in unprompted responses. This may have been the result of the constant press coverage of the effort during the period I was conducting my research. Those who spoke about the campaign fell into three camps. Some felt it diverted CHANGE's attention from more important issues. For example, when I asked Mr. Tucker about any critiques he had about CHANGE he answered, "Be

careful not to seize on gimmicks." I asked him what he had in mind and he explained,

> I'm thinking about the . . . non-partisan school board . . . technique . . . My personal analysis is that if that goal were to be achieved it would not produce substantive change in the policies, in resources allocations, that the local school system make and would approve to be a great disappointment to the folks who are active in their organization. I think that the organization has been effectively sold by very well meaning folks um what amounts to a bill of goods when it comes to the organization's basic policy goals. (B. Tucker, personal communication, April 6, 2007)

Another official, Michael Fisher, made a similar point suggesting, "I think that's just a distraction for CHANGE to get so fired up on that" (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009).

Other officials stated that CHANGE should keep its nose out of politics. A school board member replied to the survey question about any additional positive or negative comments about CHANGE, "They need to make sure their members understand that politics and political parties cannot be a part of their agenda. If they cannot separate the two they need to be monitored." Although this official did not reference to the non-partisan campaign specifically in this answer, one can infer the connection. Similarly, a county commissioner who indicated he had a cordial relationship with the organization replied, "CHANGE should concentrate on policy, not politics. I suggest an ongoing conversation with elected officials regarding issues of concern. I would stay out of politics of elections."

Finally, a few officials viewed the effort as a covert partisan attempt to elect more Democratic school board members. Clifton Tuttle, a Republican official, had a sharp

response to my inquiry about the faith-based nature of CHANGE and whether

congregations should have a role in systemic change. I cite Mr. Tuttle at length as this

provides a richer read of his analysis,

> *CT:* You gotta be a little careful there and, and I do think when CHANGE started advocating non-partisan school board . . . they got right up to the line. Right there. They claimed to be non-partisan, but they picked a group to (the school board), to become non-partisan that was predominately Republican. If you really are . . . you're too young to remember. Back in the old days, Republicans wanted the judges to be non-partisan because all the judges were Democrats. Well, now most judges are Republican, so the Democrats . . . and, of course, the Democrats control Raleigh, were able to enact the change so now judges are non-partisan. So, it's whoever is out of power tends to want them to be non-partisan. So, to me, if CHANGE was truly non-partisan, they should have advocated for the City Council to be non-partisan because that is a, 'cause, I, I, I envision most, most of CHANGE are Democratic folks. I suspect 80, 90% of the members would be. They picked a very partisan . . . to me that was a very partisan issue . . .

> *SF:* . . . So your sense is that because the school board's predominately Republican that . . . it's perceived as . . .

> *CT:* If CHANGE, the fact that CHANGE selected a Republican organization to go for non-partisanship tended to show their colors as a Democratic grassroots organization. (C. Tuttle, personal communication, March 13, 2009)

Two other school board members who responded to my survey had comparable

assessments of the campaign. Both individuals spoke about the non-partisan campaign in

their answers to my question about any additional positive or negative comments they

had about CHANGE. "My main concern with CHANGE is the selection of partisan

school board elections as a major thrust of this organization," stated one respondent (who

also said she did not have a particularly positive relationship with the organization). She

continued, "To be frank, if I believed in my heart that CHANGE would be involved in

this particular issue if the majority make-up of the WS/FC Board was Democratic I might

feel differently. But I don't believe that."

Another school board official actually typed an attachment to the survey in which

she wrote at length about her concerns. Again, I quote this official in extended form

because the author makes reference to the earlier efforts to effect election reform,

> To my knowledge, their [CHANGE's] most recent efforts have been to lobby our
> FC legislators to change the method of electing school board members. It is my
> opinion that their efforts are to create an election process that will be more likely
> to elect a liberal majority to the Board of Education in order to promote their
> liberal agenda.
>
> Their named intent is to create non-partisan school board elections. And I did,
> until 1994, support non-partisan elections for our school board.
>
> However, the make up of this coalition seems to be very similar to that of an
> effort made in 1994 to influence the policy-making endeavors of the school board.
> At that time, a new election process was initiated and passed by a liberal coalition
> in FC and Raleigh – and the intent was to create a liberal majority on the Board of
> Education in FC. And since it did NOT produce the results desired then nor has
> our community endorsed a liberal majority in the election process for the Board of
> Education since 1994, once again, lobbying efforts are underway to again, try to
> change the system for their purpose – a liberal board to support their liberal
> agenda.
>
> I am in favor of conservative leadership for our educational system.

Undeniably, the elected officials quoted above viewed CHANGE's effort to make

systemic changes to the election process as a partisan affair. The implications of these

evaluations of the organization's work and how widespread they may be are not yet fully

known.

What is known is that the school board election reform campaign moved CHANGE's work to a whole new level and to the heart of power relations in the community. In CHANGE's estimation one of the more ironic accusations by detractors is that CHANGE acted as a backroom broker. CHANGE leaders point to the grassroots manner in which the bill came into existence and suggest that it merely reflects true democratic engagement. According to Lead Organizer, Ryan Eller, "This process is how democracy should work, to a 'T' . . . Folks ought to be responding to citizens in the way that our elected officials have responded to us" (Romoser, 2009b, p. A1). However one reads it, the reality is that CHANGE's effort to secure school board election reform potentially could transform the face of public education in the community and the role that the organization will play in community governance in the future.

Current Work

After celebrating its win on the election reform campaign, CHANGE outlined its education agenda for 2010 at the Fall 2009 Delegates Assembly. With the newly instituted non-partisan school board election scheduled for 2010, the organization plans to concentrate its energy on increasing voter turnout for the primary and general elections. CHANGE likely will be collaborating with other education-focused community groups to co-sponsor seminars for prospective candidates as well as candidate forums. Raising community awareness concerning educational issues and solutions is of paramount concern. According to Lead Organizer Ryan Eller, CHANGE will engage in community dialogue about the health of our public education system and suggest well-researched solutions (R. Eller, personal communication, January 7, 2010). The goal is to

165

heighten the community discourse around identified problems and issue-related solutions

and then impact those solutions directly through a get-out-the-vote strategy.

CHANGE also has chosen to launch a family engagement campaign. The

reception of this campaign, especially by school board members, will be interesting to

follow because a number of them have suggested that CHANGE should invest its energy

in this arena rather than attempting to influence policy-making. In fact a board member

remarked in her survey that there were "so many areas where CHANGE could be

involved & engaged – mentoring students at all grade levels, mentoring parents – helping

them become their child's 1st teacher, joining at Equity + [Plus] PTA[42] – whether they

have children there or not . . ." Some of these items were referenced at the delegates

assembly when parents, grandparents and caregivers were asked to stand and repeat the

following oath,

> As a parent, grandparent, or caregiver of a child, I commit to helping my child(ren) to achieve their personal *best* in an increasingly competitive world. To meet that challenge, they must think creatively; solve problems; communicate well; and compete with persons of diverse backgrounds. With others, I pledge to:
> - Spend *at least* 30 minutes five days a week with my child *without* distraction which includes 12 or more minutes of reading as well as reviewing homework, talking about whatever is important to him or her, news or life to improve attention span and promote critical and creative thinking and problem solving
> - Collaborate with my school and place of worship to advance my child's positive growth; and
> - Partner with CHANGE to advance education for *all* children. (CHANGE, 2009b)[43]

---

[42] Equity Plus is a designation assigned to schools based on the percentage of students that receive free or reduced lunches.
[43] CHANGE has recently received funding from United Way of Forsyth County to partner with United Way, the YMCA, and the local school system to help family members become more involved in their child's education. CHANGE will be leading house meetings with parents and caregivers in three targeted schools.

As a critical educator, I was disappointed to see language in the oath that situates the purpose of education in the context of marketplace principles. Nonetheless, CHANGE's public call to family members to become more involved in their children's educational experiences is a significant action. It speaks to moderate and conservative community members who believe the solution is not just through systemic reform but also with changing the behavior of children. It also provides a platform from which to potentially challenge people, like the school board member I referenced above, about the system's responsibilities when necessary.

Perhaps more important is the last portion of the pledge that asks parents and other caregivers to partner with CHANGE in advancing education for *all* children. This is a clear indication that CHANGE will not be assuming an accommodationist stance in terms of parental and family engagement. The organization will be working actively to involve families and the larger community in transforming the public school system. One strategy for achieving this goal will be to organize parents (and interested teachers) within their home schools. In contrast to the school board member's recommendations, CHANGE's effort to organize parents and families is more concerned with increasing their power and less on mentoring or "culture of poverty" responses. Initially a handful of schools will be targeted for piloting the organizing action, which will include a voter turnout component. While there are no plans to replicate an Alliance Schools approach, it is conceivable that this could unfold over time.

In a draft paper CHANGE crafted when the organization first began its educational reform efforts, a vision for local public education practices was presented. While this paper is being update, I believe the following section of the original vision still captures the heart of the organization's work,

> Few things are more important to the future of a community than the quality of its public schools. CHANGE is committed to working with all interested parties to improve public education in Forsyth County. This will mean working with the school system where possible and opposing its policies where necessary. It will mean working with and rallying community organizations and agencies in addressing broad social issues that affect student background and preparation. It will mean educating and lobbying elected representatives for adequate funding for our schools and for necessary flexibility in documenting student success.
>
> CHANGE's sole interest is in improving the education and preparation for life of all students in the public schools. Since families from lower socio-economic backgrounds do not have access to or experience with the mechanisms for social change, much of our energies will be spent advocating for them. However, CHANGE's role is not merely advocacy. Where necessary, appropriate, and possible, CHANGE will be actively involved in working to help our community's children receive a better education. (CHANGE, 2004c)

CHANGE's extensive history of pursuing public education reform has been a source of commendation and criticism by various members of the community. Building upon the political and relational capital the organization has secured throughout the years will be essential for succeeding in achieving its vision of equitable and effective public education in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County.

CHAPTER VI

WHERE HAVE ALL THE CORPORATE FATHERS GONE?
CHANGES IN POWER RELATIONS AND GOVERNANCE IN A COMPANY TOWN

Figure 13. Local Candidates at Delegates Assembly. Candidates for local elected offices were invited to speak at a CHANGE Delegates Assembly where more than 1,200 people were in attendance (October 2006).

"Some think it's great – some are threatened – But whatever – We've now got a seat at the table (maybe not quite next to the mayor – But it's pretty hard for them to ignore us!)
~ Comment from CHANGE leader regarding how public officials and business leaders view the work of CHANGE

Once distinguished as the "city of a hundred millionaires," Winston-Salem, North Carolina has been described in a multitude of ways ranging from charming to sophisticated to bucolic. Perhaps every community sees itself as unusual, and to some extent I believe

that for every town and city this is true. This truth lies in the residents' perceptions of their home and their interpretations of the complexities of its character. Thus, it is not strange to hear someone say that Winston-Salem is a different kind of place, particularly when it comes to understanding politics and power relations in the city. Historically known as the home of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and Hanes Hosiery, the city's face has seen dramatic changes with the demise of manufacturing in the United States. However, the influences of King Tobacco and King Cotton can still be seen and felt, especially given that it has been less than 30 years since a few industrial families governed the affairs of the community.

Accordingly, it is necessary to situate CHANGE within the broader cultural and political milieu of Winston-Salem in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of its position and impact on the community at large. Central to this examination is an exploration of the multiple ways in which power lives and moves in a community like Winston-Salem. This chapter begins with reviewing theories about power that have assisted me in analyzing the cultural and political culture of Winston-Salem. I then look at early expressions of power in the community; in particular, its evolution from a congregation town to an industrial metropolis. The last portion of the chapter is an analysis of responses from CHANGE leaders, public officials, and business leaders regarding the organization's effectiveness in shifting power relations and impacting governance in the community.

Faces of Power

Lord Acton's observation that power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely continues to serve as a definitive social statement about the nature of power. People are skeptical of the matter at best, particularly in light of witnessing Machiavellian tactics by modern-day political operatives. These performances of power often lead people to completely disengage from discussions pertaining to the subject or inhibit them from appreciating power as a positive force. Caginess around power is a primary issue for community organizing efforts, because to engage in public life means you have to understand, confront, and exercise power. This can often be a stumbling block for people, especially those in faith communities. I would argue that making the connections between knowledge, hegemony, and power is the most important way of understanding the various expressions of power and governance in a community like Winston-Salem. The ways in which power relations are structured, produced, reproduced, negotiated, and resisted are critical areas of examination for any effort that seeks to strengthen the role of the civic sector in governance.

As a frame for understanding Winston-Salem's origins, Karl Marx's (1959) work is instructive because he argued that the economic base of a community in many ways determines its cultural superstructures; that is, the ruling class that controls material production also controls knowledge production (Milner & Browitt, 2002). Dominant ideas are created in the interest of the ruling class. Although other groups vying for leadership typically contest these ideas in some form or fashion, they still have enormous influence on creating the culture of a community.

Max Weber (Gerth, 1967; Berberoglu, 2005) expanded Marx's idea of the small elite class that owns and controls the means of production. Weber, suggesting that economic power is only one type of power, outlined a multidimensional concept of class stratification in which there is an interconnectedness between wealth, social status, and power. Power is garnered from an individual's capability to control social resources (property, knowledge, social respect, etc.) and by exercising one's will even when he or she faces resistance (Whimster, 2004, p. 182).[44]

The ability to control social resources also includes those who have the ability to make decisions and control conversations. In their "two faces of power" theory, Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz (1962) defined overt power as the process of decision-making and covert power as the ability to inhibit decision-making (Sadan, 1997, p. 36). More specifically, covert power refers to the ability to set the agenda, deeming certain things as important or unimportant and thus controlling what gets discussed publicly (Sadan, 1997, p. 36). Stephen Lukes (1974) added a third face of power, which he suggests is latent in that it functions in ways that cannot be easily seen. According to Lukes (1974), one person may exercise power over another person by actually manipulating his or her very desires (p. 23). Thus, latent power is the ability to inhibit people from formulating objections to their oppression by shaping their perceptions in such a way as to maintain the status quo (Lorenzi, 2007, p. 92).

---

[44] The recent work of Stanley Aronowitz (2003) explores class and stratification in light of pluralism and the social amnesia/denial about class in America. Aronowitz concludes that class formations and struggles come into being based on specific historical conditions which are constantly in flux (p. 11). In contrast to Marxists, Aronowitz defines the ruling class as "the power bloc that at any given historical period exercises economic and political dominance and ideological hegemony over the society as a whole and over the class within which it functions" (Aronowitz, 2003, p. 94).

Latent power is often the most challenging to acknowledge because of its hegemonic function. It is often difficult for people to identify latent power given the way this dimension influences their lives. Moreover, as first noted by Antonio Gramsci (1971), ideological hegemony and blind consent play a significant role in leading people to perpetuate the interests of dominant groups even when such actions are counter to their own self-interests.

Michel Foucault's work (1977, 1980) is also useful in thinking about power relations by highlighting the interconnectedness of knowledge and power. Foucault decenters power in his assertion of its discursive nature. He delineates the way power operates through socialization practices in communities and institutions (Scott, 2006, p. 128). In addition, he connects power to the creation of subjects who learn to self-discipline through the construction of social norms which are repeatedly reproduced. No direct action is needed from external authorities, because the norms have been internalized. These nuanced forms of social power radically shape the life of communities (Scott, 2006, p. 128).

Finally, critical educator, Lisa Delpit (1993), has provided one of the most valuable assessments about the connections between power, agency, and knowledge creation. Lisa Delpit's examination of the culture of power within classrooms is especially applicable to interactions that take place outside of schools as well and has served as a major lens through which I have analyzed the issues discussed in this chapter. Delpit (1993) outlines five aspects of power that are helpful in thinking about the ways in which a community organizing group like CHANGE enters into its work. Specifically,

Delpit observes that there are codes or rules which constitute a "culture of power" and that the rules of this culture reflect the mores of those who possess power. If a person does not have access to power already, it helps to be told the rules explicitly. Delpit asserts, "Those with power are frequently least aware of – or at least willing to acknowledge – its existence. Those with less power are often most aware of its existence" (p. 122).

Delpit's observation reinforces the idea that silence about power, whether it is in the classroom or the larger community, is a key source for the reproduction of power differentials. As evidenced in its own research and early campaigns, CHANGE has focused on helping citizens' understand and exercise power more effectively. CHANGE has worked to expose the rules described by Delpit, develop citizens' literacy about those rules, and pushed to have a seat at the table when rules are created. The rest of the chapter explores how successful the organization has been and the challenges with which CHANGE must grapple if it wants to have a primary role in governance.

Before the Hyphen

Among the nicknames for Winston-Salem, the "Dash" has become prominent recently with the change of the local minor league baseball team's name. While some humorously have pointed out that there is actually a hyphen between Winston and Salem,[45] others believe there is a deeper meaning to the punctuation. In an article about the name change, Mayor Allen Joines suggested, "It celebrates the connection between

---

[45]A spokesman for the Winston-Salem Dash intimated the critics' distinction between the dash and the hyphen was silly saying, "We realize that it isn't grammatically correct," he said. "But a baseball stadium isn't the place where you always hear the best grammar. And the hyphen didn't lend itself to as good a logo as a dash did" (Graff, 2008, p. A1).

Winston and Salem . . . But it also represents a connection between now and our future"

(Graff, 2008, p. A1). Nevertheless, Joines' optimistic perspective on the link between the

twin cities, which were bonded together in 1913, stands in contrast to the initial

relationship between the two townships.

Prior to Winston and Salem becoming one city, there were recognizable

distinctions and tensions between the settlements. Seeking religious freedom, a sect

called the Moravians had traveled from the Czech Republic and created their first

permanent settlement in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1741. Hoping to live separately and

without persecution, the Moravians sought out a parcel of land in North Carolina that

would fit their needs (Shirley, 1994). Salem was founded as the central town in Wachovia

in 1766. For many years the group lived communally and in relative isolation from other

settlements like "a chip of Saxony walled off in North Carolina" (Davis, 1976, p. 10).

The North Carolina General Assembly decided to create a new county in 1849

and looked to Salem to be the county seat based on its central location. The Moravian

Church eschewed the idea because they did not want to deal with all the trappings of a

legal and mercantile center. Instead, the Church offered to sell land a mile north of the

settlement; close enough that Salem could benefit peripherally from the commercial

traffic and far enough away from the noisy new township (Tursi, 1994). The county seat,

Winston, would soon overshadow Salem as a thriving commercial center propped up by

two industries, textiles and tobacco. After an unsuccessful attempt in 1879, Winston and

Salem finally merged in 1913 and began its ascendance to becoming the most vibrant and

powerful industrial hub in North Carolina (Tursi, 1994).

175

Reynolds and the Ruling Families

Richard Joshua Reynolds, who came to Winston in 1874, cultivated the industrial prowess. Creator of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, he became the primary industrial father and embarked on building nothing short of an empire that would define the community for decades to come. In 1990 Bryan Burrough and John Helyar observed, "If not for the RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company, the modest skyline of downtown Winston-Salem, North Carolina would not exist at all" (Burrough & Heylar, 1990, p. 40). Early on Reynolds and his cohorts began directing the business of the city, based on an assumption that what was in the best interest of the corporate sector was in the best interest of the city. In fact, there was an understanding in the city that no major decision was made in local government without "clearing it with the nineteenth floor of the Reynolds Building" (Davis, 1976, p. 20).

The Reynolds clan dominated the local community along with the Grays and Hanes families, who gained their wealth through tobacco and textiles. Not surprisingly, a carefully regulated mill town environment became the order of the day. The ruling class's role in governance was no secret; as noted by Davis (1976), "These men were the government" (p. 20). Jonathan Daniels (as cited in Korstad, 2003) bluntly described the relationship of these families (who frequently intermarried) and their allies in the following manner,

> Winston-Salem is not the village of a company, but in it is the company of people . . . Who know what they have and what they want. No stock ownership, no interlocking directorates (though there are some) are necessary to bind them together. They do not have to plot around a table; they can wave at a dance or

exchange a mutual conviction on the steps of a church or over a glass. They do not have to conspire, they are already agreed. Not many people have to be cajoled into guarding a gold mine. (p. 64)

One way they guarded the gold mine was by being in the center of political life. Although top corporate executives did not usually run for office, when it was in their self-interest they would insert themselves into a key position in city, county, or state government. Some argued this was done to keep taxes low and ward off new industry that might tap into the local labor market (Davis, 1976). A striking example of such positioning can be seen in the fact that of the 59 men who served on the Winston-Salem Board of Alderman between 1913 and 1940, more than half came from the industrial sector (textiles, tobacco, and banks). Considering that by 1940 60% of the city's workforce was employed at R.J. Reynolds, Hanes Hosiery, and P.H. Hanes Knitting Company, it is not shocking that the community at large would defer to these giants (Tursi, 1994).

Image is Everything

It appears that Winston-Salem has a history of being concerned with its image. In her dissertation about the black movement for parity in the city, Aingred Dunston (1981) suggests that concerns about image date back to the early 20th century. Dunston contends that the corporate leaders viewed Winston as "their private and personal property" (p. 2). With the merger of the two townships, Salem came to be regarded in much the same manner. Due to the fact that R.J. Reynolds and Hanes now had national exposure, the corporate leaders had anxiety about the appearance of the community to outsiders. Based on interviews with various community leaders, Dunston asserts, "Since the industries

were consumer oriented and sold national brands, the corporate fathers believed that their products would suffer from any adverse publicity which Winston-Salem might receive – and were thus much concerned with the town's image" (p. 3). Such apprehension would prove to be useful to the black community in subsequent years, as the corporate fathers would make concessions related to economic, political, and social relationships between the races (Dunston, 1981).

A recent Winston-Salem Journal article about Reverend Jerry Drayton, one of the "fixers"[46] in the black community, confirmed that negotiations with corporate leaders did take place especially over integration. Drayton verified that there was a white power block of business leaders connected to R.J. Reynolds, Wachovia Bank, and the like, and that nothing in the city could be moved forward without them (Railey, 2009, p. A17). Drayton noted, "These men, they had an interest in the welfare of Winston-Salem . . . We could have never dismantled segregation if it weren't for the cooperation of the whites" (Railey, 2009, p. A17). However, the point should be made that while some of the white leaders may have been sympathetic to matters of race relations, the motivating factor for the Winston-Salem corporate fathers was the understanding that bad press about segregation was bad for their bottom line.

---

[46] A fixer is defined as "a person who adjusts matters or disputes by negotiation" (Merriam-Webster On-line Dictionary, 2008). Fixers from the black community often would meet behind the scenes with white powerbrokers to forge compromises on contentious issues.

O! Winston-Salem! Now That's Living

In 2001 the city of Winston-Salem spent $65,000 to create a new slogan and marketing plan. "O! Winston-Salem Now That's Living!" was designed to capture the overall quality of life in Winston-Salem. It seems that Winston-Salem needed a makeover since tobacco was no longer the best point of reference for the city. According to Carrie Sizemore, the Director of Marketing for the city, "Community leaders and city employees decided that the city needed a slogan because it had an identity crisis" (Hamilton, 2001, p. A1). Many people would argue that revamping the image of the city has not actually effected any major changes in the general dynamics of community interactions. In fact, many would contend that Robert Korstad's (2003) reference to the elite class as "the solidarity of the solidly fixed" is still very much the reality of this community (p. 64).

To understand the source of the identity crisis, we must revisit the historical role of the great patriarchs of Winston-Salem. Benevolent paternalism is the best way to describe the ruling families relationship with the larger community. They became recognized for their generous personal philanthropy and the city became incredibly dependent upon their patronage. Some argue that such generosity was rooted in the marriage between what has been called "the Salem conscience and the Winston purse" (Tursi, 1994, p. 197). Others who are a bit more skeptical have wondered about the underlying motives. Nevertheless, the fact is that the philanthropic impulses of these families led to the creation of a number of major institutions in Winston-Salem (including foundations) that still carry the Reynolds, Hanes, or Gray name.

Of prime importance for this study is how the benevolent paternalism of the founding fathers had played out in Winston-Salem. An often-cited expression of Reynolds' generosity was the "special care" afforded to its workers, such as daycare (for the whites) and stock options. In addition, Reynolds was credited for helping create a thriving black middle class. There were detractors, however. In the late 1930s, the YWCA General Secretary captured their critics' sentiments aptly,

> Winston-Salem is just like a big mill village and controlled like such a village by the city fathers, who really say they have the welfare of the city at heart . . . They are not *actively* in politics, but they dictate who serves the city in political capacities. However, they're *actively* on our large volunteer boards like Associated Charities, Council of School Agencies, and Juvenile Delinquency. And, they work hard on these boards. They *know* crime areas, bad housing, etc. And, due to their knowledge, they're competent to perform valuable services – such as donating hospitals, parks, schools. But, they feel it is up to them to recognize and serve the need. I do not call this democracy. (Korstad, 2003, p. 67)

The Secretary was speaking both to the realities of the social hierarchy in the community and the larger cultural and political implications of that hierarchy. In short, there was no democracy; there was an oligarchy.

Of course, noblesse oblige comes with other costs as well. Ultimately, it set up a situation in which people were timorous about ever biting the hand that fed them. One of the business leaders whom I interviewed spoke at length about the role that Reynolds had played in her own life. Patrice Absher began working at Reynolds right after high school and when she decided to leave the company, she was met with incredulity.

> *PA:* So, I worked for Reynolds as a high school graduate, so made decent money, but it wasn't fulfilling, so when my husband joined the Army, I had no problems

in quitting the company, which *the* company – that was just, like, unheard of, to quit Reynolds . . . back in the day. And I did.

SF: Why was that?

PA: Oh, gee, it's like . . . it was like you had a piece of heaven here on Earth. You know, the lifestyle you could live, and it was well respected with other businesses. If you wanted to get a car, furniture, home: "Where do you work?" "Reynolds." Almost "okay".

SF: Wow.

PA: It was like that, it was unbelievable. Good life, it really was for some, but limiting, which people didn't realize, but now they see. (P. Absher, personal communication, March 20, 2009)

After moving to another state with her husband, Mrs. Absher realized that the Reynolds didn't carry that same meaning for other people. When she told people at her new church that she had worked for Reynolds, they asked who that was and what they did. Humorously, Mrs. Absher said that she was a bit chagrined when she told her Christian circle the nature of Reynolds business. Considering that the community was still a dry town, Mrs.Absher pointed out that cigarettes and alcohol were a "no-no." Laughing she said, "Can you imagine I was telling people that I worked for a company that made cigarettes?" (P. Absher, personal communication, March 20, 2009).

Perhaps the most important thing Mrs. Absher gleaned from that experience was that Reynolds was not the end-all be-all of existence and that changed her life. Mrs. Absher concluded, "So, I just realized, 'You know what? There is life outside of Winston-Salem and R.J. Reynolds' and people didn't even know the name of the company" (P. Absher, personal communication, March 20, 2009). When she and her

husband returned to Winston-Salem, she enrolled in school and did not go back to "the company." She had been exposed to something different and her opportunities expanded. That has not been the case for others.

The self-limiting effect that Mrs. Absher referenced is connected to the fact that many of those who went to work for Reynolds had dropped out of school and gone to work for the company. Because their parents lived comfortably, many of those workers' children made assumptions that like their parents they would be able to make it without advanced education. The tsunami of layoffs beginning in the 1980s and continuing into present times has shattered that dream.

The implication of the downfall of Reynolds (as well as Hanes and Wachovia) has been that like many communities dependent upon a few industries, especially textiles, the economy has been decimated. James Smith suggested that the community is suffering because Winston-Salem has been unable to recreate the wealth of the early patrons. He explained,

> If you look and see a lot of the wealth that all was created then, we have been consumers of that wealth. It has not been recreated at the same level, and so a major concern I have for us in the future is that it is one of the frog in the frying pan phenomenon. You don't realize you are consuming the wealth, and not realizing that most of the quality of life attributes that they love here because this has historically been a very wealthy area because of the work of those great entrepreneurs. Take that wealth out of the system and we're not in the same place so the re-creation of that wealth is a really major issue for the future. (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

The majority of the business leaders and public officials with whom I spoke echoed this same concern. The need for solid leadership in the next decade will be essential if

Winston-Salem is to sustain a decent quality of life for all of its residents. The question is who will assume that leadership role.

In 2008 the estimated population of Forsyth County was 337,198. The three primary racial groups are White (64.4%), Black (25.3%), and Hispanic or Latino (10.3%). A breakdown of age among residents shows that 7.2% are under the age of 5, 75.5% are 18 years or older and 12.5% are 65 years or older (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). With these percentages in mind, it is revealing that until the 2009 City Council election there was no public official in Forsyth County under the age of 50.[47] It should also be noted that for the most part there is still a significant portion of the population that has lived here for most of their lives. Amongst the public officials from whom I received surveys, the median number of years in Forsyth County equaled 40 for the City Council, 59.5 for the County Commission, 32.5 for the Board of Education, and 65 for the State Legislature. The median length of residency of the corporate leaders I interviewed was 33 years. As Winston-Salem and Forsyth County continues to diversify demographically, it will be interesting to see if the leadership begins to reflect those changes as well.

Decision-Making Before and After CHANGE

I utilized a variety of tools to assess the degree to which CHANGE has impacted decision-making in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Through surveys, interviews, and a focus group, I asked CHANGE members, public officials, and business leaders to

---

[47] In an unexpected turn of events, a 21-year-old Winston-Salem State University student, upset incumbent and long-time City Councilperson, Joycelyn Johnson. James Taylor, a 28-year-old Juvenile Court Counselor, also won a seat on the Council. Dee Dee Adams, a 55-year-old quality control engineer for Johnson Controls, joined the Council as well. All three new members are African-Americans who replaced African-American incumbents.

offer their perspectives about how decisions were made before and after CHANGE's

involvement in the community. For purposes of comparison, the survey for CHANGE

members asked them to consider how the group had affected residents' ability to impact

the decisions of public officials and business leaders. I also asked the CHANGE

respondents to think about how public officials and corporate leaders viewed the

community organizing group's work. My interest was in seeing whether CHANGE

members' views accurately reflected what I was hearing from the external community

leaders.

Views About Decision-Making Prior to CHANGE

For the most part, study participants' perceptions of traditional decision-making

in Winston-Salem reflected what has been articulated in the historical chronicles of the

city's beginnings. Repeatedly I heard public officials, business leaders, and community

members say that a small group of corporate leaders had ruled the roost when Winston-

Salem was still home to a number of powerful companies. For example, Randall

Thompson posited,

> It used to be for everybody, including [the] paper, that decisions were all made by
> you know, a group of . . . the corporate leaders, and like most southern
> communities and probably most northern communities, and that began to change
> in the '80s as the corporate structure collapsed and you had a power vacuum and
> for a while . . . it was kind of hard to know who the leaders were going to be. It
> was basically still the white corporate power structure but it was changing and a
> lot of the corporate headquarters were no longer here so some guy from Chicago
> or something was calling the shots on companies and wasn't a lot of help in being
> involved in the community . . . (R. Thompson, April 1, 2009)

Mr. Thompson explained that in the 1980s there was a rise of a more powerful middle class that gained a few more seats at the table. Blacks were continuing to secure a bit more access, though Mr. Thompson said it was sometimes through crises like problems with the police. In the 1980s and through the early 1990s he suggested there was an emergence of black leaders and grassroots groups that set the stage for CHANGE to come on the scene.

James Smith, a well-known and powerful business leader, said that while it had not been his experience that a small group of leaders were the primary decision-makers, he understood why that might have been the case,

> I would guess in the days when Reynolds had 20,000 employees here and Wachovia had 20,000, they probably were very powerful in the decision-making process because frankly, it was all their taxes that created all the money for the city . . . it was their . . . They wrote the check for the United Way, I mean that's how it used to be. Whatever the shortage was, Reynolds just made up. Reynolds filled gaps everywhere and they probably exercised their [power] . . . That just doesn't exist anymore. Susan Ivey [Current CEO of Reynolds American] doesn't call up and say "This is what I want" anymore. Nobody acts like that. I don't know anybody that carries that kind of institutional platform anymore. (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

Mr. Smith, however, did acknowledge that there were "sets of relationships that are very important" and that he happened to have relationships in a number of different spheres. Regarding his own status he offered,

> Sometimes people will say that I am involved in a lot of things or whatever, and really I just say it is all friendships. I am really comfortable with friends in a lot of different spheres of life and I have a lot of friends on the right and left, rich and poor and in the middle and white and black and Hispanic . . . I would say that people would say that the business community still has a pretty strong voice but really we don't . . . I mean I'm head of the [business] and I have no more access to city council people than you do. If you call Wanda Merschel [City

Councilperson], she'd take your phone as much as she'd take my phone call. I've never asked anything personally from them. I've asked for things community wide . . . (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

Given that it easily could be argued that Mr. Smith occupies a position similar to his corporate predecessors in terms of decision-making, it is notable that he does not perceive his positioning in that light.

Clifton Tuttle, an elected official, spoke at length about how the loss of corporate headquarters in the area dramatically shifted the nature of leadership. He explained,

I think since the '70s it's changed because at that time Reynolds was headquartered here. Hanes, which is now Sara Lee, was headquartered here. Wachovia was headquartered here. Piedmont Airlines was headquartered here. And if you took those four or five employers, which were the big employers in town, you throw the mayor and the city manager or whoever you want to throw in, you pretty much had all the decision-makers. But starting in the 70's, the head of Wachovia isn't in Winston-Salem anymore; it's Wells Fargo, actually, and it's in San Francisco. Sara Lee got bought out; they're now freestanding, but you know Hanes got bought out by Sara Lee so the president of Sara Lee was in Chicago. Wachovia was in Charlotte, now it's in San Francisco. Reynolds, you know, for a while went private and the private equity folks in New York ran it. So a lot of the power base started in the 70's and then Piedmont Airlines got bought out by . . . U.S. Air and they're headquartered out of I think out of Virginia, Washington, D.C. area. So a lot of your powerbrokers, the big companies, the decision-makers were no longer in town starting in the late 70's . . . (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009)

Mr. Tuttle thought that a much more diverse power base was in effect now and observed that if you pictured the 1960s in Winston-Salem you would see that "all the council people were white males smoking cigarettes" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April

13, 2009). He pointed out that there are only two white males on the City Council and the School Board now.

Still, Mr. Tuttle quickly suggested that the current situation is actually because "the local large employers no longer have their go-to man here" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009). He expounded,

> That's probably something . . . by the way, you, you can give me credit for that (snickering). That's something a lot of people wouldn't pick up, but when the decision-maker isn't here anymore, we don't need just a general manager of uh Piedmont Airlines customer service facility out on whatever road they're out on. We, we need somebody who can make decisions, and those decision-makers aren't in this town anymore. So we have tended to, um . . . to have other people that are decision-makers. For example, I don't know who the plant manager of Dell is . . . but he's not a decision-maker. (Don't tell him I said that.) He just runs that plant . . . but he doesn't have any say-so on how many people are gonna work in the plant. That's made down in Texas, and down in Texas, Mr. Michael Dell's gonna decide "We're gonna make computers here and we're gonna close this plant and expand that one." This guy's job is simply to run that plant as efficiently as he can. Or she, I don't know who it is. And, that's the difference between having the ownership and the decision-makers of a company in your community and having them somewhere else. (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009)

When I asked whether the shift had had a positive and/or negative effect on the community, Mr. Tuttle said both. However, he quickly returned to the issue that the headquarters of the companies are no longer local and the challenge that presents.

> The fact that we no longer have the headquarters here makes us susceptible to significant downsizing and, and loss of jobs in an instance for which we have no input. And that is really bad, and I can tell you that when Wachovia merged with First Union, the, the, the mayor had sleepless nights because . . . the decision-maker . . . made that decision and and, yes, we sent letters saying, "Listen, Winston-Salem is a great place to live and work and have a company, and please don't forget about us." And we've sent the same letter to Wells Fargo, Mr. Stump

187

out in San Francisco, but the fact that the person who's . . . back when I was a kid, the guy making decisions on what happened to Wachovia lived in Winston-Salem, and this was his hometown and he looked after his hometown first. I think in that respect, we have lost . . . (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009).

To reiterate his point Mr. Tuttle used the example of President Ross Johnson, an outsider who ultimately relocated the headquarters of R.J. Reynolds to Atlanta after the leveraged buyout by KKR in 1988. After all these years, one can tell that Johnson is still considered no friend of the city. Evoking Mr. Johnson's name, Mr. Tuttle quipped, "His wife didn't like the shops in Winston so he moved the headquarters to Atlanta. He could care less about this community. I'm sure you remember when he called us bucolic and all that kind of stuff" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009). Mr. Tuttle's comments expose the challenges for local communities in the face of globalization. The lack of commitment to regional affairs by a transitory workforce rips at the entire fabric of the community.

Although it is good to have a much more diverse decision-making group, Mr. Tuttle said the problem was that the community didn't have as much money due to the loss of those companies and decision-makers. The impact of this trickles down to services like trash pick-up. "When I was a child, we picked up trash in the back of the houses twice a week. Now, we pick up once in front of your house," Mr. Tuttle said, "We've cut the amount of money that we spend in constant dollars on that portion of trash pick-up,

probably by two-thirds" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009).[48] Why? According to Mr. Tuttle it is because at one time R.J. Reynolds paid 20% of the property taxes in Winston-Salem and now they pay 5%.

Mr. Tuttle clearly was conflicted about the loss of the corporate householders. Though he believed it is great to have other people at the table, not having the decision-makers of the largest employers at the table is ". . . real scary 'cause Dell could close tomorrow and there's not a damn thing we could do about it. Matter of fact, we can't even get Michael Dell on the phone, most likely . . . You know, he's got plants all over the world" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009). In fact, shortly after our conversation Dell did announce the closing of the Forsyth County plant. Fortunately, the city and county had crafted the incentives package contract so that those funds were recouped, but the closing dealt a huge blow to an already economically stressed community.

For Mr. Tuttle and Mr. Smith, the loss of the once mammoth corporations and their executives equates to a declining quality of life in the community. Both identified the loss of wealth and the struggle to replace it as a major problem facing Winston-Salem. Mr. Tuttle conceded, ". . . the pot of gold's just not as big as it used to be" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009). Mr. Smith warned that Winston-Salem would have to create 30,000 net new jobs in the next 10 years if it wanted to maintain the quality of life many people have had historically. Nevertheless, Mr. Tuttle concluded that

---

[48] One might think that curbside collection would be a minor issue, but in 2002-2003 a vigorous debate ensued in the community when the Winston-Salem City Council began considering the elimination of backyard trash pick-up for budgetary reasons. An article in the *Winston-Salem Journal* declared, "If there was ever a sacred cow in Winston-Salem, backyard-trash service is it" (Zerwick, 2002, p. B1).

even though the community had lost the solid tax base provided by the corporate giants

like Reynolds and Sara Lee, "I think it's much better for the community if we do have

everyone at the table" (C. Tuttle, personal communication, April 13, 2009).

Another public official concurred with Mr. Tuttle and Mr. Smith that power had

become more distributed over the years. Yet, in the end this official's comments implied

a similar pattern of decision-making. On one hand he observed, ". . . You know, a few

business people don't pick up the phone and things change" (M. Fisher, personal

communication, April 7, 2009). That being said, Mr. Fisher said he thought that dynamic

was much more prevalent in the city. Referencing the Mayor of Winston-Salem, Mr.

Fisher explained,

> *MF*: I mean, you got the mayor and you know Alan's [Mayor Allen Joines] been
> remarkably successful. I mean he's been very . . . and he's well liked. Keeps away
> from some of the difficult stuff. I mean, you don't . . . see him out there in
> controversial issues. I mean he's usually silent.
>
> *SF*: Why do you think that is?
>
> *MF*: Well, because that's one way he remains very popular.
>
> *SF*: [laughs]
>
> *MF*: You don't get in the middle, you don't in the middle of all those things *and*
> *. . . his job, he works for the Winston-Salem Alliance* [business group]. So his, I
> mean, his real bosses for his day job, if you will, you know, are the . . . that's the
> mover and shaker's money group . . . that hire him and . . . to a certain extent, use
> the city in that way in a fairly good symbiotic relationship, which is good for
> business and economic growth and so forth. (M. Fisher, personal communication,
> April 7, 2009)

Mr. Fisher's assessment can be read as an admission that while the names and faces may have changed, the fundamental form of governance may not have shifted dramatically.

To some extent this was the viewpoint of Anne Shumate, a business executive. She did think that there had been a shift in the public arena (i.e. city council, county commission, etc.) in terms of other groups, besides the usual powerbrokers, having access to governing bodies. Yet, Mrs. Shumate was clear that little change had occurred in the corporate community. She lamented, ". . . It's still very much, you know, kind of dominated by a small group of business leaders, still very much" (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009). And those leaders, according to Mrs. Shumate, are still very much white and male.[49]

> So, you don't have those huge, you know, 15,000 people who work here or there or whatever. So, that has definitely changed. But, I think a lot of things haven't changed. There's still a very small circle of, you know, corporate leaders that pretty much still call the shots, and some the personalities and all may have changed, but you know, and, and I was just looking at a list of a group of a triad leadership group . . . and it's still, I mean, there, there's probably 69 people I'm guessing on that list, and I'll bet ya there's less than 10 women and I can't, I don't know everybody from the whole thing, but I don't see a lot of African-Americans or any other ethnicity at all . . . So, a lot of things haven't changed, have not changed. . . . If you look at the power structure, it's still predominantly white men over 50. (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009)

I followed up on Mrs. Shumate's reference to the power structure and asked her whether she thought the CEO's of the larger companies had an understanding of the community. She quickly replied, "No!"

---

[49] Of note is a study of the city government that was released shortly prior to my meeting with Mrs. Shumate. The article reported that nearly three-quarters of the city's administrators and officials were white men (Graff, 2009, p. B1).

A striking part of our conversation was the shift in body language that occurred as Mrs. Shumate spoke. When she began speaking candidly about her views of the power structure she unconsciously seemed to lean toward me and lower her voice, although we were in a private office. I couldn't help but feel we were entering into taboo territory. In response to my inquiry about the differences between homegrown company executives and transplants, Mrs. Shumate offered an insightful and candid analysis.

> . . . that's a fundamental difference now about Winston-Salem because before when the headquarters were all here and the people who ran them came up through the ranks, I mean, it's very . . . 20 years ago was a very different time. Many of their kids went to public school. Their wives didn't work, it was all men, their wives didn't work. What did their wives do? They were very active in volunteering in the community. So they had, even if they . . . and, at the bigger companies, *you did your stint*. You were on the Arts Council Board, you were on all those boards. So you had a deep immersion into the community. Now, let's be honest: the white, the power structure was into the white community, I mean, you know, a whole lot of 'em had never been on the other side of [Highway] 52, had never been to Winston-Salem State [historically black university], whatever. So, for the most part, at least they had an understanding of the community. Okay. So, now what you had . . . and they had the time to so these things, and you had time and business. Now what you have is, for this most part of the larger companies, the CEOs are not from here. In a lot of cases, if they have a spouse, the spouse works. So they're not involved in the volunteer thing anymore. They're not as involved on boards because everybody is so stressed and, you know, work is so challenging; so, maybe they're on one, or whatever. So a lot of their kids don't go to public school anymore; they go to Summit or Forsyth County Day. So, you see, they have lost all of those interconnections. Their kids' friends are all in their social sphere or they all go . . . to one of the establishment churches – so their, if their social structure fits around the church, it's . . . so they're not as aware of the community, deep into the whatever their part of the community is, as they used to be. And, so they don't really understand what, in my opinion they don't really understand what's going on. And a whole lot of them, they're here for three years, four years, five years, then they're somewhere else. So, they don't have that vested interest; they're not thinking that their kids are going to grow up here and maybe they're gonna retire here and their kids are gonna come and maybe their grandchildren will. It's different, it's a whole different thing than it used to be. (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009)

Mrs. Shumate also observed that it wasn't just the newcomers who were disconnected. She thought that the upcoming generation of homegrown leaders, whose children attend private schools, is somewhat out of touch with the community too.

In terms of losing homegrown businesses, Mrs. Shumate's point that Winston-Salem is not necessarily different than any other community is important. It speaks to the larger cultural context of the impact that globalization has had on local communities and individual workers. As Richard Sennett (2007) argues, there are serious individual and collective consequences in the shift to more unstable and fragmentary institutional structures. I would argue that the condition about which all of the aforementioned leaders have spoken is a reflection of what Zymunt Bauman (1995) calls stationary togetherness. The transient cultures created by globalization breeds a situation in which people know they will soon go their own way and thus have no motivation for making an investment. It is safer to keep the stranger at arm's length; it is more prudent not to commit to the community in which you are merely residing for a short period of time.

A few other responses to my question about decision-making are worth reviewing, because they expose a sense of current practices. Patrice Absher, an African-American business leader, provided a conflicted answer to my question about decision-making. Her tentative response suggested that there might be a difference in appearance and reality. Mrs. Absher said of the decision-making process, "Well, you would hope democratically. But sometimes there are meetings before the meeting, and there are meetings after the meetings. But what actually goes on in *the* meeting appears to be democratic" (P. Absher, personal communication, March 20, 2009).

Unlike Mrs. Absher, participants in the CHANGE focus group had a more blunt

reply. Overall, the impression was that decisions were often made (and continue to be

made) without the general public's involvement. When asked about how decisions

regarding things like public policy and economic development were made, the group

retorted,

> *Leader 1*: At the 2:00 meeting. This is what people don't understand. The decisions when you go down there to the board, nine times out of 10 the decisions have already been made in the committee meetings. They've chosen sides, they've passed out little [. . .] for everybody. When you get down there you thinkin' you gonna sway 'em but nine times out of 10 it normally goes the way, if you don't go to the committee meetings you lost. The 2:00 meetings, like they had meetin' today at 8:00 get postponed, you know I'll tell people, a lot of people can't go at 8:00 because first of all, they don't know. They find out about it after the meetin's over with it. And that's when the hard core decisions are really made . . . That stimulus money would not be decided at 7:00 in the City Council meeting.
>
> *Leader 2*: The public hearings and City Council meetings are usually just for show.
>
> *Leader 3:* And you know, I mean the city has long been controlled by banking interests and by large corporations, like Reynolds and institutions like, you know, Wake Forest. Those have traditionally been the big decision-makers and the people that politicians *wanted* to listen to more so than the general public.
>
> *Leader 2:* That's why the system is set up the way it is. The mayor's position is not technically considered a full-time position. You don't make enough money doing it that you could do it unless you have some other source of income. And it was, I think, traditionally was set up that way so that the corporations would have that kind of power and influence, and many times the mayor has been a person who was very tied to corporate interests and quite frankly, it's not necessarily unlike that right now. (CHANGE Focus Group, April 16, 2009)

The CHANGE leaders' analysis of the current face of decision-making practices in

Winston-Salem suggests there continues to be a belief that the civic sector does not have

the same kind of access to governmental structures that the corporate sector has.

Considering that a primary goal of CHANGE is increasing that access, an examination of

the organization's efficacy in achieving that goal is warranted. The next section of this

chapter reviews the extent of that success through the eyes of public officials, business

leaders, and CHANGE members.

<div align="center">

Views About CHANGE's Influence on Decision-Making

</div>

External Views

The surveys sent to public officials asked them to use a Likert Scale rating of very

influential to not influential at all to assess CHANGE's impact on public policy. Each of

the officials were then asked to rate the level of CHANGE's influence on the decision-

making of the particular governing body with which they were associated. They also

were asked to cite the particular areas of CHANGE's influence and to describe their

relationship with the community organizing group. I compared the description of the

relationships with the ratings provided by the officials to see if there was any correlation

between the two. There was nothing that suggested that the type of relationship the

officials indicated they had with CHANGE affected their appraisal of the group's

influence.

 Survey responses.

With the exception of some school board members, the majority of the other

public officials used terms such as cordial, friendly, and respectful to describe their

relationship with the organization. An African-American official said, "The relationship I

have with CHANGE is positive and I can see them as agents of partnership and

empowerment for the community." Three of the six school board members who answered the question said they either had a relationship that was not particularly positive or non-existent. One member said the relationship was "Cordial, but strained at times. Their leadership has attacked me personally;" another said, "I have tried to be supportive of CHANGE however at one of their forums they 'booed' me off the stage. I did not feel this was very polite." Only one school member indicated a friendly relationship with CHANGE.

Four of eight city council members returned their surveys. With regard to determining public policy, two council members (Caucasian and African-American) said that CHANGE had not been very influential while the other two (both Caucasian) said the organization had been somewhat influential. When it came to decisions made by the council, the three Caucasian representatives said CHANGE had been somewhat influential. The fourth, an African-American councilperson, responded CHANGE had exerted little influence.

Only two of seven county commissioners responded to the survey. A self-identified Afro-American commissioner said that CHANGE had been very influential in determining public policy and had exercised a great deal of influence on decisions made by the commission. The other commissioner, who identified as Caucasian, said that CHANGE had not been very influential in determining public policy and had wielded little influence on the commissioner's decisions.

Six of nine school board members responded to the survey. All except one self-identified as Caucasian or white; the other said race was not applicable. Three members

196

said CHANGE had been somewhat influential on public policy decisions. The other three members answered between somewhat and not very influential, not very influential, and not influential at all. Five school board representatives indicated that with regard to their own governing body, CHANGE had exerted minimal or little influence. The sixth respondent said there had been no influence by CHANGE on decisions made by the school board.

Of the four state legislators in the local delegation who returned their surveys, both African-American representatives said CHANGE had been influential in public policy decisions. The two white legislators were split between not very influential and somewhat influential. I asked the legislators to rate the group's influence on decision-making by local governing bodies. Three legislators said there was some influence, while the fourth said a great deal of influence.[50]

Interview responses.

My interviews with public officials and business leaders provided a more in-depth understanding of the general thoughts about CHANGE's influence on decision-making. Generally, there appeared to be consensus that the business community might have a peripheral awareness of CHANGE but there really was no relationship and thus no impact on decisions made by that sector. The one interaction referenced was when the organization worked with business leaders and public officials to harness community

---

[50] Were I to send the legislators the survey again, I would ask specifically about their perceptions regarding the impact of CHANGE on the state legislature. At the time I sent the survey out, CHANGE had only interacted with some of the legislators in 2005 around the Dell incentives package. Given the limited scope of the interaction, I chose to ask the legislators about how CHANGE had impacted governing bodies on the local level. Given the success of the school board election reform campaign, it would interesting to see what the representatives think about CHANGE's ability to impact the state legislature now.

support for bringing the Dell Computer Manufacturing Facility to Winston-Salem. "I

think their participation in that particular process did influence the decision of the general

assembly," said John Graham. As for other business-related issues, Arlene Little, an

African-American corporate leader, said she thought CHANGE could have a role in

decision-making about economic development in the community but she wasn't sure why

she had not heard or been involved with the group. She then observed, "Number One,

I've never been asked" (A. Little, personal communication, March 20, 2009).

Concerning CHANGE's impact on decision-making, there were mixed reviews.

Interestingly, there were some things that were mistakenly credited to CHANGE like the

passage of the local smoking policy. A few people suggested that the group obviously

had a solid relationship with Mayor Allen Joines and felt that he listened to and engaged

CHANGE regularly. Mostly people named the relationship with the school system. "I

don't think the school system cares much for CHANGE 'cause, you know, they go after

certain things. They [CHANGE] haven't bothered us too much at county government"

(C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009). The tenuous relationship with

the School Board came to mind for a number of people. Attributing the shaky to political

perceptions, Michael Fisher offered,

> . . . you know the School Board, you know to the extent that there's some, there's
> probably some biases on some school board members' parts, you know, 'cause,
> 'cause it [CHANGE] is viewed more liberal and some of them are very
> conservative . . . so I mean it probably has a perception of being, you know, a
> very liberal, you know, kinda group. (M. Fisher, personal communication, April
> 7, 2009)

Nevertheless, some respondents felt that CHANGE had exerted some influence on the

school system. When asked about CHANGE's potential impact, William Mills answered

emphatically,

> Well absolutely! I mean, I mean, I . . . the first thing that jumps out to me, you
> know, when you guys did the school audits, I mean . . . these things that you guys
> cited were you know, they weren't new. They, they'd been there for a while, but,
> you know, to see, you know, Don Martin kinda, you know, [snaps fingers] jumpin
> just to get things fixed, I said, '"Wow!'" You know what I mean? (W. Mills,
> personal communication, March 26, 2009)

Mr. Mills suggested that the above example unquestionably contributed to shifting

governance in the community.

> So, you know, I think, you know, definitely that's changing the way that decisions
> are made because, I mean, I mean I wouldn't be a politician running in the
> primary and having to answer to 600 people in the church who can definitely
> sway, you know, an election. But, yeah, I think overall, decisions have been made
> by the higher-ups and CHANGE has also, I think, provided an outlet for average,
> everyday people to go and express themselves . . . (W. Mills, personal
> communication, March 26, 2009)

> On the other hand, school board member, David Dalton, said he could not think of

a policy in which CHANGE had affected the board's thinking.

> I'm not aware of any particular policy that they have affected us. That doesn't
> mean that their input wasn't considered; it doesn't mean that their, the outcomes
> that they sought weren't achieved. It's just that I can't, you know, it's not a like
> situation where, if would you ask me, "Has there ever been a situation in which
> parents would affect the outcome of a decision." Yes . . . There's been many
> times in my 11, 10 or 11 years on the board when I've seen *parents* change our
> minds on something; and I've seen our teachers change our minds on something,
> but rarely have I seen any community group change our mind on something. And,
> that may be . . . my grandfather never spanked his children and when somebody

asked why, he said, "Because I never asked them to do anything that wouldn't, they didn't want to do." And so it may be that an organization like CHANGE has got us in a position where we are agreed, so it's not a situation where we're changing our mind (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009).

I was surprised that Mr. Dalton did not mention the circumstances surrounding the 2006 school bond. I couldn't help but wonder if he was unaware of the dialogue that had occurred between Superintendent Martin and the CHANGE leadership. Though were this true, it would be rather strange considering that *The Chronicle* even knew about it. The newspaper reported in one of its articles about the bond that, "In response to the Ministers Conference and CHANGE's joint opposition to the original bond proposal, Superintendent Don Martin, contacted Chris Baumann [Lead Organizer of CHANGE], and Martin and the School Board went back to the drawing board" (Farmer 2006, p. A13).

Public officials connected to other governing bodies supplied interesting perspectives on my question about decision-making also; a number of who spoke to CHANGE's strategies. Bill Tucker he suggested that CHANGE had exerted some influence on decision-making but no dramatic influence yet. He felt the organization was still in a base-building phase. However, Mr. Tucker thought that if CHANGE stayed active and successful then the organization would have more of a substantive policy impact.

Where Mr. Tucker thought CHANGE had been successful was in shaping public perception of their influence and effectiveness. Specifically, Mr. Tucker believed CHANGE's initial decisions about the campaigns it pursued had provided a solid track

record to build upon.

> . . . I mentioned earlier that I thought there was a healthy mix of short-term
> projects and longer-term efforts . . . some of the short-term projects have been
> selected cannily for high success probability. Things like the impact on . . . on
> city service delivery . . . didn't require fundamental change in any way . . . didn't
> require the present city officials to do anything that they weren't or we weren't
> already happy to do . . . and the public success of that and sort of the equivalent
> project at the school system level of fixing identified problem at schools . . . has
> helped build a perception of CHANGE as a practical organization and as an
> effective one. And that's been important to maintaining participation, building
> participation, and to, I think in the long run, the perception by other actors in the
> community that CHANGE is a real organization that needs to be dealt with on an
> ongoing basis . . . not dealt with as in you know suppressed but . . . taken into
> account and worked with. (B. Tucker, personal communication, April 6, 2009)

Mr. Tucker noted that the deliberate internal decision-making processes in CHANGE (i.e.

house meetings) might impede the organization from making as much of an impact as it

could. Using the example of application of stimulus monies, Mr. Tucker suggested that

CHANGE might have more of an opportunity to affect policy decisions if there was an

interim decision-making body in the organization that could move quickly on particular

issues that arise.

Local press coverage of the campaigns referenced by Mr. Tucker supports his

evaluation. After the May 2003 delegates assembly in which CHANGE secured a

commitment from Mayor Allen Joines to partner on the neighborhood revitalization

campaign, an editorial in the *Winston-Salem Journal* said that it was "public engagement

in social and civic affairs done right" (Gates, 2003a, p. A6). The editor said that the

neighborhood problems identified by CHANGE were ones that could be readily and

inexpensively addressed. Ultimately, this campaign was a win-win for everyone

involved. Another editorial shortly thereafter concluded that the relationship forged

between CHANGE and the city of Winston-Salem was a "remarkable partnership"

(Gates, 2003b, p. A8). Perhaps most importantly, in this editorial we see the first

statement about CHANGE's role in governance, "The impact of CHANGE is not just on

public services. It has proved to be a useful vehicle in involving the city's residents in the

process of governing" (Gates, 2003b, p. A8).

Phillip Goins had strong feelings about CHANGE's ability to influence decision-

making in the community and their understanding of politics. When I asked Mr. Goins

about whether the organization had influence in terms of governance issues in the city

and county, Mr. Goins quickly retorted,

> No! If you were going to get me to do something for you and the last thing you
> would want to do, in my opinion, is to alienate any confidence I might have in
> your ability to help . . . to help change the policies that are in place in our
> community. The only way you're going to effect change is to get folks to
> compromise, which is what politics is all about, and commit to helping you. If
> you can't do that, then you haven't accomplished anything; and, they've never
> done that. If you will stop and think for a moment, politically – and that's what
> CHANGE is talking about – they can't do it without politics . . . You've gotta
> have it. The County Commission is made up of four Republicans and three
> Democrats. They [CHANGE] do not support the Republicans, as I said; I've
> never seen that happen. So, right off the bat, when they come in and talk to
> Democrats for change, the Democrats may, especially two out of three who are
> members of the black community, they say, "We'll do what we can." But, if you
> take the four Republicans who are opposed obliquely in every election, what's in
> it for them? Why would they want to effect change? There is no reason. And,
> although the concept that CHANGE has is on paper, a good concept, but their
> ability to carry it out is not successful, and their mindset for how to carry it out
> successfully and their mindset for how to carry it out is way off base. It shows a
> certain lack of understanding of what politics is all about. Politics, to me, is the
> ability to get you to go along with me and if I can't get you to go along with me,
> what will it take through compromise to at least make both of us join hands and
> go forward. And, if I say to you, "It's this way and if you cross the line or the

highway" then as far as I'm concerned the highway is a better choice (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

Mr. Goins was clear that for CHANGE to be effective "they need people like me who could affect policy" (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009). He claimed CHANGE had never reached out to him and when I inquired if he would be receptive to such an action, Mr. Goins rejoined,

> Of course, I'm interested! But, why would I, after all these years that I've seen them operate, believe that the tiger would change his stripes and the leopard would change his spots? It's just not there. Maybe with the new leadership, but the new leadership hasn't even bothered to reach out to *me*. I don't even know his name. I know he's there, and I know he's moving in the *same* areas as the old leadership moved in. But, if you're gonna effect change, you'd better get with the people who can help you make the change happen, and they're not doing it. (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

Later in our interview, we returned to the issue of CHANGE reaching out to him. Again, he hurled a scathing evaluation at the organization,

> They only come to the County Commissioners when they want something. They only hold forums when they want something. Even though they hold their meetings in church, the church is democratically . . . the church is generally in an area that is primarily Democrats. The people in the church, the last election that I attended where CHANGE had a forum – all black – you can count on one finger how many Republicans there were in that meeting which was none, and you walk in and it's like the deck is stacked against you, so why would you even want to go? (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009)

Mr. Goins reiterated that CHANGE needed to learn about to communicate to the entire community noting, "If you don't people what you do and what you stand for, they'll never know. I don't know" (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009). He also

said that CHANGE would do well to reach out to the whole board and not just a few sympathetic officials.

In Chapter 4 Mr. Goins was cited with regard to his perceptions of CHANGE's mission. He expressed his initial reticence to answering the survey I had mailed to him, because he was concerned it might lead to CHANGE criticizing him publicly. Another public official, Donna Joyce, expressed the same concerns when she unexpectedly called me one evening to follow up on the email I had sent to her. On this particular evening I realized that I had missed a phone call and returned the call. When the person answered I said, "Hi. This is Sharee," and the person replied, "Oh! Hi!" The woman said she had called regarding the reminder email about my survey. At that point I realized I was speaking with an elected official. Ms. Joyce said she was hesitant to provide a written response to my survey because of her experiences with CHANGE. I assured her that anything she shared with me would be held in confidence. I explained that my experience working with CHANGE over the years had been the catalyst for my study. I also assured her identity would be protected in my writing.

At this point Ms. Joyce began telling me about her assessment of the group. She said she had had horrible experiences with CHANGE and wondered why I was even interested in writing anything about them. Ms. Joyce then asserted that CHANGE had had "zero influence" on any decision-making by the elected body with which she was affiliated. She referenced a delegates assembly where she found the group to be extremely rude and hostile. Of the experience she concluded, "I thought that for Christians these people weren't acting very Christian." Ms. Joyce said she thought

CHANGE had "pretty radical ideas on how they approach things" and was disappointed

that her own congregation had been involved with the organization since it was "a

political activist group" (D. Joyce, personal communication, March 29, 2009).

Even more interesting is that when I missed Ms. Joyce's call, she decided

to go ahead and email me the following response:

> I did get your survey but am very hesitant to put my opinion of the Change group
> in writing as a result of my past experiences with this group. Are you a member of
> Change? I have been a [elected position] for ___ years and will say that they have
> had absolutely no impact on any decision made by this [elected body] and have
> never heard any [colleagues] speak of being influenced in any way by Change on
> an issue on either side of the aisle. Have any [of my colleagues] responded to the
> survey? (D. Joyce, personal communication, March 29, 2009)

Ms. Joyce's response suggests that for better or worse CHANGE has certainly

evoked reactions from local public officials. The reactions of this particular official might

be read as an example of how CHANGE has challenged what has been termed southern

civilities and the comfort of parochialism. When talking about CHANGE, Mrs. Joyce

insinuated that there were people in the organization who were not originally from the

community. She said that "people were coming here from the outside saying this is a

horrible place, things are bad . . ." and then added incredulously, "I just didn't understand

. . . I grew up here . . . Everyone thinks this is a warm, hospitable place" (D. Joyce,

personal communication, March 29, 2009).

Unlike Mr. Goins and Ms. Joyce, Charles Simmons believed that CHANGE had

been extremely influential. When asked about how decisions about issues have been

made in the community prior to CHANGE's presence, Mr. Simmons candidly replied,

We did what we wanted to without thinking about what was gonna happen cause . . . but now before you make a serious decision about somethin, we say, "Well, how is . . . how is CHANGE gonna take this, I wonder?" So, usually if it's dealing with people's welfare, housin, or something like that, before we make a strong decision . . . *I do* . . . say, "I wonder how CHANGE is thinkin?" and I usually try to think like the people in CHANGE think before I make a decision. (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009)

Mr. Simmons indicated that he did not think his colleagues particularly cared for the organization " . . . but they respect 'em and they not gonna . . . they not gonna do anything crazy. I think most of 'em respect 'em highly" (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009). He referenced CHANGE's involvement in helping to pass a recent policy decision and pointed out that there had been no significant blowback from the governmental bodies. He thought that was because those officials were scared of the group and concluded, ". . . they ain't going to fuck with CHANGE" (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009).

Two public officials spoke directly about their own interactions with the organization and its influence on them. Both talked about CHANGE's effort to ensure follow through with commitments. John Graham mentioned his first experience of having to stand up in front of 300+ people and have to go on record about what he will do. ". . . it was a little bit intimidating. But on the other hand it was . . . invigorating too" (J. Graham, personal communication, April 2, 2009). Upon further inquiry, Mr. Graham said that he had had a positive experiencing working with CHANGE and that the group had made his job harder in some ways because,

206

. . . you got a group of individuals that are very well connected and very in touch with the whole community, I think, so from that standpoint it is hard and it is good. 'Cause it does give you a quick flavor for what it going on in the community. On the other hand, it is a group that you got to be sure that you're listening to and that you're not just going around them. (J. Graham, personal communication, April 2, 2009)

Mr. Graham appeared clear about the two-edged sword of accountability, and a similar perspective was found in my interview with Michael Fisher.

Fisher said that CHANGE's influence came from being perceived as a watchdog in the community. He suggested, ". . . you get better decisions when you have people watching stuff," and offered an example about when he worked in a situation where he was able to do whatever he wanted. He said it was really bad, "because I didn't have anybody to call . . . I didn't have anybody looking after me, calling questions on issues, and that's, that can be . . . that is a very lonely kind of deal" (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009). Mr. Fisher believed it is better when you are accountable to other people and can receive at least a little feedback. He argued, ". . . it also makes you plan better; makes you do your homework better and do that," and said that he thought CHANGE had done that (M. Fisher, personal communication, April 7, 2009).

William Mills was the only community leader to explicitly name the issue of power in his response about CHANGE's impact on decision-making. Mills asserted it was hard for public officials to deny the power that comes with CHANGE's ability to turn out hundreds of people.

> . . . I think, you know, numbers talk and especially to a politician. So, you know, when the CHANGE events I've attended, I mean, you walk in and, you know, you see 600 people, you know, that's gonna earn the organization some respect, you know, because I mean that's 600 people – multi-racial, different congregations. So, you know, in terms of a public official . . . the group, you know, could be intimidating, I mean, because I mean the group has some power and in elections, you know, I mean. So, that's why I think you see the organization has had so much success in . . . getting, you know, politicians and leaders to attend events because, because having a lot of people involved there. So, I think the organization is respected because numbers equates to power and, of course, you know, you respect power, especially if you are an elected person. (W. Mills, personal communication, March 26, 2009)

Mills was, however, quick to acknowledge that while CHANGE is billed as non-partisan a fair number of elected officials, especially Republicans with whom he had spoken over the years, thought the organization was a left-leaning organization. Notwithstanding this critique, Mills concluded, "But, I think the organization is respected just because of the, the vast numbers" (W. Mills, personal communication, March 26, 2009).

Internal Responses

The survey distributed to CHANGE leaders asked them to assess the organization's ability to influence local government and business leaders. Overall, the 89 respondents indicated that they felt CHANGE had positively (52%) or somewhat positively (43%) affected residents' ability to impact local government. Five percent said there had been neither a positive or negative effect, and only one person said there had been a somewhat negative impact. The majority of CHANGE respondents said the group had somewhat positively (49%) affected residents' ability to impact business leaders, while a quarter (25%) of leaders said there had been a positive effect. Another 24% indicated CHANGE had neither positively or negatively had an influence, and only 2

respondents suggested there had been a somewhat negative impact on residents' ability to influence business leaders.

CHANGE members had realistic and fairly accurate evaluations of how public officials and business leaders viewed the organization's work. There was an overall sense that perspectives were dependent upon the particular group of individuals. For instance, a Metro Council leader said some people see CHANGE as an ally, others as a threat. More specifically, another Metro Council participant provided the following analysis,

> Business leaders who are not involved in public affairs do not know CHANGE. Public officials and engaged business leaders view us, I think, on a spectrum. Some view us as potentially useful allies with a unique base. Others view us as wrong-headed fools who should be ignored if possible – and it is usually possible in their view – or crushed. It is a very wide spectrum, and I think we gain by focusing on a few who can be allies on issues of common concern: Dr. Monroe [Health Director] and Sup. Martin [School Superintendent] are examples.

One person quipped, "That would depend on whether their political interests involve serving the community or serving themselves." Notably, there were a number of respondents who believed the Mayor and City Council had a much more favorable view of the organization than the County Commission or School Board.

With regard to business leaders, some CHANGE members felt that they either had no sense of what the corporate sector thought because of limited interactions or that the sector had no awareness of the group. "There have been fewer interactions with business leaders, their profit interests being more narrow and specific than the broader concerns that CHANGE addresses," offered a Strategy Team leader. Yet, he surmised,

"When issues affect business interests, business leaders may give more recognition than they have."

Leaders, who said they felt officials respected CHANGE, proposed it was because the group was seen as an instrument of change and a voice of conscience in the community. "We frighten, we impress, we challenge," declared a Clergy Caucus member. Leaders who indicated that officials recognized the influence of CHANGE seemed a bit more skeptical and pragmatic about why – self-interest and power. One Metro Council member wrote that officials ultimately viewed CHANGE, "Carefully – with a view to voting power." "Many are aware that they can use engaged citizens as 'political cover' for moving common issues," said another. Given the success with the school board election reform campaign, this point has been thoroughly discussed by CHANGE members. On the heels of that victory, Reverend Darryl Aaron cautioned the group to be on the lookout for those who might wish to prostitute CHANGE for their own agenda because they know CHANGE can win. He warned that CHANGE would no longer be expressing good power; it would become just simply power.

It stands to reason that CHANGE members should be skeptical about hidden agendas. A pertinent example is found in John Graham's identification of CHANGE as a medium for communicating with the public. Mr. Graham said that he had received some push back from colleagues who wondered why he was willing to support the organization's work. When asked about how he responded to his peers, Mr. Graham explained,

. . . I have said that this organization is the best in terms of really being able to touch such a broad base – black, white, Jewish, Protestant – you know very broad based and you know to me it's a pretty good vehicle to hear from and I said you know folks remember it gives us an opportunity to get a message out, you know. It's not like we are trying to use the organization but it is a vehicle that we can try to explain some things we are trying to do (J. Graham, personal communication, March 17, 2009).

Although Mr. Graham was quick to say that his elected body was not trying to use the organization, the fact he even identified CHANGE as a prime vehicle for getting their message out is noteworthy.

Of interest is Randall Thompson's assessment that CHANGE's intentional nonpartisan identity is an asset, it also makes it difficult to take credit for putting a person in office who acts on CHANGE's agenda. Although a politician may embrace the group's ideas, they much not give the organization credit. ". . . I'm afraid that has not happened that much [giving CHANGE credit] . . . just because a politician may indeed use your ideas, he has to walk the line and he doesn't want to say I got this idea from CHANGE," said Thompson (R. Thompson, personal communication, April 1, 2009).

Many CHANGE members responded that they believed public officials and business leaders saw the organization as a challenge to traditional power and "business as usual." "A thorn in their side," declared a Metro Council member, while another suggested, "Important but agitating - not going away." The notion that CHANGE was viewed as a troublemaker was clearly an underlying theme in all of these responses.

Finally, a significant number of respondents named the elephant in the room – public officials' perceptions that CHANGE actually had a partisan agenda. These

CHANGE members were unambiguous about the group being seen by some officials as left-leaning "crazy liberals." "Many view us as publicly non-partisan but privately an extension of the left wing of the Democratic party," concluded a pastor. A Strategy Team member noted, "CHANGE is often perceived as a liberal political action group and somewhat distrusted by conservative officials."

Filling the Leadership Void

Over the last two decades there has been a great deal of speculation about the dearth of "leaders" in a community where people used to be able to name them on one hand. When Dr. Suzanne Morse, head of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, presented at a Winston-Salem Foundation event in 2003, she urged Winston-Salem to cultivate new leaders if it wanted to be a successful community (Giunca, 2003). Asked about her response to the speech, attendee Mutter Evans acknowledged, "I don't know that, as a community, there's much agreement on who the leaders are in Winston-Salem" (Giunca, 2003, p. B1). One could argue that Mrs. Evans statement is still an accurate depiction of the state of affairs in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. At the very least, there is evidence that leadership is up for grabs in a way it has never been previously.

With this in mind, it seems CHANGE has an opening to dramatically affect power relations and governance in the community. As has been evidenced in this chapter, there are public officials who recognize CHANGE's potential to provide new leadership. It should be mentioned this potential was recognized early in the organization's history. After one of CHANGE's initial delegates assemblies *Winston-Salem Journal* reporter, John Railey, wrote, "In Winston-Salem, a city that's long struggled to replace the

corporate leadership that once ruled it almost single-handedly, CHANGE has drawn

together new leaders" (2003b, p. B1). In subsequent articles Mr. Railey suggested that

leadership in the grassroots sector also "had its share of carcasses" and that "CHANGE

had come along at just the right time" (Railey, 2006, p. A12).

The challenges in securing a long-term position as an organization representing a

broad-based constituency of citizens are many. A few elected officials mentioned

"staying power," or sustainability, as a major hurdle to cross particularly in terms of on-

going financial support. Considering the field of grassroots "carcasses" John Railey

identified, there is a legitimate reason to wonder if CHANGE might end up in the same

situation. Using business language, corporate leader James Smith, explained,

> Now the question is how do you go from entrepreneurial founder environment to institutionalization. How do you sustain leadership in a place like CHANGE? How do you go from outside leaders to inside leaders in a way that is meaningful? And then how does CHANGE, at least as I can understand it, in the minority community . . . embrace the African-American community and Hispanic community, but also not make them silos, to bring those two together themselves, which is a trick everybody is trying to work through. It is a challenge. We do not need to turn around and then create three silos. (J. Smith, personal communication, April 1, 2009)

I believe the focus on sustainability and the ideas about leadership expressed by James

Smith accurately reflect what the IAF teaches – organizing people and organized money.

The state and market sectors understand that these two assets are what propels an agenda

forward. CHANGE must focus on shoring up organized citizens and funds in order to be

effective in building and maintaining a strong civic sector.

To ensure that CHANGE continues to be a vehicle for cultural and political transformation for generations, it is imperative that the organization focus its energies on grooming a new generation of leaders. The demographics of the leadership in CHANGE is quite similarly to that of the public officials and business leaders. Until recently, I was one of only a few young people actively involved in CHANGE. In my study the median age of Strategy Team respondents was 49 years of age, for Metro Council it was 65, and for the Clergy Caucus it was 53. With regard to the median number of years in Forsyth County, the Clergy Caucus respondents had been in the community the least amount of time, 18 years. The median residency of Strategy Team members was 20 years and for Metro Council participants it was 30.

The length of participation in CHANGE by the respondents does suggest that at the time of this study most members have been in the organization for many years. Seventy-five percent of Strategy Team (N=12), 70% of Clergy Caucus (N=30) and 41% of Metro Council (N=49) respondents have been involved with CHANGE from its inception. However, there is also evidence that new people are coming into the organization. Fifty-nine percent of Metro Council and 30% of Clergy Caucus members have been active in CHANGE 3 years or less. There are currently efforts underway to develop an interfaith youth organizing constituency in the CHANGE. Intensive work toward this end will need to continue if the organization hopes to a long-term leadership role in the community.

Finally, as has been shown throughout this study, CHANGE's political identity and the extent to which it represents the diversity of the community is an issue. David Dalton was confident in his description of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County as a center right community. Based on this he questioned,

> . . . I don't know that the CHANGE membership could be described as center right. I mean, I'm not that familiar with the membership; that's just my impression of the membership. And that may be something for you to consider as you're saying that the CHANGE organization is representative of the community, and if not, does that inhibit their ability to achieve whatever the goals are that they have. (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009)

Mr. Dalton's reaction is important, because it reiterates that perception of identity and mission can be a significant impediment for CHANGE being able to accomplish its objectives.

CHANGE leaders had no illusions about these impediments. At the organization's summer leadership retreat, I shared some of what I had been learning through this study. One leader responded,

> I don't think it's at all surprising. I mean, how do you think . . . of course we're identified as a political organization. I think most of us would identify as such . . . if we are claiming to stand . . . to bring people to the table of power who don't have a lot of power right now in the community, that's perceived as a liberal thing. So, I think it's [information from my study] very useful and will cause us to reflect in important ways, but I don't see it as surprising. (D. Howell, CHANGE Focus Group, July 25, 2009)

His reaction seem to accurately reflect what others were thinking. Another leader concurred,

I don't think it's surprising that we're not perceived the way our mission states we are, because we are such a different kind of animal from anything that has come into the community that people can't understand who it is we're trying to be. (J. Curtis, CHANGE Focus Group, July 25, 2009)

Even so, the group did not think that the perceptions were irrelevant and agreed that more work needed to be done to clarify the mission and identity of CHANGE. Following up on his previous comments, Mr. Howell concluded,

In terms of the way we're conceptualized, one of the things I've always liked is we're talking about the self-interest for everyone in the community and that includes the rich Republicans in Clemmons, but I think we have not done a good job of articulating how what we do is in the self-interest of a lot of people that I know in Buena Vista [wealthy neighborhood] . . . I think we believe that at our core but I don't think we've articulated it very well. (D. Howell, CHANGE Focus Group, July 25, 2009)

To assert a strong leadership presence in the community and live into its mission statement that states CHANGE has a diverse constituency, the organization must consider the issues raised by the public officials and business leaders in this study seriously. Diversity is more than just about race; it's means bringing together people from different socioeconomic, geographical, theological, and political persuasions. That CHANGE is even willing to attempt such a feat in the current cultural landscape is a radical act, and one that if done well, will position this group as a central power player in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County for years to come.

CHAPTER VII

GOOD POWER:
FAITH, POLITICS, AND BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY

Figure 14. "We Shall Overcome." At the conclusion of a Delegates Assembly where more than 700 people were in attendance, CHANGE leaders joined together to sing the civil rights anthem (May 2009).

"It has helped me to understand the difference between justice and charity."
~ Comment for CHANGE leader in response to how CHANGE has affected his view of the relationship between faith and politics

Religion and politics make for bad bedfellows at dinner supposedly, but they are

intricately connected in American culture and in contemporary community organizing

efforts. The relationship has been conspicuously more present in American elections over

the last few decades with the rise of the Religious Right and the establishment of the

White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives during the Bush administration. In recent years Democrats have realized that ignoring religion means losing votes; hence, we have seen more and more progressive candidates speaking about their religious beliefs. In a 2006 *USA Today* editorial then Senator Barack Obama argued ". . . it's wrong to ask believers to leave their religion at the door before entering the public square. . . .To say men and women should not inject their 'personal morality' into policy debates is a practical absurdity" (Obama, 2006, para. 9). Obama concluded by asserting that ". . . our law is by definition a codification of morality" (Obama, 2006, para. 9). Similar discourse entered the 2008 presidential campaign season where we witnessed a clear shift on the Left regarding the presence of religion in the public square with nearly every candidate referencing his or her faith journey.

Considering the larger cultural and political context and the position of religion in the South, it seemed imperative to ask community leaders and CHANGE participants about their feelings regarding the mixture of faith and politics. Moreover, I was interested in understanding how theological perspectives on power can influence how congregation-based community organizing groups like CHANGE conceptualize and teach about the subject. This final chapter delves into these various topics and concludes with a discussion of the ways religion may be seen as a roadblock and a resource for community organizing efforts in Southern communities.

Brief Review of Religious Practices in Forsyth County

Considering that Salem and the surrounding areas were established as Moravian settlements in the 1700s, one should not be surprised that religion has had a long-standing

and significant influence on the residents and institutional practices in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. The history, and some would argue leftover vestiges, of Moravian society provides an interesting perspective on the contemporary religious and political culture of the area.

In essence, the Moravians of Wachovia (the area that later became Forsyth County) led by theocratic rule until the 1860s. With the exception of the Methodist Episcopal Church, mainline Protestant denominations found in the Old South simply had failed to enter into the Moravian controlled boundaries (Tise, 1976). Prior to the Civil War the denominational makeup of congregations in Forsyth County was primarily Moravian, Methodist, and Baptist, and later Episcopal and Lutheran churches came into the picture. The 1856 dissolution of the lease system, a means by which the Moravian Brethren had controlled who could live in their settlements, meant the official days of theocratic rule and cherished Moravian piety were over. Tise (1976) explains that the demise of the theocracy "resulted, in the first place, from an inner change, a transformation of spiritual values, and a loss of piety. The transition from theocracy to secular community was accompanies by a shift from pietism to revivalism, from German traditions to American practices" (p. 17). The early 19th century saw Moravianism lose its distinct flavor and become more secular and American (Tise, 1976). The door was open for new religious sects to come into the community.

Additionally, it is important to recognize the role of slavery during this period. Early on slaves were baptized and granted membership in nearly all of the white churches in the colony, though this eventually would change to reflect the southern mores of the

219

times (Fries, Wright, & Hendricks, 1976). The Moravians in Salem were seen as fairly liberal in their treatment of slaves and allowed Blacks to worship alongside Whites up until the 1780s when pressure from surrounding white settlements led the church to institute segregation policies (Tursi, 1994). In the late 19th century Blacks began to split off from their white counterparts and organize their own congregations.[51] These congregations would serve as a main vehicle for tying the black community together and as a launching pad for various social activities and causes over the years (Shirley, 1994).

As was discussed in Chapter 6, early in their history Winston and Salem differed in a variety of ways including the makeup of their religious establishments. Whereas Salem was a Moravian stronghold, Winston had been founded as a commercial and legal township and as a result "would be the antithesis of everything Salem represented" (Tise, 1976, p. 22). Unlike the initial non-Moravian congregations in the settlement, which had been organized and overseen by men of common means and influence, affluent and powerful businessmen organized the main churches in Winston. Tise (1976) suggests this is important because for the first 50 years of Winston's story, ". . . industrial workers and menial laborers had to worship on Sunday under the wings of the same men who directed their labor and paid their wages, who controlled their town government, and who represented them in the legislature and Congress" (p. 23). With the marriage of its religious, governmental and corporate powers, Winston was firmly established as a mill town.

---

[51] More detailed information about the history of black and white congregations can be found in Fries, Wright, & Hendricks, 1976, and Tise, 1976).

In the early 1900s the success of industries led to the city's corporate elite to found what would come to be known as the "downtown churches." These churches constructed large, expensive, cathedral-type structures, many of which remain to this day. During this same period common laborers began establishing independent offshoots of the mainline denominations and evangelistic sects saw a marked increase in membership. The religious face of the city also began to look more diverse with the establishment of Jewish, Greek Orthodox, Friends, and Christian Scientist congregations (Tise, 1976).

After World War II a once thriving downtown Winston-Salem was in bad repair and the community started seeing population growth extend out into the county. Even so, many people continued to travel into the city to attend existing downtown churches or rural churches rather than found new churches. With the movement of Blacks into previously white occupied areas, however, Winston-Salem began to see waves of white flight into suburbia both in terms of people and churches. Many of the white churches that were unwilling to integrate relocated to areas outside of the city, leaving only those downtown churches along with their African-American counterparts to offer spiritual witness and resources to a struggling urban environment (Tise, 1976). Not surprisingly, CHANGE has found its core support in these congregations located closer to city center.

It should be noted that CHANGE has had a rich history of ecumenical and interfaith efforts to build upon. Ecumenical and interfaith collaborations beginning in the mid 20th century led to the establishment of social service programs such as Meals on Wheels, Crisis Control, Contact (a 24 hour crisis line), and the Downtown Church Committee (Fries, Wright, & Hendricks, 1976). Many of the congregations and

parishioners that were instrumental in starting these programs were involved in the initial efforts to build CHANGE.

Even more noteworthy are the multi-racial and multi-faith efforts focused on social justice issues that pre-dated CHANGE. As early as 1935 a group of religious leaders formed the Winston-Salem Round Table of Jews and Christians in hopes of bridging ethnic and denominational divides. The Round Table was followed by the Forsyth Minister's Fellowship, which joined with the Negro Winston-Salem Ministerial Alliance, in 1958. This organization began functioning as an informal commission on race relations and worked for an end to discriminatory racial practices in Winston-Salem for several years. Eventually the Ministerial Alliance would pull out of the organization in order to commit its full energy to uplifting the black community, albeit with the blessing of the white ministers who pledged their ongoing support (Fries, Wright & Hendricks, 1976).

The current landscape of religious institutions in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County is more diverse than ever. Following national trends, the community has seen an increase in mega-churches over the last few decades. Most of these are evangelical Christian and non-denominational congregations. The 2000 Religious Congregations and Membership Survey shows that of residents who indicated adherence to a tradition, Evangelical Protestants were the largest group followed by Mainline Protestants (Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2000).

One of the most telling studies about church affiliation and attendance in Forsyth County was one conducted first in 2000 and followed up in 2006 by the Winston-Salem

Foundation and the Harvard University Saguaro Seminar. The 2000 study ranked

Winston-Salem sixth in comparison to 40 other American communities when it came to

religious social capital. Survey respondents in Forsyth County exceeded the national

average in terms of membership in a church, synagogue or mosque (71% versus 58%), at

least monthly attendance (75% versus 61%), and participation in additional congregation-

related activities (54% versus 45%) (Harvard University Saguaro Seminar & Winston-

Salem Foundation, 2000). These studies affirm the venerable position religion continues

to hold in this community, a position that perhaps is summed up most appropriately by

Michael Breedlove (2009) who wrote in a recent article in *Winston-Salem Monthly*

Magazine, "It's hard to imagine where Winston-Salem would be without religion"

(Breedlove, 2009, para. 1).

When Faith Meets Politics

The influence of faith-based community groups on the political culture of

Winston-Salem and Forsyth County has not gone unnoticed. After CHANGE's Fall 2009

assembly that more than 1,000 people attended, a local periodical ran a cover story with

the words church and state in large print. The heading declared, "CHANGE AND

OTHER FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY GROUPS EXERT POWERFUL INFLUENCE

ON AREA POLITICS" (Barber, 2009, p. 12).[52] Upon outlining the various campaigns

---

[52] The article also highlighted two other faith-based community groups, the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity, and the Institute for Dismantling Racism. Both are seen as influential in local politics. There is a strong relationship between these two groups and CHANGE that should be highlighted. The Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity co-extended the invitation to the IAF to come to Winston-Salem. Although still a predominantly African-America pastors' group, the Ministers Conference has seen an increase in the number of white pastors who are involved (many of whom are connected to CHANGE). Reverend Willard Bass, who has served a tri-chair for the CHANGE Clergy Caucus over the

discussed at the assembly the reporter acknowledged, "The voting power of the Forsyth County chapter of CHANGE is undeniable, and the elected officials and candidates in attendance showed great deference to the group's sweeping influence" (Barber, 2009, p. 13).[53] Countless individuals (including me) have felt deeply skeptical and at times alarmed at the power some faith-based groups have with regard to influencing public policy decisions. One must wonder what makes CHANGE so different from these groups and whether the organization has affected the way people think about the relationship between faith and politics.

There has been minimal discussion in the literature regarding participants' perceptions of how congregation-based community organizing has impacted their feelings about the connection between faith and politics. Most studies have been broadly oriented around the use of organizing techniques to increase political engagement or organizing as cultural work.[54] Considering the role of religion in southern culture and contemporary discourses about the position of faith in public life, I believed it was pertinent to learn more about the ways that CHANGE may have influenced its members and other community leaders' perspectives on the topic.

In his dissertation about the IAF organization, Tying Nashville Together (TNT), Michael Byrd (1997) noted that the group was comprised primarily of liberal and

---

last few years, founded the Institute for Dismantling Racism. There is a great deal of crossover in terms of participation in all three of these organizations.

[53] I believe Barber's reference to the organization as a chapter indicates a continued lack of understanding about how CHANGE is structured and its relationship to the IAF.

[54] In my literature review I did find a dissertation (Scott, 1991) and master's thesis (Freidus, 2001) that specifically concentrated on personal transformation as a result of participation in IAF organizations. Insights about personal faith journeys are discussed, but there is no in-depth examination of how the organizations influence beliefs about the relationship between faith and politics.

moderate white Protestants, black Protestants, and Catholics who tend to identify the principle of social justice as central to their faith. Conservatively leaning congregations, particularly those that adhere to beliefs of scriptural inerrancy, are less likely to be members of congregation-based community organizing groups. An analysis of the theological orientations of the 42 religious institutions involved with CHANGE, as well as responses to my survey question about how CHANGE has affected peoples' views about the relationship between faith and politics, suggests a similar trend.

Views of CHANGE Members

To begin, it is important to understand the religious make-up of CHANGE. Presently of the 53 member institutions in CHANGE, there are 41 congregations and a ministerial alliance (21 black churches, 18 white congregations, 3 mixed race bodies, and the predominantly African-American ministers group). A breakdown based on religious and denominational affiliation show that 16 Baptist churches are members of CHANGE, of which 12 have a majority African-American membership. Of the five Presbyterian churches, two are considered white congregations. There is only one Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and one temple, both of which are predominantly white, and one mosque that is mixed race. There are two white Moravian congregations, and three Methodist churches (white, black, and mixed race). Another black Baptist congregation and the first black Pentecostal church recently joined the organization. Efforts are currently underway to recruit another Catholic congregation two Lutheran institutions.[55]

---

[55] See Appendix F for a detailed list of CHANGE's dues-paying member institutions.

Of the 83 CHANGE members (all but one of whom identified a religious affiliation) who answered the survey question about whether the organization had shaped their view of the relationship between faith and politics, 61% responded affirmatively. Twelve percent replied that it had confirmed or underscored the linkage between the two. Of those who indicated there was no appreciable effect on their perspective, some noted it was because their congregation already had been politically active. There also were some other notable responses. An African-American Christian respondent said the relationship had always been there because "faith & politics have in the past gone together in the black movement." A self-identified mixed European Catholic member said the organization had not impacted their view much since "Catholic Social Teaching is committed to improving the lives of those who are powerless," adding the caveat "(at least they teach it – sometimes it's 'do as I say' – not necessarily 'do as I do' ☹)." A Caucasian Episcopalian constituent noted that he did not think of CHANGE as a "faith" organization rather as a people organization, while a Caucasian Methodist participant stated, "I don't see a faith-politics concerns so much as faith-justice. Politics is only a part of the social justice equation." For the healthy skeptics in the bunch, a Caucasian Unitarian Universalist member concluded, "It hasn't. I'm still as realistic about both as I've been for years."

For those individuals who asserted that CHANGE had affected their views, a few said the organization had shown them their individual involvement was needed in the community and that people *can* work together. Overwhelmingly, though, the responses pointed toward CHANGE directly impacting the way its members are thinking about and

226

acting out their faith and politics. Two themes were present in CHANGE members'

responses: 1) CHANGE has provided concrete ways for people to connect their faith and

politics in public life; and 2) CHANGE has provided a way for "the church" to become

more assertive when it comes to public policies that are just and equitable.

The first theme seems to suggest an intersection between a sense that the

Religious Right typically has been the chief proponent of faith-related actions in the

public sphere. Richard L. Wood (2002) notes that these actions tend to focus on

"individual and legislative moral change" whereas congregation-based community

organizing groups "work through religious institutions to reshape government policy via

the exercise of democratic power" and place an emphasis on securing economic and

racial justice for poor, working class, and middle income families (p. 4). For individuals

who espouse a more moderate or liberal theological viewpoint, there has long been a

tension about the relationship between faith and politics because of strong feelings about

the separation of church and state.

Rabbi Michael Lerner (2006) has addressed the reticence of some progressives or

liberals to identify spiritual motivations for their political positions publicly. He submits

that there is a very real spiritual crisis that the political Left in particular has failed to

acknowledge and thus "the Religious Right has managed to position itself as the

articulator of the pain that crisis causes and as the caring force that will provide a spiritual

solution" (p. 14). When teamed up with the political Right, the Religious Right has the

power to enact its beliefs in ways that arguably move the United States toward a type of

theocratic rule. Lerner contends that progressives and liberals must acknowledge the

spiritual nature of the values that lead to unjust institutions, structures and policies and confront them by introducing countervalues in the public sphere.

Generally, the data suggests that white CHANGE participants have seen a more profound shift in their thinking about the connection between their own faith tradition and political engagement. Black respondents either had their beliefs reinforced or made statements that had an "of course" flavor to them. Those who identified that they have been able to connect their faith and politics through the organization's work reflect Wood's and Lerner's analyses. For example, a white Presbyterian minister stated,

> In the waning days of "the religious right," it has been gratifying to see and experience a totally different group of believing peoples involved politically. The caricature that only people on the right care about faith and public policy is just that, a caricature.

An African-American Baptist pastor said CHANGE had confirmed, "the two [faith and politics] share an important role in shaping a more intentionally inclusive community." More specifically, a white Episcopal minister explained that CHANGE had provided him with "concrete issues and practice to demonstrate the relationship of spirituality and the public life/civic life of members," while another white Presbyterian pastor said that CHANGE had iterated to him that "my faith is vital to my politics." Perhaps most striking was a response from a white leader from a mainline moderate congregation who stated she has "become increasingly convinced, comfortable with, and vocal about the importance of this relationship and public recognition of it."

A number of Metro Council members suggested that CHANGE had given them a vehicle by which to live out their faith and political beliefs in a more integrated and meaningful manner. A white Catholic parishioner asserted that CHANGE had "given me a way to act on my faith in a political way which I have never been able to do before. Social justice has always been a passion, now I have a way to act." Similarly, a white United Church of Christ participant answered, "CHANGE has helped me live my faith daily and be aware of how powerful daily living one's beliefs can be." A white Episcopalian pointed to how the organization had bolstered her understanding of her faith, saying "my experience – particularly through relationships has strengthened my commitment to justice and what I read as Gospel work." In all of these cases, CHANGE is identified as directly influencing how participants are conceptualizing and connecting the interplay between faith and politics in public life.

The idea of bridging divides was also a thread woven throughout the responses suggesting that CHANGE is a conduit for people to develop a mutual relationship between faith and politics. Feelings about the possibility of such connections and the actual reality of them do appear to differ for some CHANGE members. On one hand, a white Baptist leader indicated that CHANGE "has given me hope that diverse people can work together." On the other hand, a white Presbyterian leader affirmed that while CHANGE "has given me conviction to connect my faith & politics . . . it's also fallen short of my hope that faith & common values can bridge political divisions." I believe this concession stems from the experience with the campaign for school board election

reform and the awareness that congregations right of center have chosen not to join CHANGE's efforts.

The second theme in CHANGE members' responses centered on the organization agitating religious institutions to "put feet to their faith." The clearest expression of this idea was from a white Methodist pastor who stated,

> CHANGE is our major vehicle for communal justice. All faith communities use the rhetoric of justice in their traditions, but few find a way to work for it. CHANGE gives people a way to make change toward a more just community.

Offering a similar perspective, an African-American pastor responded that CHANGE had "brought about a reawakening to the call of the church to enable and empower people." Inferred in these and similar answers is a base of theological interpretations which support values focused on what has been characterized as social justice; namely, a concern for the human condition, equality, reconciliation, and wholeness.

People whose responses correlated with the second theme also noted how powerful faith communities can be when they come together. In some cases, this appears to stem from a general skepticism by some about religious influence on public policy particularly in the age of the Religious Right. "I am happy to have learned that a faith-based network can make a positive impact in our community," answered a white Unitarian Universalist leader, "From my perspective, the impact of faith in the public sphere has usually been negative." While not necessarily a surprising response from a person in a liberal denomination, this response seemed to capture a sentiment shared by other members too. Clearly, some people see the idea that faith-related entities can

cooperate without fear of proselytization or enactment of religious doctrine as a marked achievement.

For community organizing groups that wish to bring faith-related institutions into their fold, particularly those that are more moderately or liberally based, the recognition of the part that the Religious Right has played in shaping cultural images of religion in America cannot be ignored. Nowhere was this more evident than in a response from a moderate Baptist CHANGE leader who said that while the organization had not changed her personal views of the relationship between faith and politics,

> . . . it has made me much more aware of the extent to which folk in my denomination are still feeling alienated and wounded by the work of the American religious right over the past several decades. I am not sure that CHANGE is aware of this dynamic and its implications for organizing largely white evangelical congregations. It is quite a challenge.

This leader concluded by saying that relational work, which acknowledges the theological culture of these kinds of congregations, needs to continue being developed.

Views of Public Officials and Business Leaders

By and large the public officials and business leaders whom I interviewed felt that faith could not be segregated from politics in the sense that people could not fully separate their religious beliefs from their political beliefs and work. "People who are involved in politics who have faith, their faith is a part of who they are and how they make decisions," Mr. Dalton, a white male conservative public official explained (D. Dalton, personal communication, March 31, 2009). Mr. Dalton added the caveat that he did not think people of faith should be considered less important or their beliefs

discounted in terms of their support or opposition to an issue because of their faith. This statement appeared to be a reference to the opinion that conservative people of faith feel they are dismissed or persecuted because of their beliefs.

Mrs. Butler, an African-American educator, shared a similar reaction that faith and politics could not be separated but she clearly saw it from a social justice perspective. She exclaimed,

> How on this earth can you be a Christian or any other . . . Muslim or whatever it is that you are and really not get involved in what is going on it the community, because it all *can* be political . . . like these little babies dying? You know? Is that political? Are we not putting the resources into trying to stop that like we should be? So you *cannot* separate these issues. "I am going to talk about this when I go to the County Commissioners' meeting but when I get back to church it has nothing to do with my life." That's wrong. (F. Butler, personal communication, April 17, 2009)

While Mrs. Butler talked about not being able to separate the political and the religious, Harold Fulton, an African-American leader, said he thought CHANGE mainly gets churches to address equality issues "not, I don't think, political issues . . . like endorsing certain candidates," (H. Fulton, personal communication, March 25, 2009). Whereas Mrs. Butler saw the political nature of every issue, like many people Mr. Fulton conflated the idea of politics with partisanship. I'll examine this issue more closely later in the chapter when I reference responses related to working with congregations as a strategy.

A more judicious position came from a white business leader, who attends a moderate mainline Protestant church and self-identified as a person of faith. He emphasized,

. . . I think you need to be careful that if it's just faith-driven, that sometimes it can be clouded; just like if it's not. You know, I would hate to see things done, you know, based purely on faith. I don't agree with, you know, separation of church and state. I do think that there are certain integrations that have to be maintained and that the Christian perspective and other faith perspectives . . . are valid in at least the consideration process. At the end of the day, you know, you've got to make a decision based on different metrics that affect the decision, and, you know, again I don't think that any . . . particular segment should necessarily drive the decision if that's not what the decision ought to be. . . So going back to your original question, you know, I think it's important to have the religious perspective, but it's dangerous to take only the religious perspective. You know, you gotta have, you gotta have the whole picture. There's a lot of colors in a picture. (L. Jones, personal communication, March 20, 2009)

Mr. Jones's answer reflects an understanding of religious liberty that law and religion scholar, Noah Feldman, tenders has been a long-standing characteristic of church-state relations in America. Feldman (2005) explains that religious liberty "assumes that religion is profoundly meaningful, and it guarantees that citizens may draw on their own beliefs when they form opinions or make political decisions" (p. 336). The separation clause is intended to ensure that pluralism is honored to the extent that governance and religion are not bound up together in such a way that we have theocratic rule.

Sectarian prayer lawsuit.

The separation between church and state drama been playing out in Forsyth County over the last few years due a lawsuit filed against the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners relating to the unconstitutionality of sectarian prayers at their meetings (Young, 2009). At least three of the interviewees referenced the lawsuit when I asked them about how CHANGE had impacted their views about the connection between faith and politics. A white Baptist educational leader said that "churches have to be very

careful in working in the public square that in doing that they are always a witness and they are not implicitly or explicitly seeking to be privileged" (L. Anderson, personal communication, March 25, 2009). Mr. Anderson saw the lawsuit as a signal that it was not people's religious liberty being challenged as much as it was a reminder that in a pluralistic society one group can't have the primary voice. In terms of its implications for CHANGE he concluded, "So for CHANGE, I think CHANGE has to be a witness, and so we take our witness to the public square" (L. Anderson, personal communication, March 25, 2009).

An African-American public official who described himself as Christian and "'bout a fourth of a Moravian" commented on the lawsuit, noting that it was the strong conservative Republicans who had voted to move forward with defending the board's policy while none of the Democrats had.[56] He said he didn't much care about the outcome of the lawsuit but chuckled, "I don't think you should use religion to do something devilish" (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009). Mr. Simmons pointed out that CHANGE had not made a statement about the issue and he understood why the organization had not become involved with "this religious stuff." Considering that Mr. Simmons viewed CHANGE as having a large African-American constituency, he connected the lack of the organization's involvement in the prayer issue to the fact that no black minister was actively engaged in the lawsuit defense. According

---

56 One of those Democrats, Commissioner Walter Marshall, indicated that his primary concern was the Alliance Defense Fund, a conservative Christian non-profit group that had offered to represent the county pro bono. Commissioner Marshall charged, "It's theocracy versus democracy . . . The people who are behind this are trying to create a theocracy in America, not a democracy. I'm not opposed to prayer. This is not about praying at all. It's about creating a theocracy in America" (Barber, 2009, para. 9).

to Mr. Simmons, "I notice most of them [black pastors] don't get too involved in politics. But you saw what the white ministers did, didn't ya? They said, 'We'll pay for that lawsuit' (C. Simmons, personal communication, March 24, 2009)."

Mr. Simmons's analysis is interesting both in terms of his reading of the politics of the lawsuit and because of his unmistakable sense that CHANGE is not affiliated with white, right of center religious institutions but rather is firmly planted with the black church. Meanwhile, the sectarian prayer issue and corresponding lawsuit were not on CHANGE's radar because the organization does not tackle "hot button" issues. Recognizing that there are pastors in CHANGE who do support prayer at public meetings and there are pastors who are strongly opposed, the organization has intentionally steered clear of the conflict.

Engaging religious institutions as strategy.

A third of the community leaders with whom I spoke identified CHANGE's engagement of religious institutions as strategic. A white business official suggested the involvement of faith communities added credibility to the organization because it made CHANGE appear less threatening. She explained,

> I think from CHANGE's perspective, it's probably a good thing to have that affiliation, because, you know, the corporate community is, is very leery of citizen groups at large just because they don't know 'em, they don't understand 'em, they don't know who they are, they don't know. You know, they don't want to be on the front of the newspaper being criticized by some group of people, however well-intentioned. And, so having a tie to the faith community I think probably helps CHANGE in that respect in that people tend to think that the faith co . . . even though you may ideologically be at this end or that end, they don't see the faith community in *this* community as being radical. You know what I'm saying?

. . . So, there's, I think there's a plus from that perspective. (A. Shumate, personal communication, March 27, 2009)

While the corporate community in Mrs. Shumate's estimation sees religious institutions as a subduing presence, a few respondents said they see churches as vehicles for moving sizeable numbers of people into action. For instance Arlene Little, an African-American business leader, said she thought it was great that CHANGE was comprised of local churches because they were a great place to rally people and more could get done. She explained, ". . . to reach a large group of people, especially for African-Americans, the faith-based community is one way to do that. I think a lot of political strategies have come out of the church" (A. Little, personal communication, March 20, 2009). She added that churches are where many people get information and as a result, pastors have a big responsibility in terms of what they say and do in the pulpit when it comes to politics. Mrs. Little also echoed the idea that because various aspects of people's lives (i.e. home, work, faith) are connected and politicians/policymakers have an enormous influence on day-to-day living, faith and politics are inextricably connected.

William Mills shared similar thoughts. He pointed out that churches' pastors are some of the most influential people in the community since they have their parishioners' ears at least once or twice a week. When asked about whether CHANGE had influenced his view about the relationship between faith and politics, Mr. Mills spoke specifically about his reaction to seeing the involvement of white pastors. I have chosen to quote our exchange at length, because I believe his explanation draws attention to recurring themes related to perceptions about race in Winston-Salem.

WM: . . . it's shown me that, you know, there is, you know, too often I think, you know, there's pastors . . . reluctant to, you know, really, unless you're, you know, one of the fighters – the Reverend Mendez, the Eversleys[57] – they're [pastors] reluctant to really get out there and, you know, state, you know, the truth [laughs]. So, you know, [laughs] they want to walk the line, which is fine, you know. So, that's changed for me, you know, to see, you know, pastors, you know, really, you know, it was surprising to me to kind of see when CHANGE first had their meetings to see, you know, some the white churches and some of the white pastors actually taking stands on some of these issues, like school equality and stuff. I mean that was, that was surprising; that was shocking, you know.

SF: Shocking?

WM: Shocking, *yeah*, I mean to see the, you know, several white churches in there, just really vehemently taking, you know, standing up to the school board, saying, "This ain't right," you know, was something I hadn't seen before. And, you know, again, maybe these groups felt, you know, more comfortable doing that as a group, as a united body than just on their own. (W. Mills, personal communication, March 20, 2009).

Mr. Mills clearly found it striking that white members of the community were actively addressing matters traditionally seen as "black issues," and he credited CHANGE for this movement. Moreover, Mr. Mills realized that such activities might be easier for people when they are in a large group; a point with which CHANGE would most likely agree.

In light of Mr. Mills's comments, I return to Mrs. Shumate's assertion that the benign nature of the faith community makes its presence in CHANGE copasetic for the corporate world. Though not explicitly stated, I believe Mrs. Shumate actually was speaking about the *white* faith community. Historically, when it comes to public actions most of the mainline white churches in Forsyth County have done what churches are

---

[57] Reverends John Mendez and Carlton Eversley, both African-American pastors, are seen as some of the most vocal critics of racial bias in Winston-Salem. They were founders of the Darryl Hunt Defense Fund and are seen as controversial figures, especially by some white people.

expected to do – charity. Charity is not as controversial and more comfortable for people to support. Considering the evidence presented in the last chapter that the business community is least aware of CHANGE's work, it would stand to reason that they may not grasp the unusual nature of the organization's efforts. As an African-American man, Mr. Mills clearly saw CHANGE as something remarkable in Winston-Salem because it has moved white and black faith institutions into public political action *together*.

Unlike Mrs. Shumate and Mr. Mills, Mr. Goins did not view the involvement of religious institutions in CHANGE in the most positive light. When I asked him about whether CHANGE has affected his thinking about religion and politics, he retorted, "They use faith to achieve their goals" (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009). Speaking expressly from his post as an elected official, he said that he believed in the separation of church and state but was open to faith-based actions and reactions as long differing groups understood the needs of the entire community. "But in many cases, if we have a faith-based organization come in they will say, 'it's for the community,' but if you look at what's going on, it comes from one area," Mr. Goins clarified.[58] To be honest my assumption was that Mr. Goins was referencing conservative religious groups. However, Mr. Goins's subsequent comments revealed that he was talking about race. In line with his responses outlined in previous chapters, Mr. Goins declared once again that CHANGE primarily represented the black community. To my surprise, he also believed

---

[58] Related to this point, Mr. Goins later mentioned that his congregation out in the county had never been contacted by CHANGE as far as he knew and they had 1,500 members. He retorted, "It's one of the bigger churches in the county. But CHANGE kind of operates in their own little areas, they stay there" (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009).

that CHANGE was not a multi-faith group. I offer our dialogue in its full context, as I

believe it provides profound insight into this white public official's general feeling

about CHANGE.

> *PG:* For example, very seldom, I've never seen CHANGE walk in with a rabbi or a priest. It's always someone from the African church, generally speaking. It's always a black minister; it's always a black congregation. . . and I understand that the Jews have a different perspective, much different. But CHANGE doesn't look at that; they don't even include them. And I think the Catholic Church is the same way.

> *SF:* Are you aware that the Temple and Our Lady of Mercy and Our Lady of Fatima are members of the organization?

> *PG:* No, but I've never seen them. How 'bout …

> *SF:* Yeah, in fact . . . one of the larger delegates assemblies was held at the Temple, probably four years ago now. So, that's interesting that . . .

> *PG:* Well, now then, that's begs the question . . . whose . . . whose problem is that? Is that my problem? No! 'Cause I shouldn't be out there looking at every organization, trying to figure out what's going on. It's CHANGE and how they tell their story. Obviously, they haven't told me the story since I'm not aware of it.

> *SF:* That's very … yeah, that's why this is really insightful conversation.

> *PG:* I have just finished a conversation yesterday with the current chairman of the [Jewish Foundation], and we got into a conversation about prayer before government meetings and before civic club meetings. He says, "I object to that," He said [when Christians say], "Let me say in Jesus's Name" . . . he [chairman] says . . . the first thing out of . . . in my mind is, "Oh, my God, will this never stop?" *They* [Jews] *don't believe in Jesus Christ.* And, so my question, based on that, is if the Jews don't believe in Jesus Christ, then what does CHANGE think about that, how do they approach that when they integrate the AME Zions, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Jews who don't believe the way they believe. That's a story I've never had the answer to. I'm not sure I *will* get an answer to it. (P. Goins, personal communication, March 17, 2009).

Ironically, later in our interview Mr. Goins addressed an incident that occurred at a

CHANGE delegates assembly he attended in October 2006. Upon review of the agenda

for the meeting, as well as my personal experience having been there, the fact is that a

representative from a member Catholic congregation presented one of the primary

campaigns CHANGE was working on at the time. Furthermore, the rabbi of the local

Jewish temple offered the closing prayer for the assembly.

Although Mr. Goins resonated the belief that faith has a place in public life so

long as a non-biased environment is maintained, he clearly did not have a sense that

CHANGE represented a pluralistic perspective. Viewing Mr. Goins's reactions to my

questions about faith and politics in the context of our entire interview, it is apparent that

his answers were colored by his obvious disdain for the organization. Moreover, one

could read his repeated observations that CHANGE solely represented African-

Americans' interests as allusions to his deeper feelings about the black community. His

sense that CHANGE is a black organization is especially interesting given that there are

many African-Americans who view CHANGE as a white organization. Regardless, it is

significant that Mr. Goins, who is a powerful public official, failed to acknowledge

CHANGE as a multi-racial, multi-faith organization and is suggestive of work the

organization needs to do to tell its story more effectively.

Challenges for CHANGE Internally

Based on my experience as a leader and staff member in CHANGE I believe the

two biggest challenges for the group in terms of the faith and politics relationship are

negotiating the various perspectives regarding the role faith communities should occupy

240

in the political realm and sustaining a religiously pluralistic organization. Like the abovementioned leader expressed, there are moderate and liberal congregations with members who are cautious about the presence of religion in the public square because of strong feelings about the separation of church and state.[59] In some cases the concern stems from people being deeply concerned about theocratic type actions by the Religious Right; in other cases it comes from witnessing a political environment in which partisan politics is the only kind of politics seen or understand. As a result there has been frequent discussion and training in CHANGE about what it means to be political and how to differentiate partisan and non-partisan issues and approaches.

Concerning religious pluralism, it's no secret that most of the congregations connected to CHANGE are theologically moderate or liberal in nature. The organization has been attentive to this and has struggled with how to recruit more conservatively oriented congregations. For the few member congregations that are more right of center, any unease doesn't appear to be as much about political involvement as it is about making sure they don't have to water down their beliefs to make everyone else comfortable (i.e. not being able to pray in Jesus' name for fear of offending non-Christians). Possibly the best example of this tension arose when I was on staff and had worked to craft an inclusive litany for a Delegates Assembly that included quotes from Jesus, Rabbi Hillel, Ghandi, the prophet Mohammad, and the Hopi Nation. A theologically conservative Clergy Caucus member said that his parishioners would not be

---

[59] Even a high-ranking public official whom I interviewed broached this issue. He told me that he had heard a few of his colleagues state concerns about the strong existence of churches in the organization and asking "Are we getting too close to the church/state kind of tie in there?" (J. Graham, personal communication, April 2, 2009).

comfortable with the litany because a litany was a statement of belief and his people did not subscribe to all of the included writings. After much dialogue a decision was made that the people leading the litany would offer the disclaimer, "Please use this litany to affirm your own tradition and as a way to learn about the traditions of others." The litany opened the door for a discussion in the Clergy Caucus about how to make CHANGE more welcoming to right of center congregations.

At another Clergy Caucus meeting a more hearty debate ensued about the point at which the organization dilutes its mission and commitment to inclusivity in order to make CHANGE more palatable to certain segments. In response to those arguing that CHANGE needs to recruit more diverse congregations, Southeast Director of IAF, Gerald Taylor, reminded the leaders that there would be some folks who would never join CHANGE because they simply don't believe in ecumenical or interfaith work. A leader rejoined, "Yes, but we need to invite them," to which Taylor agreed and then countered, "But don't lose your core values."

Some recent evidence suggests there is a generation of young evangelical Christians who are more interested in issues like poverty and climate change than those at the center of the culture wars (James, 2008). It will be interesting to see if this will be translated into the willingness of theologically conservative congregations to join an organization like CHANGE. Furthermore, as the religious landscape in the United States continues to be reshaped (as evidenced in the decrease mainline denominational membership and the increased growth of non-denominational churches), CHANGE and similar community organizing groups can no longer count on organizing within usual

structures. They may experience a whole new range of challenges as they try to organize within this shifting terrain.

When Faith Meets Power

On a cool winter day in January 2009, a young African-American pastor four months into his new pastorate and relationship with CHANGE, welcomed Metro Council members to his congregation. He then presented an impassioned treatise about the heart of CHANGE's work, placing it squarely in the realm of power. In his distinctive rolling cadence that leads you to the mountaintop, Reverend Darryl Aaron delivered the following speech,

> Today I say to this organization, the time is ripe and right to exercise our power. There are very few organizations like us. We (members) not only have power but our power is good power. We (members) are not interested in power without goodness or goodness without power. Today is a brilliant moment for this organization. The light shines brightly and the path is clear for us to put into effect our good power. CHANGE is an organization that is willing to grapple with the origins of evil, the sources of struggle against suffering, and the mysterious grounds of hope. Because CHANGE is willing to see the wrong and call a spade a spade our power is good power. Because CHANGE is willing to challenge the status quo and offer them a better option that reorients their lives for liberation – our power is good power.

> This organization has the courage to describe what a beloved community can and should look like. We (members) have the courage to put our faith in the impossible. We (members) have the courage to say to all who have no voice we will speak until you find your voice. We (members) are not too arrogant to reach across the table and gather new partners to join us in spreading our good power.

> Our president declared in his inaugural address that those in power will be judged by what they build not by what they destroy. Let us leave here ready to use our moral capital and our good power to erect a more prosperous city, put together a more loving community, and build a safe and sacred place where all God's children can, run and not get weary, walk and not faint, speak and be heard, go to school and learn, dream at night and rise to make it real in the morning, stand tall

243

and know that greatness is not for some but for all. This is our time; this is our brilliant moment to put in effect our good power! (CHANGE, 2010)

Reverend Aaron's intentional use of the adjective "good" in describing CHANGE's power is worth examination, because it alludes to the idea that there are different faces and natures of power. I explored the conceptualization of power as structural, relational, and a resource in Chapter 5 and 6. In this final section I use Reverend Aaron's speech as a springboard for analyzing power through a prism of faith that sees justice as a public expression of love and believes that both are animated by *good power*.

Any discussion about the meeting place of faith and politics must include a discourse of power. Power is a highly contested concept with a shifting identity influenced by the historical and cultural contexts within which it is both observed and experienced. Unfortunately, contemporary political demonstrations of power have left many people with a view that power is solely a dominating, oppressive force and/or as a resource relegated to a few privileged people. Yet, IAF Director Ed Chambers counters that power "is the basis of our capacity to address differences through politics" (Chambers & Cowan, 2003, p. 27). People of faith who have a tenuous relationship with politics are especially challenged with the idea of embracing power as a fulcrum for cultural and political transformation. Hence, for congregation-based community organizing efforts to be successful it is essential to situate power in a framework of faith.

My experiences studying and working with CHANGE have pushed me to a deeper understanding of power as a complex animal. Along with the idea of power as relational, various theologians and philosophers have proposed perspectives through

which I have come to see power as a creative force as well as a source of resistance. Theorists such as Hannah Arendt (1970) and Bernard Loomer (1976) deem power to be dynamic and relational; it exists *between* people. In fact, Arendt (1970) challenges the idea that power is a possession that can be amassed for future application. Instead she says power comes into being *only* in relationship and that it is "the human ability not just to act but to act in concert" (Allen, 2005, p. 138).[60] Rather than being a static, measurable entity, power is always a potentiality. Likewise, Loomer (1976) affirms power as not merely the ability to influence but to be influenced, a willingness to give and receive, to move and be moved. Through Arendt's and Loomer's work, we see a disruption of conventional notions of power. Power is reclaimed as a neutral force that can be used to dominate *or* to co-create. In this framework, power is no longer a concrete, finite object. It becomes an infinite spring of creative energy that can be used to change the world for the better. This face of power is clearly present in Reverend Aaron's speech.

Reverend Aaron invoked phrasing from Isaiah 40:31 to present power as dynamic and affirming. Feminist theologies envision power similarly, crafting it as a life-giving force.[61] Religious systems carry an enormous amount of authority in our society and significantly influence our perceptions of power. Many feminist theologians reject predominant readings of the Bible and symbolism of the church as androcentric and culturally prescribed by those who are in power and want to maintain that power (Daly,

---

[60] Arendt also concludes that just as power appears when people come together, it also disappears the moment people disband (Allen, 2005, p. 138).
[61] Theologian Robert Linthicum (2003) reminds us that power is a contested concept within religious discourses as well. Given the significant political and cultural influence of religions, especially Christianity, I think it is essential to analyze differing theological readings of power as well. Walter Wink (1984, 1986, 1992, 1998) and Walter Brueggemann (1987, 2001) both provide alternative biblical readings of power.

1973, 1985; Christ & Plaskow, 1989, 1992; Schüssler Fiorenza, 1988, 1996; Reuther, 1983, 1985). In short, the dualistic and hierarchical nature of Western Christianity perpetuates a power-over mentality that places the divine over against the world. This places the divine in a position external to us rather than as an animating force which lives in, through and among us and connects us all together.

In contrast to androcentric thinking and patriarchal structures that characterize much of Western religious traditions, a number of feminist theologians counter that the power expressed by the divine is inherently an erotic power (Brock, 1988; Chittister, 1998; Heyward, 1984, 1989). According to these scholars, power is the ability to effect a change; it is neither positive nor negative although it can be used for good or evil. Furthermore, erotic power is that which is productive and affirming. At its core, this kind of power is divinely inspired. It is relational power (power-with) and when used in concert with others, it is good. In the same vein as Arendt, this theory challenges traditional understandings of power as a possession that is wielded over others. Carter Heyward (1984) goes so far as to say that domination (power-over) is evil and offers,

> The power of Jesus, which is the power of God and the power of all persons with faith in this power, is a shared power – moving, given, received, passed on, celebrated, held in common as ours, not mine alone or his alone or hers alone. God's power does not belong to Jesus. It belongs to us, to the extent that we pass it on. (1984, p. 119)

Such a reading is reflected in Reverend Aaron's words urging people to spread good power. Shared power becomes the pilot light for community organizing efforts like CHANGE, because it is a unifying force that is "additive and multiplicative, not limited

246

and divisive" (Chambers & Cowan, 2003, p. 28). The more powerful a person becomes, the more powerful those in relationship with that individual become and vice versa.

Just as power can be used to positively affect change, it can also be employed to resist negative forms of power that lead to oppression and injustice. Most notably, this embodiment of resistance is found in the withdrawal of consent. David Nyberg (1981) suggests the withdrawal of consent is "the final power act" in that without consent, authority is relegated to using force which ultimately is the weakest form of power (p. 47). With the removal of consent, the hegemonic reproduction of knowledge and positionalities that help prop up oppressive systems is disrupted. New arrangements can be negotiated and old ones can be dismantled. Reverend Aaron captured the notion of power as resistance when he suggested that CHANGE expresses good power in its refusal to go along with the status quo.

Yet, Reverend Aaron didn't suggest that CHANGE only withdraws its consent in the face of injustice. Rather he asserted that CHANGE goes a step further and invites those locked in the status quo onto a new path reoriented toward liberation. Thus, CHANGE enacts and offers good power through a critical hope that both recognizes and challenges systems of inequality *and* engages the establishment in crafting more just alternatives.

In his exegesis of CHANGE's work, Reverend Aaron presented a theology of power that is critical and expectant. Such a theology insists that people of faith examine political, economic, and religious structures and understand the manner in which they enact power. In view of the fact that these systems will either use their powers to build or

destroy, Dr. Robert Linthicum (2003) argues, " . . . as God's people, we will either have to confront the abuse of power or affirm its use" (p.23). CHANGE openly embraces this call. Still, wielding good power is dependent upon maintaining a reflective stance so as to mitigate the tendency to become self-righteous or hegemonic. CHANGE's ability to sustain good power long-term most likely will be the biggest challenge the organization ever tackles.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZING CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CLASSROOM

**Figure 15. The Next Generation of Leaders. Youth from CHANGE
affiliated congregations led the organization in the annual march to
celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in downtown Winston-
Salem (January 2008).**

This study grew out of my passion for transformative social change that only

comes from a dynamic democracy rooted in social inclusion in governance, meaningful

relationships between diverse groups, and active citizen participation. Given my

experiences as a volunteer leader and staff member of CHANGE, a congregation-based

community organizing group in a transitioning southern town, I believed that I had found

a vehicle for my passion. After years of working with CHANGE I became curious about

the extent to which the organization had effected such changes in power relations and public life its nearly 10-year history. Thus, I chose to explore the organization's work more deeply in an effort to gain a better understanding of one model of developing public spaces, cross-cultural relationships, and engaged citizenship.

The findings in this study suggest that CHANGE in fact has impacted the political and cultural landscape of Winston-Salem by bringing diverse groups together. Many people credit CHANGE for increasing participation in public life as well. Some significant advancements in shifting power relations and securing a role in governance have occurred, although CHANGE will need to continue to variegate its constituency to ensure a sustainable and effective presence in the community.

A primary source of CHANGE's success has been basing its work within congregations. The Industrial Areas Foundation model is based on the belief that faith communities can organize around a sense of a shared moral foundation and values. Strategically this makes sense in terms of being able to move large networks of people, particularly in the South. As I have continued to ruminate on this approach, however, I have become more and more convinced that we must engage people much earlier in learning the requisite knowledge, skills, and ethics for participation in an inclusive and vibrant democracy. Furthermore, the focus on faith as a source for values is complicated particularly within the current political environment where there are strong forces arguably advocating for theocratic rule. The fact is that the organizing principles promoted by the Industrial Areas Foundation and organizations like CHANGE can easily be co-opted by groups that wish to secure a dominant governing position in order to

restore a "traditional" and exclusive way of life. Evidence of this can be seen in recent conservative movements, including the burgeoning Tea Party.

In their discussion of the need for public or "free" spaces, Harry Boyte and Sara Evans (1992) ask,

> What are the environments, the public spaces, in which ordinary people become participants in the complex, ambiguous, engaging conversation about democracy: participators in governance rather than spectators or complainers, victims or accomplices? What are the roots, not simply of movements against oppression, but also of those democratic social movements that both enlarge the opportunities for participation and enhance people's ability to participate in the public world? (p. viii).

Clearly, the mission of community-organizing efforts like CHANGE is an answer to Boyte's and Evans's question. Even though these organizations assert that every one is welcome and that there are non-religious groups involved too, it cannot be overlooked that there is a strong faith-based positioning. The reality is that people without a faith orientation may feel marginalized and at the very least uncomfortable with religious rhetoric and rituals foregrounded in congregation-based organizations. Hence, the likelihood of some people feeling excluded is probable and ultimately counter to the goals of the group.

The question with which I've been wrestling is how to develop a collective sense of values and ethics that are not solely centered in a faith perspective (although such perspectives would be welcomed), but rather on mutual beliefs about equality, active and shared involvement in governance, and the importance of establishing a society in which differences are celebrated. This collective sense could then give rise to fully inclusive

groups committed to addressing difficult societal problems in humane and just ways. I believe a primary place where the shaping of common language and values can occur is in the classroom.

While citizenship education continues to be politicized, thus making the formalized adoption of it in schools contested terrain, I have concluded that educators can still teach the knowledge and skills essential for democratic participation. James A. Banks (2008) references this approach as transformative citizenship education and asserts that it facilitates students' ability "to challenge inequality within their communities, their nations, and the world; to develop cosmopolitan values and perspectives; and to take actions to create just and democratic multicultural communities and societies" (p.135). He argues that transformative citizenship education also assists students in cultivating "the decision-making and social action skills that are needed to identify problems in society, acquire knowledge related to their homes and community cultures and languages, identify and clarify their values, and take thoughtful individual or collective civic action (Banks & Banks, 1999)" (p. 135). Through transformative citizenship education, teachers can partner with students in creating classrooms that are testing grounds for democratic interactions and deliberations.

My work as a victim advocate and community organizer led me into the classroom with the hopes that I might be able to enact a critical pedagogy that would disrupt hegemonic belief systems and practices that often lead human service providers, teachers, and other similar professionals to misuse their power or unknowingly reproduce social hierarchies. Over time I have come to understand that the marriage of studying

252

critical pedagogies and my community organizing experiences have birthed a

pedagogical approach that is rooted in what I call an organizing consciousness. In this

final chapter, I assert that community organizing principles are reflective of Banks's

vision for transformative citizenship education and can play a significant role in

developing free spaces that are all-encompassing and where collective action for

progressive social change can arise. I believe educators who espouse an organizing

consciousness in the classroom can help equip students with skills vital for participating

in this type of active democratic citizenship.

Elements of an Organizing Consciousness

To begin, in trying to craft meaningful, relevant, and provocative curricula I have

found that the frameworks used in community organizing can provide an effective means

by which to push critical pedagogy to another level. Community organizing principles

include: utilizing experiential learning cycles of research, action and reflection; critically

analyzing and reanimating concepts such as power, justice, freedom, and democracy;

investing in relationship-building; examining and appreciating lived experiences as

valuable sources of social knowledge; and intentionally working to expand one's

imagination.[62] Developing an organizing consciousness means embodying Paulo Freire's

(2007) model of critical pedagogy and praxis and Gloria Alzandua's (2007) conception of

the new *mestiza* who is able to transcend binaries and read the world through multiple

---

[62] While there are different types of organizing strategies and tactics, in general most broad-based organizations can trace their methodologies back to Saul Alinsky and the IAF. When referencing community organizing, I am speaking about the IAF perspective. For more detailed descriptions of IAF principles, the reader is encouraged to review *Roots for Radicals: Organizing for Power, Action, and Justice* by Edward T. Chambers and Michael A. Cowan (2003) and Larry McNeill's article, "The Soft Arts of Organizing" (1995).

lenses. This is vital if we are to teach students how to contribute to building a pluralistic society and democratic way of life.

Connecting Community Organizing and Critical Pedagogy

In order to conceptualize an organizing consciousness, it is important to more explicitly examine the natural connections between community organizing and critical pedagogy. Both recognize that societal transformation is born from the development of critical consciousness and agency. David Purpel and William McLaurin (2004) suggest that a critical consciousness "becomes a crucial component of freedom, autonomy, and justice. It is critical that people be critical in order that they continue to be critical" (p. 135). Cultivating a critical consciousness is a continuous process, which is requisite for being able to confront and transform the cultural attitudes, behaviors, and systems responsible for oppression. Paulo Freire (2007) explains, "To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity" (p. 47). When people are disempowered as a result of the lack of knowledge, they feel impotent and at times apathetic. Through conscientization individuals are able to transform their apathy into hope and action by rejecting oppressive realities and bearing witness to a new way of being and doing.

In addition, Freire insists that critical pedagogy can assist in altering our understanding of the world but in and of itself cannot change reality (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 175). In other words, knowing is not enough. Freire suggests that only political action beyond the classroom can transform the world around us. This is where

community organizing both enacts and builds upon critical pedagogy, moving it toward what Gloria Ladson-Billings (1992) terms culturally relevant teaching. Ladson-Billings argues that critical pedagogy focuses on assisting the individual in critically assessing and changing societal conditions, while a culturally relevant pedagogy advocates for collective action rooted in cultural experiences and understandings of the world (pp. 382-383). Culturally relevant teachers engage students in a collective effort to challenge the status quo. In accordance, Rochelle Brock (2005) asserts if we move a step past critical pedagogy and its individualistic nature to a culturally relevant pedagogy which embraces the collective, we can create a revolutionary force for transformation (p. 97).

This force can only be realized if students have had an opportunity to explore their learning edges, share stories, open their hearts and minds to new thoughts and feelings, test their ideas, and examine their limitations. Organizers point to this as developing one's politicalness. As explained by Ed Chambers (2003),

> Politicalness requires that we know and value what it means to have power, and that means developing the head, the heart, and the gut. Exercising politicalness demands that we participate in something larger than our individual projects, and that means give-and-take, compromise, and mutual respect. (p. 70)

Chambers notes that being political also entails responsibility (p. 70). The classroom is a perfect laboratory for students to begin to develop and exercise their politicalness. When we as teachers espouse an organizing consciousness, we commit to co-creating a classroom environment in which students are able to practice the kind of engagement that can lead to culturally transformative actions.

<center>**Community Organizing Frames**</center>

Practicing the Iron Rule

As elucidated above, I maintain community organizing is critical pedagogy pushed a step further. It embodies the revolutionary force called forth by Brock. Community organizing seeks to create more equitable and just communities by increasing individual awareness, collective power, and political efficacy. This kind of power comes from developing relationships with others, engaging in an analysis of the factors inhibiting social justice and devising and executing strategies focused on systemic change. Like critical educators, community organizers serve as partners in the process of deepening one's critical consciousness which is needed to give rise to action. As community organizer, Cathy Woodson, explains, "I think as a community organizer, my job is to shift people into reframing how they think about what's going on in their lives and get them thinking about what they can do. Community organizing gives people the voice and the courage to work together to make long-term changes in our society" (Szakos & Szakos, 2007, p. 7).

Clearly, conscientization and agency are inextricably connected. I believe implicit in both authentic critical pedagogical and community organizing practices is having confidence in others' ability to know and act. One of the primary universals set forth by the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) organizing model is the Iron Rule, which states that you never do for others what they can do for themselves (Chambers, 2003; Cortes, 1993). The Iron Rule infers that it is paternalistic to do things for others if or when they are able to act on behalf of themselves. Describing the role of organizers, Sheila

<center>256</center>

Kingsberry-Burt expounds,

> I don't like to think of it [organizing] as empowerment, because I think it's not about giving them power but activating the power that is in people. We all have it, it's just that sometimes we don't know we have it. Sometimes we've suppressed or oppressed or depressed for so long until we've lost connection with our power. So I think it's about helping to power up individuals and communities. (Szakos & Szakos, 2007, p. 7)

Thus, the role of the community organizer is to work *with* individuals in developing their own voices and acquiring the necessary tools to be able to effectively advocate for themselves and in partnership with others.

Similarly, critical pedagogy requires educators to trust their students' abilities to engage in critical thought and informed action. Critical educators are called to work *with* students to deconstruct and reconstruct their own experiences and the social order. Freire (2007) insists that those who work on the side of justice must not fall into the trap of *doing for* others, which ultimately recreates the tactics of the status quo (i.e. instilling dependence); instead, we must work *with* them to attain their own liberation (p. 66-67). Antonia Darder (2002) states, "Teachers do not 'empower' their students, but they are in a position to support their process by creating the dialogical conditions, activities, and opportunities that nourish this developing process within students, as both individuals and social beings" (p. 100). Modeling and teaching the Iron Rule is a first step toward developing an organizing consciousness in the classroom.

Reanimating Dead Words

In speaking about the power of verbal icons in theological language, Marcia Falk

257

(1989) explains, "Dead metaphors make strong idols. Dumb as stone, they stand stubbornly in the way; like boulders jutting up in the desert, they block our view of any oasis that may lie ahead" (p. 132). One could argue that such is the case with contemporary uses of words like democracy, community, justice, and freedom. When unexamined and inert, these words and the signifying practices which accompany them often result in impeding significant social change and actually reinforcing the status quo. Central to community organizing is the countering of similucrums of these radical ideas by intentionally interrogating and revitalizing them. Furthermore, given that power is central to these concepts, those involved in organizing work regularly wrestle with understanding the various meanings and applications of power in the world.

Power.

Exploring the various manifestations of power is a foundational action when one claims an organizing consciousness. Interrogating discourses and relations of power is in itself empowering, because students are able to understand moments of their own powerlessness and how power is interwoven into knowledge production, skill development, and resource acquisition and distribution. As members of a global community, this is especially important for American students. In his discussion about democracy after September 11th, Henry Giroux (2002) makes the point that in the face of dominant discourses, educators must call on any pertinent resources and theories they can in order to involve students in critically considering the ways in which power is infused in everyday life, structures and relationships. These efforts are central to helping students

become more self-aware of their American-ness, their impact on the rest of the world and how leadership can be enacted without the "arrogance of power" (p. 1156).

Countering abusive uses of power by our students means actively resisting them in our own work. I would argue that a reflective and radically democratic practitioner constantly confronts her or his own use of power, particularly forms of adultism and identity-based privileges, and actively models this for students. When we induce an organizing consciousness in our practice and classroom, we are able to re-animate power and move it from being a commodity to a source of movement and positive action.

Democracy.

While democracy is often conceptualized as a state to which we aspire, I believe it is a way of being and acting in the world. In speaking about educational leadership practices, Ulrich Reitzug defines democracy as "a way of living that requires the open and widespread flow and critique of ideas, with an overriding commitment to determining and pursuing the common good" (Gause, Reitzug, & Villaverde, 2007, p. 218). He suggests that democracy goes beyond mere governance, it is a way of life. It is the journey and the search that embodies democracy and freedom. Similarly, Maxine Greene (1988) argues explains that overthrowing tyranny, and thus manifesting democracy, does not create freedom in and of itself, but rather creates a space for the search. It is the search - the process of questioning - that is at the root of liberation. Freedom is not an end goal or a destination, but the process itself. Freedom exists within the tension created by encountering obstacles and transcending them. Democracy is not a thing we aspire to, but a communal adventure in which we join others.

An organizing consciousness leads educators to provide on-going opportunities for students to practice the type of democratic engagement proposed by Reitzug and Greene. Working with students to relate theory and practice and link classroom experiences with their daily lives can create an active and relevant learning environment (Giroux, 2001). Henry Giroux suggests that with this kind of approach,

> theoretical rigor is connected to social relevance, knowledge is subjected to critical scrutiny and engagement, and pedagogy is seen as a moral and political practice crucial to the production of capacities and skills necessary for students to both shape and participate in public life. (p. xxvi)

Like Giroux, teachers with an organizing consciousness seek to partner with students in co-creating the kinds of classrooms where they can stretch themselves intellectually, emotionally and relationally. They are test out democracy in action and how to build just, vibrant, and affirming communities.

Relationality, community, and freedom.

An organizing consciousness performed in the classroom invites students into the challenging work of deconstructing the strong idols of contemporary American life and making new meaning of them. One example of such work is the experience of building dynamic, passionate and compassionate community through an investment in relationship-building between students and teachers. Dr. Leo Penta (1999), an IAF organizer in Germany, stresses that what makes organizing countercultural in its intentionality to initiate, develop and deepen relationships in the face of a transactional culture which values quick encounters instead of meaningful interactions. Students are

bombarded everyday with examples of the kind of togetherness that Zygmunt Bauman (1995) refers to as being-aside and being-with. Bauman suggests the main characteristics of being-aside and being-with, which are forms of togetherness, are their fragmentary and/or transitory natures (which serve as coping mechanisms in the postmodern world). Furthermore, being-aside and being-with do not demand an obligation to others. By their very nature, these are forms of togetherness established on the understanding that they will not last. Thus, there is no long-standing responsibility to others.

However, Bauman does assert that a shift from the state of being-with to being-for is possible. Bauman argues that being-for is an experience that sneaks out from behind the usual forms of togetherness (being-aside and being-with); it is not an act of reason but rather a decentering surprise which emerges from truly being face to face with the Other. At its very core, being-for is a moral moment in which one embraces responsibility for others. It requires a willingness to be fully present to others. In these moments I do not engage others because of contractual relationships or conventions; I *choose* to take responsibility for the welfare and integrity of others. In this move from convention to commitment, being-for transcends being-with. It is an act of love.

Bauman insists being-for is not an intentional choice, but I believe cultivating the conditions that may create the opportunity for a being-for encounter is indeed a choice. Consider Maxine Greene's (1988) aforementioned supposition that the role of educators is to create the conditions under which freedom can appear. One of the greatest hurdles facing those of us committed to transformative pedagogy is creating the circumstances under which being-for can spring forth.

261

I propose that intentional relationality, marked in organizing work by what are called one-on-one or relational meetings and story-telling, provides corporal opportunities to counter a "being-with" kind of culture. This type of togetherness consists of being present to others, sharing personal stories, and listening. Through intentional relationality trust is developed and with trust comes the ability to agitate, meaning the ability to ask critical questions to further another person's thinking as well as your own. Through story-telling people are able to locate themselves in a social context – to awaken not only to the Other's face but to their own.

Hatred by and large erupts from the fear of the unknown or the Other. When people encounter the Other in a shared space (i.e. in the classroom), in texts (reading can open minds and hearts), and through dialogue about the fears that accompany difference, they are much more likely to counter potential hatred with understanding and acceptance. Having one's perceptions about the Other challenged through the exchange of stories and deliberate relational work can be one of the most powerful ways to decenter and reconnect.

Some would argue that such practices are time-consuming and distract from more important curriculum. It is true that relationship-building efforts are protracted, require patience, and involve the kind of risk and discomfort that comes from sharing our lives with others. However, I contend that investing in relational work not only models passionate community and the transformative togetherness of being-for, it significantly impacts the level of learning that students experience. This was affirmed for me in my work with pre-service teachers, many of who wrote in their self-evaluations that they had

never had the kind of relationships with their peers that they had in this class. These same

students noted that the relationships allowed them to feel more confident and trusting.

Thus, they found that the class became an open and safe environment in which more

people were willing to take risks and share their perspectives. One student wrote that

above all the experience had shown him the benefits of encouraging a community rather

just a classroom.

We cannot underestimate the importance of this investment. In the current

political and cultural context in which the individual often is pitted against the collective,

it is vital for students to see that it one does not have to choose. Moreover, it is

important for students to recognize that freedom and community are inextricably linked.

Jazz musician, Wynton Marsalis (Marsalis & Ward, 2008), offers an insightful way of

thinking about this in his discussion of how jazz can teach us about democracy. He

explains that he realized his freedom of expression on the bandstand was directly

connected to the freedom of his fellow musicians. They had to listen to one another and

create space for each to speak, because "The freer they were, the freer I could be, and vice

versa" (p. 13). Teaching and modeling the relationship between the self and the collective

helps students understand and experience how this kind of connectedness can liberate our

minds and our hearts.

From a similar perspective Maxine Greene (1988) argues that freedom, so often

understood in American culture as unadulterated autonomy and self-dependence, is bound

up in relationship; that is, freedom is situated in a context of community. According to Greene, ". . . freedom shows itself or comes into being when individuals come together in a particular way, when they are authentically present to one another (without masks, pretenses, badges of office), when they have a project they can mutually pursue" (p. 17). When people are disconnected from others and have no way of participating in community or stretching their imaginations, "they may think of *breaking* free, but they will be unlikely to think of breaking through the structures of their world and creating something new" (Greene, 1988, p. 17). A teacher with an organizing consciousness urges students to examine the nuances of situated freedom and spends time developing a space in which they can experience it.

Examining Matters of Charity and Justice

Community organizers often speak of the world as it is and the world as it should be. The tension of living between these worlds is the hallmark of the human condition. I have begun employing this frame early in the semester with my students as a way to rouse their righteous anger, incite their radical dreaming, and invite them into the life-long process of critical hope. Megan Boler (2004) explains that critical hope means allowing one's worldviews to be shattered over and over again (p. 128). As students (and teachers) struggle with the feelings and thoughts that occur when things fall apart, Boler asserts that critical hope is a powerful antidote to their sense of helplessness, anger and propensity to try and find a new center. One of the more daunting tasks as an educator is to help students turn their pain and discomfort (and ours) into transformation by

becoming clear that change *can* occur if we are all willing to move and be moved. The question is what kind of change.

This is where a critical understanding of the differences between charity and justice prove to be useful. Charity is our response to conditions in the world as it is. Justice is what moves us to the world as it should be. Organizers argue that our challenge is to live with a foot in both worlds, recognizing and responding to the immediate needs of those suffering today *and* working to disturb and transform the hegemonic beliefs and practices which prevent us from living into a more just and peaceful world. Within the classroom these frameworks provide students with ways to critically analyze how and why things are the way they are, as well as begin to dream and formulate new ways of being and doing.

One example of how this approach might be used comes from a class for pre-service educators that I recently taught. In a recent conversation about media advertising for back-to-school products, I employed the charity and justice scaffolding in order to push the dialogue a bit further. One of the students raised the issue of personalized school supply lists at stores such as Walmart and so ensued a dynamic discussion about a host of concerns including whether students really need everything on those lists, what corporate reciprocity might be occurring, and the fact that hand sanitizers may actually lead to more resistant bacteria. With my organizing consciousness fully present I saw this as a sacred moment to agitate. I began asking questions like what happens when some children can't buy everything on those lists? The wheels started to turn. "We have back-to-school drives so people can donate school supplies for needy children," one student responded. I

265

suggested that such a generous act of caring for others who are struggling should not be given short shrift. However, these charitable acts do not address the underlying issues like why school budgets are so miniscule that more and more financial responsibilities are being placed on students and their families. By viewing back-to-school advertising efforts through a charity/justice lens, these students began asking the types of critical questions that are central to being informed and thoughtful democratic actors and teachers.

Expanding Imagination and Embodying Hope

Democracy necessitates imagination and the kind of critical hope outlined by Megan Boler. Creating a community where people can ask critical questions, practice responsible decision-making and envision a healthier world is imperative to understanding our role as democratic citizens and gaining a deeper sense of our own agency. This is the crux of an organizing consciousness. Again I return to Maxine Greene (1988) who suggests that critical thought is a pre-condition to naming the things that constrain us, and it is imagination that allows us to move beyond the givenness of our world. Greene concludes,

> When oppression or exploitation or segregation or neglect is perceived as "natural" or a "given", there is little stirring in the name of freedom . . . When people cannot name alternatives, imagine a better state of things, share with others a project of change, they are likely to remain anchored or submerged, even as they proudly assert their autonomy. (p. 9)

One can argue that critical thinking and imagination have been the fuel for every great social movement that has ever occurred. If people are unable to dream about what

Kierkegaard describes as "the passionate sense of the potential", then they are unable to harness their energy into a transformative force.

Redefining Leadership

With the increasing use of business models in various institutions (and on the heels of an MBA president), there is an increasing need to understand the difference between leadership and management. John Kotter (2001), a Harvard Business School professor, posits that the primary function of leadership is to effect change. This involves seeking out new information, developing strategies and visions, building relationships, and nurturing others' leadership capabilities as well. The kind of revolutionary leadership inherent in a democratic life is what Glenn Hudak (2007) refers to as leadership-with. Hudak points to Paulo Freire's assertion that a revolutionary leader "cannot think *without* the people, nor *for* the people, but only *with* the people" (p. 349). Being and doing *with* are hallmarks of the democratic journey and the foundation of an organizing consciousness.

Often the primary models of leadership are those that are exhibited by politicians and pundits. Harry Boyte (2004) argues that recent trends point to a professionalization of politics in which experts and those with titles are conferred more and more authority to make decisions. Thus, politics and modes of leadership are frequently seen as detached from civic life and ordinary people.

Community organizers define leadership differently. Titles and credentials do not a leader make. Instead, from an organizing standpoint leaders are seen as those individuals who have a network of relationships and are able to move people to act on

267

common concerns. Such leadership is born from a sense of trust that has been woven between people through the sharing of stories and demonstrated accountability to each other. Leo Penta, an IAF organizer, asserts that the IAF organizing model nurtures this type of transformative leadership. In tandem with a reflective praxis and attention to cultivating meaningful cross-boundary relationships, Penta (1999) suggests that the model offers a new type of leadership rooted in the collective rather than individual and "one based not on charismatic personality, electoral mandate, or institutional office, but on the relational capacity to represent a diverse collective" (p. 9).

In classrooms where organizing frames of leadership are utilized, students are encouraged to learn about and practice leadership in a different way. Teachers frequently use group work as a method of building interpersonal and leadership skills. Often students are not prepared in an adequate manner to get the most out of these experiences, and many walk away feeling disappointed and even resentful. Because students may not be familiar with the democratic leadership practices, prefacing group projects with a discussion about leadership is important. Such a discussion provides a crucible where theory and practice can meet and students are able to examine their own leadership styles and consider the relationship between leadership paradigms and democratic communities.

Organizing Consciousness and Possible Community

Maxine Greene (1995) speaks of the classroom as the "possible community," marked by a sense of interconnectedness, imagination, and a continuing quest for intellectual freedom and expression. In this kind of classroom, the soil of the known is plowed up, the familiar is made strange, and the seeds of democratic society are planted

268

and nurtured. Based on my experiences as a victim advocate, community organizer and educator, I have proposed that the possible community that Greene casts before us can be realized through developing an organizing consciousness in the classroom. Explicit conversations about the nature of power and how it is used can help students, who often feel immobilized and hopeless, discover their own agency.

Working with students to examine inanimate and taken-for-granted concepts such as democracy and freedom can be a first step in breathing new life and meaning into these radical ideas. Investing in relationship-building can create space for a dynamic community of seekers to emerge. An organizing consciousness necessitates a commitment to an experiential form of education in which students have opportunities to actively explore the ingredients crucial for democratic engagement. In summary, for those of us committed to a critical, liberatory pedagogy that disrupts, invites, and transforms, an organizing consciousness enacted in the classroom can crack open profound opportunities for the cultivation of students who are agents of positive change.

REFERENCES

Alinsky, S.D. (1971). *Rules for radicals: A pragmatic primer for realistic radicals*. New

York: Vintage Books.

Alinsky, S.D. (1974). *Reveille for radicals*. New York: Vintage Books.

Allen, A. (2005). *Feminist perspectives on power*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Retrieved February 10, 2007, from http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist

power/

Altemose, J.R., & McCarty, D.A. (2001). Organizing for democracy through faith-based

institutions: The Industrial Areas Foundation in action. In J.M. Bystydzienski and

S.P. Schacht (Eds.), *Forging radical alliances across difference: Coalition

politics for the new millennium* (pp. 133-143). London: Rowman & Littlefield

Publishers, Inc.

Anzaldúa, G. (2007). *Borderlands/la frontera: The new mestiza* (3rd ed.). San Francisco:

Aunt Lute Books.

Arendt, H. (1970). *On violence*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Arizona Interfaith Network (2003-2009). *Mission*. Retrieved from http://www.arizona

interfaith.org/mission.php

Aronowitz, S. (2003). *How class works: Power and social movement*. New Haven: Yale

University Press.

Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. (2000). County membership

    report. Retrieved from http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/reports/counties

    /37067_2000.asp

Atlas, J. (2003, September/October). The world as it should be. *Shelterforce*, 131.

    Retrieved from http://www.nhi.org/online /issues/131/world.html

Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. (1962). Two faces of power. *American Political Science

    Review*, *56*(4), 947-952.

Banks, J. (2008, April). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global

    age. *Educational Researcher*, *37*(3), 129–139. doi: 10.3102/0013189X08317501

Barber, K. (2009, November 4-10). CHANGE and other faith-based community groups

    exert powerful influence on area politics. *YES! Weekly*, pp. 12-17.

Bauman, Z. (1995). *Life in fragments: Essays in postmodern morality*. Cambridge:

    Blackwell.

Bay Area Industrial Areas Foundation. (2008). *Home*. Retrieved from http://bay

    areaiaf.org/index.php

Beckwith, D., & Lopez, C. (1997). Community organizing: People power from the

    grassroots. Retrieved from http://comm-org.wisc.edu/papers97/beckwith.htm

Bevan, S.E. (2003). *Organizing the congregation: The use of community organizing

    techniques in the training of congregational leaders* (Doctoral Dissertation).

    Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3111317)

Blee, K.M., & Taylor, V. (1995). Semi-structured interviewing in social movement

    research. In B. Klandermans & S. Staggenborg (Eds.), *Methods of social*

movement research (Vol. 16, pp. 92-117). Minneapolis; University of

    Minneapolis Press.

Boler, M. (2004). Teaching for hope: The ethics of shattering world views. In D. Liston

    & J. Garrison (Eds.), *Teaching, learning, and loving: Reclaiming passion in*

    educational practice (pp. 117-131). New York: Routledge.

Boyte, H.C. (1989). *Commonwealth: A return to citizen politics*. New York: The Free

    Press.

Boyte, H.C. (2004). *Everyday politics: Reconnecting citizens and public life*.

    Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press.

Boyte, H.C. (2005, September/October). Reframing democracy: Governance, civic

    agency, and politics. *Public Administration Review, 65(5),* 536-546. doi:

    10.1111/j.1540 6210. 2005. 00481.x

Boyte, H.C., & Evans, S.M. (1992). *Free spaces: The sources of democratic change in*

    america (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Breedlove, M. (2009, November). Hallowed halls: A look inside eight of downtown's

    most historic houses of worship. *Winston-Salem Monthly*. Retrieved from

    http://www.winstonsalemmonthly.com/index.php/site/features/hallowed-halls/

Brock, R.N. (1988). *Journeys by heart: A christology of erotic power*. Crossroad: New

    York.

Brock, R. (2005). *Sista talk: The personal and the pedagogical*. New York: Peter Lang

    Publishing.

Brueggemann, W. (1987). *Hope within history*. Atlanta: John Knox Press.

Brueggemann, W. (2001). *The prophetic imagination. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.*

Brydon-Miller, M., Greenwood, D., & Maguire, P. (2003). Why action research? *Action Research, 1(9),* 9-28. doi: 10.1177/14767503030011002

Buckwalter, P. (2003, Spring). Building power: Finding and developing leaders in arizona congregations. *Social Policy*, *33(3),* 2 - 8. Retrieved from EbscoHost Database.

Burrough, B., & Helyar, J. (1990). *Barbarians at the gate: The fall of RJR Nabisco*. New York: Harper & Row.

Byrd, M.K. (1997). *The Discourse ethics of religious-based organizing: A critical analysis of the Industrial Areas Foundation's recent efforts in metropolitan Nashville (Tennessee)* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 9815581)

Cahill, C. (2007, June). The personal is political: Developing new subjectivities through participatory action research. *Gender, Place and Culture, 14(3)*, 267–292.

Carpenter, K.P. (2008, December 16). Lead poisoning [Letter to the editor]. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A10. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Chambers, E.T., & Cowan, M.A. (2003). *Roots for radicals: Organizing for power, action, and justice*. New York: Continuum.

CHANGE. (2003). *Proposal for CHANGE school audit*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2004a). *CHANGE school audit survey results*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2004b). *CHANGE 2004 fall update*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2004c). *CHANGE's vision for public education*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2005a). *CHANGE position on school bond*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2005b). *CHANGE speech to school board*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2005c). *2005 annual report to CHANGE Membership*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2006a). *School equity campaign briefing packet*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2006b). *Action proposals from public education seminars*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2006c). *Forsyth county electoral system fact sheet*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2007). *Non-partisan school board fact sheet*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2008a). *CHANGE education public hearing agenda*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2008b). *Recommendations to 2008 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2008c). CHANGE 2008 *annual report*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2009). *CHANGE delegates assembly agenda packet*. Copy in possession of author.

CHANGE. (2010). *CHANGE: An organization of good power*. Retrieved from http://www.changeiaf.org/CHANGE_Site/About_CHANGE.html

Chittister, J.D. (1998). *Heart of flesh: A feminist spirituality for women and men*.

Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Christ, C., & Plaskow, J. (Eds.). (1989). *Weaving the visions: New patterns in feminist spirituality*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Christ, C., & Plaskow, J. (Eds.). (1992). *Womanspirit rising*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Cooke, S. (2003). A change is gonna come. On *Ain't that good news* [CD]. New York: ABKCO Music & Records. (Originally released 1964).

Cortes, E. (1993). Reweaving the fabric: The iron rule and the IAF strategy for power and politics. In H.G. Cisneros, (Ed.), *Interwoven destinies: cities and the nation* (pp. 295-319). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Cortes, E. (September/October, 1998). Organizing's past, present and future: Reclaiming our birthright. *Shelterforce*, 101. Retrieved from http://www.nhi.org/online /issues/101/cortes.html

Coughlan, D., & Brannick, T. (2001). *Doing action research in your own organization*. London: Sage Publications.

Craver, R. (2004, July 10). CHANGE wants place in Dell proposal: Community group eager to support possible plant and jobs it could bring. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. D1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Craver, R. (2008, December 5). County board of health oks tougher rule on lead poisoning. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Daly, M. (1973). *Beyond god the father: Toward a philosophy of women's liberation*.

    Boston: Beacon Press.

Daly, M. (1985). *The church and the second sex*. Boston: Beacon Press. (Original work

    published 1968).

Darder, A. (2002). *Reinventing Paulo Freire: A pedagogy of love*. Boulder: Westview

    Press.

Davis, C.S. (1976). *The character of the community* (Vol. 13). Winston-Salem: Historic

    Winston.

Davis, L.G., Rice, W.J., & McLaughlin, J.H. (1999). *African-Americans in Winston-*

    Salem/Forsyth County: A pictorial history. Virginia Beach: Donning Company.

Deaver, D. (2005a, May 17). School bond gets cool review: 3 groups shy from support of

    proposal in present form. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1.

Deaver, D. (2005b, June 15). Panel puts bond on shelf: School-board members say the

    time isn't right to go to voters for money. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1.

    Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Deaver, D. (2007, March 29). School study draws doubt: Some local officials criticize

    UNC look at Forsyth students. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from

    LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Delgado, G. (1998, November/December). The last stop sign. *Shelterforce*, 102.

    Retrieved from http://www.nhi.org/online /issues/102/stopsign.html

Delpit, L. (1993). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other

people's children. In L. Weiss, & Fine, M. (Eds.), *Beyond silenced voices: Class, race, and gender in United States schools* (pp. 119-139). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2003a). (Eds.). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Denzin, N.K., and Lincoln, Y.S. (2003b). (Eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Drake, J. (2001, Fall). Why I organize. *Social Policy, 32(4)*, 4. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Dunston, A.G. (1981). *The black struggle for equality in Winston-Salem, North Carolina: 1947-1977* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 8129840)

Eller, R. (2001). *We are . . . CHANGE.* Copy in possession of author.

Engel, L.J. (2002). Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago school. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, *16*(1), 50-66. Retrieved from Project Muse Database.

Farmer, L. (2006, October 5). Ministers, CHANGE back bond referendum. *The Chronicle*, p. A13.

Feldman, N. (2005). *Divided by god: America's church-state problem – and what we should do about it*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Fernandes, D. (2002, June 5). Board disbands panel, for now equity committee's future is left hanging. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Filback, R.A. (2007). *Transformative learning in the public sphere: The educational dimensions of a broad-based community organizing movement* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3283694)

Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 70-82). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Fine, M., Weiss, Weseen, & Wonge. (2000). For whom? Qualitative research, representations, and social responsibilities. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (2nd ed., pp. 167-207). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Fisher, R. (1994). *Let the people decide: Neighborhood organizing in America*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

Flaherty, M.A., & Wood, R.L. (2004). *Faith and public life: Faith-based community organizing and the development of congregations*. New York: Interfaith Funders.

Forsyth County Board of Elections. *Contest results for Forsyth County – (official results)*. Retrieved from http://www.co.forsyth.nc.us/elections/061107 GenElection.aspx

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings* (C.

    Gordon, Ed.). New York: Pantheon Books.

Freedman, S.G. (1993). *Upon this rock: The miracles of a black church*. New York:

    Harper Collins.

Freidus, N. (2001). *Changes in the valley: The role of the individual in community*

    development (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from http://www.creativenarrations.net

    /thesis/thesis.html

Freire, P. (2007). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (30th anniversary ed.) New York: Continuum.

Fries, A., Wright, S.T., & Hendricks, J.E. (1976). *Forsyth: The history of a county on the*

    march. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Gannon, S., & Davies, B. (2007). Postmodern, poststructural, and critical theories. In

    S.N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and*

    praxis (pp. 71-106). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Garr, R. (2009, October 1). *Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS)*.

    Retrieved from http://www.grass-roots.org/usa/cops.shtml

Gates, J. (2003a, June 2). Walking the walk. *Winston-Salem Journal*. p. A6. Retrieved

    from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Gates, J. (2003b, September 29). Change and the city. *Winston-Salem Journal*. p. A8.

    Retrieved from Lexis-Nexis Universe Academic database.

Gause, C.P., Reitzug, U.C., & Villaverde, L.E. (2007). Beyond generic democracy:

    Holding our students accountable for democratic leadership and practice. In D.

Carlson & C.P. Gause (Eds.), *Keeping the promise: Essays on leadership, democracy, and education* (pp. 217-232). New York: Peter Lang.

Gaventa, J., & Cornwall, A. (2001). Power and knowledge. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* (pp. 70–80). London: Sage Publications.

Gecan, M. (2002). *Going public.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Gergen, M.M., & Gergen, K.J. (2003). Qualitative inquiry: Tensions and transformations. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (2nd ed., pp. 575-610). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Giroux, H. (2001). *Theory and resistance in education: Toward a pedagogy for the opposition*. Westport: Bergin & Garvey.

Giroux, H. (2002, September). Democracy, freedom, and justice after September 11th: Rethinking the role of educators and the politics of schooling. *Teachers College Record*, 104*(5),* 1138-1162. Retrieved from Education Resources Information Center.

Giunca, M. (2003, May 7). A recipe: Cultivate leaders, Morse says. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Giunca, M. (2004, November 4). CHANGE reports mixed success with turnout drive. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Giunca, M. (2009, March 25). Prayer lawsuit may be coming to an end. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: Longman.

Glickman, N.J., & Scally, C.P. (2008, December). Can community and education organizing improve inner-city schools? *Journal of Urban Affairs, 30(5),* 557-577.

Graff, L. (2008, December 5). The name is set, but where will they play? *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Gray, K.A. *Families' lives in and out of poverty: Stories from Project QUEST* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3008344)

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization. (2009). Our mission. Retrieved from http://www.gbio.org/

Greater Winston-Salem Sponsoring Committee (2002). *IAF/Greater Winston-Salem Sponsoring Committee timeline*. Copy in possession of author.

Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Greider, W. (1992). *Who will tell the people?* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Gustafson, R., & Miller, D.E. (2000). *Power, justice, faith: Conversations with the IAF*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California.

Hamilton, C. (8 February, 2001). City hopes slogan changes image: Campaign highlights the quality of life in Winston-Salem. *Winston-Salem Journal*, pp. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Helm, T. (2004, June 22). Gaps remain among schools: Equity plus students get lower scores on tests, CHANGE report shows. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Hercules, B., & Orenstein, B. (Producer/Director) (1998). *The democratic promise: Saul Alinsky and his legacy*. [Documentary]. San Francisco: ITVS.

Herr, K., & Anderson, G.L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Piatelli, D. (2007). Holistic reflexivity: The feminist practice of reflexivity. In Sharlene N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.). *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (pp. 297-326). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Heyward, C. (1984). *Our passion for justice*: *Images of power, sexuality, and liberation*. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Heyward, C. (1989). *Touching Our strength: The erotic as power and the love of god*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Hinton, J. (2009, June 25). School officials talk about use of minority contractors. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Hoeffel, J. (1990, November 11). Other boards ensure black representation. *Winston-Salem Journal*, pp. A1, A4.

Hoeffel, J. (1991, March 3). School-board vote stirs debate: Members cite several reasons

    for rejection of district elections. *Winston-Salem Journal*, pp. C1, C8.

Hoeffel, J. (1992a, January 12). Leaders question school plan: Delay is urged on new

    districts. *Winston-Salem Journal*, pp. E1, E6.

Hoeffel, J. (1992b, March 20). School board is undecided about integration issue.

    Winston-Salem Journal, pp. A1, A4.

Horwitt, S.D. (1989). *Let them call me rebel: Saul Alinsky: His life and legacy*. New

    York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Hudak, G.M. (2007). Leadership-with: A spiritual perspective on professional &

    revolutionary leadership in a digital culture. In C.P. Gause & D. Carlson (Eds.),

    Keeping the promise: Essays on leadership, democracy, and education (pp. 335-

    356). New York: Peter Lang.

Industrial Areas Foundation (1990). *Standing for the whole*. [pamphlet].

Industrial Areas Foundation (2004-2008). *Industrial areas foundation*. Retrieved from

    http://www.dallasareainterfaith.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=articl

    e&id=48:industrial-areas-foundation&catid=80:national-affiliates&Itemid=77

Industrial Areas Foundation (2009). *Who are we?* Retrieved from http://www.industrial

    areas foundation.org/who.html

Interfaith Education Fund. (2003, Fall). *Alliance schools concept paper*. Retrieved from

    http://www.dallasareainterfaith.com/alliance.htm

James, S.D. (2008, December 18). New evangelists buck the Christian right: Younger

generation wants poverty, global warming, unjust wars, AIDS on agenda. *ABC News*. Retrieved from http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=6491162&page=1

Janesick, V. (2003). The choreography of qualitative research design: minuets, improvisations, and crystallization. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*, (2nd ed., pp. 46-79). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Johnson, M.P. *The industrial areas foundation in new Orleans: Congregationally based grassroots activism* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3046649)

Jones-Sanpei, H.A. (2006). *School choice, segregation, and academic outcomes: Educational trajectories under a controlled choice student assignment policy* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3239240)

Kemmis, S., & McTaggert, R. (2003). Participatory action research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed., pp. 336-396). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Kincheloe, J.L. (2001). Describing the bricolage: Conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 7(6),* 679-692. Retrieved from http://qix.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/7/6/679.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2005). On to the next level: Continuing the conception of the bricolage. *Qualitative Inquiry, 11(3)*, 323-350. doi: 10.1177/1077800405275056

Kincheloe, J.L., & Berry, K.S. (2004). *Rigour and complexity in educational research: Conceptualizing the bricolage*. New York: Open University Press.

Kincheloe, J.L., & Pinar, W.F. (Eds.). (1991). *Curriculum as social psychoanalysis: The significance of place*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Kincheloe, J., & McLaren, P. (2003). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (2nd ed.) (pp. 433-488). California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Knoepfle, P. (Ed.). (1990). *After Alinsky: Community organizing in Illinois*. Springfield: Sangamon State University.

Kooperkamp, E. *The prophetic promise of the church that acts: An examination of the theology of Daniel Day Williams as a basis for an activist social ethics* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3048894)

Korstad, R.R. (2003). *Civil rights unionism: Tobacco workers and the struggle for democracy in the mid-twentieth-century south*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Kotter, J. (2001, December 1). What leaders really do. *Best of Harvard Business Review*, 3-12.

Krantz, R.S. (2003). *Practicing creative democracy: Participatory neighborhood planning, community organizing, and pragmatist sociology in Madison, Wisconsin* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3101463)

Ladson-Billings, G. (1992, Summer). Liberatory consequences of literacy: A case of

    culturally relevant instruction for African American students. *Journal of Negro*

    Education, *61*(3), pp. 378-391.

Lee, M. (2003). *Faith-based community organizing and the renewal of congregations*.

    New York: Interfaith Funders.

Lerner, M. (2006). *The left hand of god: Taking back our country from the religious*

    right. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Lester, M. (1980, December). Generating newsworthiness: The interpretive construction

    of public events. *American Sociological Review*, 45, 984-994.

Lewin, K. (1948). *Resolving social conflict*. New York: Harper.

Linthicum, R. (2003). *Transforming power: Biblical strategies for making a difference in*

    your community. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative*

    observation and analysis (3rd ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth.

Loomer, B. (1976). Two kinds of power. *Criterion*, *15*(1), 11-29. Retrieved June 22,

    2007, from http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2359.

Lorenzi, M. (2006). Power: A radical view by Stephen Lukes. *Crossroads*, *6* (2), 87-

    95. Retrieved June 20, 2007, from http://www.webasa.org/Pubblicazioni/

    Lorenzi_2006_2.pdf.

Lukes, S. (1974). *Power: A radical view.* Bristol: British Sociological Association.

Malcolm, D. (2004, November 4). Will C.H.A.N.G.E. change? *The Yellow Jacket*, p. 2.

Maney, G.M., & Oliver, P.E. (2003, August 17). Political Processes, Social Networks, and Local Newspaper Coverage of Public Events.. Paper presented at 2003 meeting of American Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA. Retrieved from http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~oliver/PROTESTS/PROTESTS.HTM

Márquez, B. (2003). *Constructing identities in Mexican-American political organizations: choosing issues, taking sides*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Marsalis, W., & Ward, G. (2008). *Moving to higher ground: How jazz can change your life*. New York: Random House.

Marschall, M. (1999). From states to people: Civil society and its role in governance. In K. Naidoo (Ed.), *Civil society at the millennium* (pp. 167-178). Hartford: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Marx, K. (1959). *Capital, the communist manifesto, and other writings* (M. Eastman, Ed.) New York: Modern Library.

McCarthy, J.D., & Walker, E.T. (2004, September 1). Alternative organizational repertoires of poor people's social movement organizations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *33*(3), 97S-119S.

McKenzie, S. (1992a, June 15). Community outraged over all-white board vote. *The Chronicle*, pp. A1, A2.

McKenzie, S. (1992b, July 9). Civil disobedience blocks board vote. *The Winston-Salem Chronicle*, pp. A1, A2.

McNeill, L. (1995, Winter). The soft arts of organizing. *Social Policy*, *26*(2), 16-22. Retrieved from EBSCOhost Database.

Mediratta, K. (Transcriptionist) (2001). Community organizing for school reform in New York. New York: Institute for Education and Social Policy. Retrieved from http://www.annenberg institute.org/CIP/publications/2001/case-studies/nyc-rpt.pdf.

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. (2009). *Fixer*. Retrieved from http://www. aolsvc.merriam-webster.aol.com/dictionary/fixer

Miller, B.H. (1981). *Blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1895-1920: Community development in the Age of benevolent paternalism* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 8212967)

Milner, A., & Browitt, J. (2002). *Contemporary cultural theory: An introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Neal, K.D. (2008, November 17). *CHANGE education public hearing* [Interview transcript].

Nyberg, D. (1981). *Power over power: What power means in ordinary life, how it is related to acting freely, and what it can contribute to a renovated ethics of education*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Obama, Barack (2006, July 10). Politicians need not abandon religion. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2006-07-09-forum-religion-obama_x.htm

O'Donnell, L. (2009, May 4). Officials asked to keep pushing. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A13. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Oliver, P.E., & Myers, D.J. (1999, July). How events enter the public sphere: Conflict,

location, and sponsorship in local newspaper coverage of public events. *American

Journal of Sociology*, 105*(1),* 38-87.

Orr, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Transforming the city: Community organizing and the challenge of

political change*. Lawrence: University of Press Kansas.

Osterman, P. (2003). *Gathering power: The future of progressive politics in America.*

Boston: Beacon Press.

Otterbourg, K. (1991, July 14). District elections get final approval. *Winston-Salem

Journal*. pp. A1, A3.

Parra, A.V. (1993). *Assessing community needs and congregational resources for

development of a program to revitalize Houston-Temple United Methodist Church*

(Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Available from ProQuest Dissertations

and Theses database. (AAT 9322498)

Penta, L. (1999). *Islands of democratic practice: Organizing for local and regional

power in the USA. The industrial areas foundation and its organizing network as

an example.* Presented at the Biannual European Conference of the Inter-

University Consortium for International Social Development, Cracow, Poland.

Retrieved from www.aicgs.org/file_manager/streamfile.aspx ?path=&name=

civilsocietyiaf.pdf -

Pierson, F. (2001). 'Power before program': Broad base organizing and the Industrial

Areas Foundation. In J. Pierson and J. Smith (Eds.), *Rebuilding Community:*

Policy and Practice in Urban Regeneration (pp. 99-117). New York: Palgrave

Publishers Ltd.

Purpel, D., & McLaurin, W.M. (2004). *Reflections on the moral and spiritual crisis in*

education. New York: Peter Lang.

Railey, J. (2003a, March 8). Sounds of 'new wings': Group of people of faith stepping

into local issues. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis

Academic Universe.

Railey, J. (2003b, May 30). Joines promises action on requests from CHANGE: Mayor

tells multicultural community group that city will tackle its list. *Winston-Salem*

Journal, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Railey, J. (2004, October 26). Answering to CHANGE. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A16.

Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Railey, J. (2006, May 15). CHANGE grows up. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A12.

Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Railey, J., (2009a, January 18). Local minister was 'change' before change was cool.

Winston-Salem Journal, p. A17. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Railey, J. (2009b, May 5). Nonpartisan school board. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A10.

Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Reitzes, D.C., & Reitzes. D.C. (1987). *The Alinsky legacy: Alive and kicking*. Greenwich:

JAI Press.

Ruether, R.R. (1983). *Sexism and god-talk: Toward a feminist theology.* Boston:

Beacon Press.

Reuther, R.R. (1985). *WomanGuides: readings toward a feminist theology*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Robinson, B., & Hanna, M.G. (1994). Lessons for academics from grassroots community organizing: A case study – The Industrial Areas Foundation. *Journal of Community Practice*, *1*(4), 63-94.

Rogers, M.B. (1990). *Cold anger: A story of faith and power politics.* Denton: University of North Texas Press.

Romoser, J. (2009a, April 23). Nonpartisan-vote bill moves on. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B2. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Romoser, J. (2009b, June 7). Board effort seen as partisan. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Romoser, J., & Underwood, K. (2009, June 9). School board to abandon party ties. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Rooney, D. (1995). *Organizing the South Bronx*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2001). *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice*. London: Sage Publications.

Ross, T.A. (1996). *The impact of community organizing on East Brooklyn, 1978-1995* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 9719819)

Rubin, H.J., & Rubin, I.S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Sadan, E. (1997). *Empowerment and community planning: Theory and practice of people-focused social solutions.* Translated by Richard Flantz. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishers. Retrieved February 14, 2007, from http://www.mpow.org/ elisheva_sadan _empowerment.pdf.

Schüssler Fiorenza, E. (1988). *In memory of her: A feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins*. New York: Cross Road.

Schüssler Fiorenza, E. (Ed.). (1996). *The power of naming: A concilium reader in feminist liberation theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

Scott, S.M. (1991). *Personal transformation through participation in social action: A case study of the leaders in the Lincoln Alliance* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 9208113)

Scott, J. (Ed.). (2006). *Sociology: The key concepts*. London: Routledge.

Scroggin, S. (2008, September 17). Segregation by default in Winston-Salem schools. Retrieved from www.uncg.edu/bae/econ/seminars/2008/Scroggin2.pdf

Seal, M. (2008). Saul Alinsky, community organizing and rules for radicals. T*he Encyclopaedia of Informal Education*. Retrieved from www.infed.org/thinkers/ alinsky.htm

Seidel, J.V. (1998). *Qualitative data analysis*. Retrieved from ftp://ftp.qualisresearch.com /pub/qda.pdf

Sexton, S. (2008, May 6). Big races get the ink, but smaller ones carry clout. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Shirley, D. (2002). *Valley Interfaith and school reform: Organizing for power in south Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Shirley, D. (2001). Linking community organizing and school reform: A comparative analysis. In R.L. Crowson (Ed.), *Community Development and School Reform*. (Vol. 5, pp. 139-169). Kidlington: Elsevier Science Ltd.

Shirley, D. (1997). *Community organizing for urban school reform*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Shirley, D., & Evans, M. (2007). Community organizing and No Child Left Behind. In M. Orr (Ed.), *Transforming the city: Community organizing and the challenge of political change* (pp. 109-133). Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.

Shirley, M. (1994). *From congregation town to industrial city: Culture and social change in a southern community*. New York: New York University Press.

Shor, I., & Freire, P. (1987). *A pedagogy for liberation: Dialogues on transforming education*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey.

Slessarev-Jamir, H. (2004, December). Exploring the attraction of local congregations to community organizing. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *33*(4), 585-605. doi: 10.1177/0899764004269147

Smock, K. (2004). *Democracy in action: Community organizing and urban change*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Sobel, A.D. (2004). *Political transformations: Hearing latina mothers' voices in the educational policymaking process* (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (AAT 3128867)

Sohng, S.S.L. (1995). *Participatory research and community organizing*. Retrieved from www.cdra.org.za.

Southeast IAF Region (2009). *How we organize*. Retrieved from http://www.iaf southeast. com/nciafnetwork.html

Staudt, K., & C.N. Stone. Division and Fragmentation: The El Paso Experience. In M. Orr (Ed.), *Transforming the city: Community organizing and the challenge of political change* (pp. 84-108). Lawrence: University of Kansas.

Steinberg, J. (1996, January 18). Parents' suit on classes is rebuffed. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1996/01/18/nyregion/parents-suit-on-classes-is-rebuffed.html?pagewanted=1

Swarts, H.J. (2008). *Organizing urban America: Secular and faith-based progressive movements*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Szakos, K.L., & Szakos, J. (2007). *We make change: Community organizers talk about what they do – and why*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Tackabery, J.A. (2007, July 9). System works [Letter to the editor]. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A6. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Tise, L.E. (1976). *The churches* (Vol. 10). Winston-Salem: Historic Winston.

Tursi, F.V. (1994). *Winston-Salem: A history*. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2006-2008). *American community survey*. Retrieved from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFFacts?_event=ChangeGeoContext&geo_id=05000US37067&_geoContext=&_street=&_county=Forsyth+County&_cityTown=&_state=&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&_useEV=&pct

xt=fph&pgsl=010&_submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=ACS_2008_3YR_SAFF
&_ci_nbr=null&qr_name=null&reg=null%3Anull&_keyword=&_industry=

United States Commission on Civil Rights. (1972, December). *Five communities: The search for equal education*. Retrieved from Education Resources Information Center.

Wake Education Partnership. *Making choices: Diversity, student assignment, and quality in Wake's public schools*. Retrieved from *www.wakeedpartnership.org/ publications/d/Making_Choices_report.pdf*

Warren, M.R. (2001). *Dry bones rattling: Community building to revitalize American democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Warren, M.R., & R.L. Wood. (2001, January). *Faith-based community organizing: The state of the field.* Jericho: Interfaith Funders. Retrieved from http://comm-org.wisc.edu/papers2001/faith/faith.htm

Walker, K. (2003a, June 5). CHANGE gets commitment from mayor to help fix eyesores around city. *The Chronicle*, p. A10.

Walker, K. (2003b, October 2). CHANGE is on its way to local schools. *The Chronicle*, p. A1, A5.

Walker, K. (2004, October 28). Change of direction: Organization announces plan to become self-sufficient and to continue advocacy. *The Chronicle*, p. A5.

Walker, K. (2005a, January 6). Group to fight for Dell jobs for locals. *The Chronicle*, p. A11.

Walker, K. (2005b, May 19). Support for bond lacking at public forum. *The Chronicle*, p. A1, A5.

Walker, K. (2005c, July 7). School bond may not be dead long. *The Chronicle*, p. A1, A4.

Walker, K. (2005d, July 21). Dell hires say they have found job security. *The Chronicle*, p. A9.

Whimster, S. (Ed.). (2004). *The essential Weber: A reader.* London: Routledge.

Wink, W. (1984). *Naming the powers: The language of power in the new testament* (Vol. 1). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Wink, W. (1986). *Unmasking the powers: The invisible forces that determine human existence.* (Vol. 2). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Wink, W. (1992). *Engaging the powers: Discernment and resistance in a world of domination.* (Vol. 30). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Wink, W. (1998). *The powers that be: Theology for a new millennium.* New York: Doubleday.

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. (1984). *Reorganization.* Forsyth County Public Library, North Carolina Room (Vertical Files, Winston-Salem Schools: Assignment Plans). Winston-Salem, NC.

Winston-Salem Journal. (2003, March 29). 100 canvassers to ask about city problems. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B2.

Winston-Salem Journal, (2010, January 31). Editorial page. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A28.

Wood, R.L. (2002). *Faith in action: Religion, race, and democratic organizing in America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Wood, R.L., & Flaherty, M.A. (2003). *Renewing congregations*. New York: Interfaith Funders and the Ford Foundation

Young, I.M. (1990). *Throwing like a girl and other essays in feminist philosophy and social theory*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Young, W. (2009, March 28). Commissioners lose health-board round. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Youngquist, S. (2007, July 1). Nonpartisan election urged; Petition relates to school board in Forsyth. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Zerwick, P. (2002, September 3). No fuss: Some folks carry trash to the curb. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Ziegenbalg, D. (2002a, March 7). Equity-plus schools still lagging behind others: Committee finds staffing, lack of resources are identified as problems. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. A1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Ziegenbalg, D. (2002b, May 7). Board may dismiss panel. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

Ziegenbalg, D. (2002c, March 8). Board revises the duty of panel: Equity committee loses its review role. *Winston-Salem Journal*, p. B1. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic Universe.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES AND SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Interview Schedule – Public Officials

1. How long have you been a public official? What is your position?

2. Why did you become involved in public life?

3. Describe how you have been involved with public life. For example, what leadership positions have you held?

4. What do you know about the organization, CHANGE?

5. How would you describe CHANGE's work?

6. What role does CHANGE play in the community?

7. Describe the relationship that CHANGE has with other institutions, such as local government, the school system, business sector, in the community.

8. What has been your experience with CHANGE?

9. Prior to CHANGE's involvement in the community, how do you think decisions about issues in Winston-Salem were made?

10. Has CHANGE affected the way that decisions are made? If so, how? If not, why?

11. How do you think the presence of CHANGE has affected public life in Winston-Salem?

12. What impact, if any, has CHANGE had on your view of the relationship between faith and politics?

13. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?

Demographic Information:

What is your age? ـــــــــــــــــ

What is your racial/ethnic background? ـــ

What is your religious affiliation, if any?ـــ

Where did you grow up? ـــ

How long have you lived in Winston-Salem? ـــــــــــــــــ

Interview Schedule – Business Leaders

1. How long have you been at your place of employment? What is your position?

2. Describe the overall relationship between your business and the larger community.

3. What kind of relationship do you have with local public officials?

4. What do you know about the organization, CHANGE?

5. How would you describe CHANGE's work?

6. What role does CHANGE play in the community?

7. Describe the relationship that CHANGE has with other institutions, such as local government, the school system, business sector, in the community.

8. What has been your experience with CHANGE?

9. Prior to CHANGE's involvement in the community, how do you think decisions about issues in Winston-Salem were made?

10. Has CHANGE affected the way that decisions in the community are made? If so, how? If not, why?

11. How do you think the presence of CHANGE has affected public life in Winston-Salem?

12. What impact, if any, has CHANGE had on your view of the relationship between faith and politics?

13. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?

Demographic Information:

What is your age? _____

What is your racial/ethnic background? _____

What is your religious affiliation, if any?_____

Where did you grow up? _____

How long have you lived in Winston-Salem? _____

CHANGE Focus Group Schedule

1. Describe CHANGE's mission.

2. How would you describe CHANGE's work?

3. What role does CHANGE play in the community?

4. How do you think others in the community view CHANGE's work?

5. Prior to CHANGE's involvement in the community, how do you think decisions about issues in Winston-Salem were made?

6. Has CHANGE affected the way that decisions are made? If so, how?

7. How do you think the presence of CHANGE has affected public life in Winston-Salem?

SURVEY

CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for your willingness to assist me in collecting data for my doctoral research study focusing on how local public officials and business leaders view the work and effectiveness of CHANGE.

This survey is voluntary and the responses are private and confidential.

<u>**Using the scales indicated, please circle the answer to the following questions:**</u>

1. How influential do you think CHANGE has been in terms of determining public policy in Winston-Salem?

| **Very Influential** | **Somewhat Influential** | **Not Very Influential** | **Not Influential At All** |

In what areas has CHANGE been influential? _____
_____

2. How much influence do you think CHANGE has on decisions made by the City Council?

| **A Great Deal of Influence** | **Some Influence** | **Little Influence** | **No Influence At All** |

3. How would you describe your relationship with CHANGE? _____
_____

What is your age? _____
What is your racial/ethnic background? _____
How long have you lived in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County? _____
Do you have any additional positive or negative comments about CHANGE?
_____

Once you have completed the survey, please mail it back to me using the envelope provided. THANK YOU!

<div align="center">

SURVEY

</div>

COUNTY COMMISSION

Thank you for your willingness to assist me in collecting data for my doctoral research study focusing on how local public officials and business leaders view the work and effectiveness of CHANGE.

This survey is voluntary and the responses are private and confidential.

<u>**Using the scales indicated, please circle the answer to the following questions:**</u>

2. How influential do you think CHANGE has been in terms of determining public policy in Winston-Salem?

Very Influential	**Somewhat Influential**	**Not Very Influential**	**Not Influential At All**

In what areas has CHANGE been influential? _____
_____

2. How much influence do you think CHANGE has on decisions made by the County Commission?
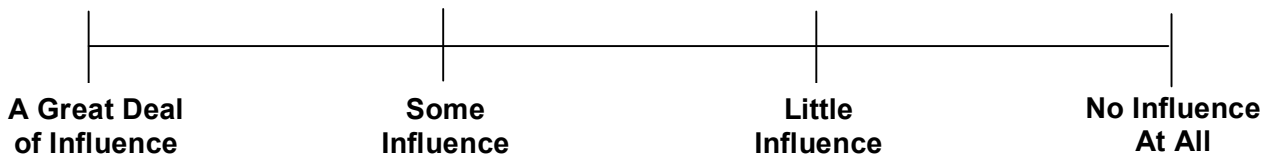
A Great Deal of Influence	**Some Influence**	**Little Influence**	**No Influence At All**

3. How would you describe your relationship with CHANGE? _____
_____

What is your age? _____
What is your racial/ethnic background? _____
How long have you lived in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County? _____
Do you have any additional positive or negative comments about CHANGE?
_____

<div align="center">

Once you have completed the survey, please mail it back to me using the envelope provided. THANK YOU!

</div>

SURVEY
SCHOOL BOARD

Thank you for your willingness to assist me in collecting data for my doctoral research study focusing on how local public officials and business leaders view the work and effectiveness of CHANGE.

This survey is voluntary and the responses are private and confidential.

<u>**Using the scales indicated, please circle the answer to the following questions:**</u>

3. How influential do you think CHANGE has been in terms of determining public policy in Winston-Salem?

Very Influential	**Somewhat Influential**	**Not Very Influential**	**Not Influential At All**

In what areas has CHANGE been influential? _____
_____

2. How much influence do you think CHANGE has on decisions made by the School Board?

A Great Deal of Influence	**Some Influence**	**Little Influence**	**No Influence At All**
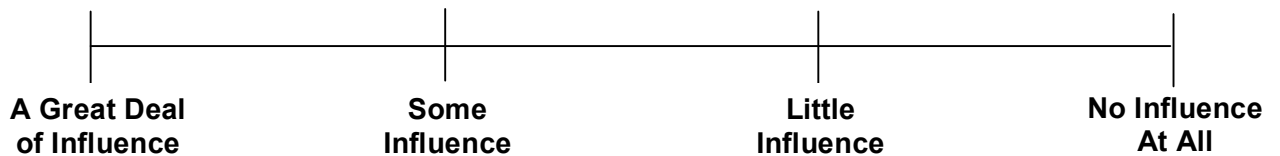
3. How would you describe your relationship with CHANGE? _____
_____

What is your age? _____
What is your racial/ethnic background? _____
How long have you lived in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County? _____
Do you have any additional positive or negative comments about CHANGE?
_____

Once you have completed the survey, please mail it back to me using the envelope provided. THANK YOU!

SURVEY
STATE LEGISLATURE

Thank you for your willingness to assist me in collecting data for my doctoral research study focusing on how local public officials and business leaders view the work and effectiveness of CHANGE.

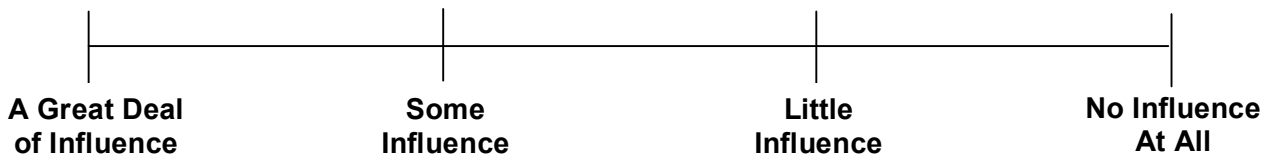*This survey is voluntary and the responses are private and confidential.*

Using the scales indicated, please circle the answer to the following questions:

4. How influential do you think CHANGE has been in terms of determining public policy in Winston-Salem?

Very Influential	**Somewhat Influential**	**Not Very Influential**	**Not Influential At All**
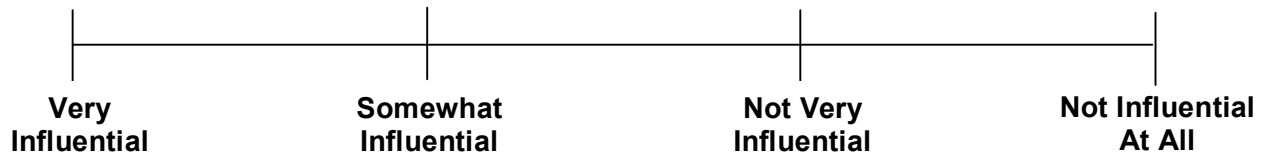
In what areas has CHANGE been influential? _____
_____

2. How much influence do you think CHANGE has on decisions made by local governing bodies?
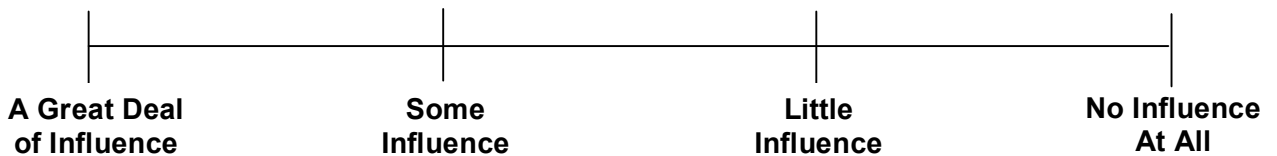
A Great Deal of Influence	**Some Influence**	**Little Influence**	**No Influence At All**

3. How would you describe your relationship with CHANGE? _____
_____

What is your age? _____
What is your racial/ethnic background? _____
How long have you lived in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County? _____
Do you have any additional positive or negative comments about CHANGE?
_____

Once you have completed the survey, please mail it back to me using the envelope provided. THANK YOU!

SURVEY
CHANGE Leaders

1. How long have you been involved with CHANGE?_____

2. Why did you get involved with CHANGE? _____

3. What, if any, leadership roles have you had in CHANGE? _____

4. What has been CHANGE's biggest contribution to Winston-Salem? _____
_____

5. How do you think public officials and business leaders view the work of CHANGE?
_____

6. Describe the mission of CHANGE. _____
_____

7. How has working with CHANGE affected your view of the relationship between faith and politics? _____

8. Please read the following questions and check the appropriate box:

How has CHANGE affected . . .	Positive Impact	Somewhat Positive Impact	Neither Positive or Negative Impact	Somewhat Negative Impact	Negative Impact
the ways in which residents and public officials interact?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
residents' ability to impact local *government*?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
residents' ability to impact the decisions of local *business leaders*?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
relationships between diverse groups in the community?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
your participation in public life (i.e. politics, civic groups)?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
the way you feel about your ability to make positive changes in your community?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

What is your age? _____

What is your racial/ethnic background? _____

What is your religious affiliation, if any?_____

Where did you grow up? _____

How long have you lived in Winston-Salem? _____

Additional Comments _____

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP BODIES

Role, Work, and Purpose of the Strategy Team

1. Criteria for Membership
   - Elected from the membership base of CHANGE
   - Be seen as a leader in good standing (provides a network of active followers, provides financial support, and active involvement by their member organization)
   - Must participate in local and regional and/or national training
   - Demonstrated leadership within CHANGE by serving as chair or other leadership role
   - Commitment to self-development

2. Responsibilities
   - Serves three year term
   - Strategic planning to develop and communicate the mission of CHANGE
   - Guides staff in decisions and actions
   - Holds staff accountable
   - Decides who speaks for the organization
   - Planning and carrying out training
   - Financial management
   - Develops, manages, and monitors calendar for CHANGE
   - Commits to conduct Individual Meetings with key leaders in the organization

3. Meets once a month

Role, Work, and Purpose of the Metro Council

1. Criteria for Membership
    - At least two representatives from each member institution
        - An active leader or developing leader
        - Participates and completes local training; works to attend regional or national training
        - Works with internal organizing team in congregation or organization
        - Attends Metro Council meetings on a regular basis

2. Responsibilities
    - Ratifies and implements work and action of CHANGE
    - Responsible for the internal work and strength of the organization
        - Communication to congregations/organizations and other groups
        - Works to fulfill and meet turnout quotas
        - Recruits people for Action Teams and other actions
    - Develops Action Teams and plans actions and major events for the organization
    - Manages the work and direction of Action Teams and other committees
    - Develops, directs, participates, and leads training for CHANGE
    - Coordinates the calendar and communicates dates and events to member congregations/organizations

3. Meets once a month and attends special trainings and retreats

Role, Work, and Purpose of the Clergy Caucus

1. Criteria for Membership
   - Clergy from member congregation

2. Responsibilities
   - Provide spiritual direction and reflection; provide the foundation for action
   - Clergy make commitment to:
     - provide vision
     - strengthen internal organizing team in their congregations
     - meet quotas for action
     - financial support
     - develop and communicate with their congregations
   - Clergy Caucus implements and ratifies actions of Action Teams and Metro Council
   - Recommends and recruits new congregations and clergy
   - Has representation on the Strategy Team
   - Commits to conducting individual meetings

3. Meets once a month

Role, Work, and Purpose of Action Teams

Action Teams are open to all members of the CHANGE member institutions, organizations and congregations. Action Teams are Fluid, Flexible and Ad-hoc.

1. Focus and Responsibilities
   - Turns problems into issues for actions and change; makes sure that issues are of immediate importance, specific, and winnable
   - Undertakes and carries out power analysis and research
   - Reports to Strategy Team, Clergy Caucus, and Metro Council
   - Composed of at least 15 active members (goal is to have at least 50% of member congregations/organizations on team)

2. Qualifications
   - Congregation, Association, Organization is a member in good standing
   - Participate in orientation training
   - Commit to developing a collective leadership, and expanding the participation and ownership of the action team by as many organizations and members as possible
   - Co-Chairs are selected in consultation with Staff

3. Working Meeting
   - Meets at least once a month plus research and action work

Role, Work, and Purpose of Internal Organizing Teams

Also known as *Core Teams* - Located within Member Congregations and Organizations

1. Criteria for Membership
    - 5 to 25 persons at the local level
    - Committed to the mission and work of CHANGE
    - Composed of leaders within member congregations and organizations

2. Responsibilities
    - Communicate CHANGE information within member congregation/organization
    - Periodic meetings to review work of CHANGE and local participation and support
    - Provide orientation to congregation or group
    - Work to fulfill quotas and assignments
    - Support and seek financial commitment
    - Implement CHANGE programs and recruit persons for Action Teams and action campaigns

3. Meets at least quarterly, preferably every 4-8 weeks

Snapshot of CHANGE Work Cycle & Decision-Making Process

STEPS 1 & 2

Leaders from member institutions lead **House Meetings** within their congregations or organizations to identify problems of importance to them. Once submitted to the Strategy Team, Metro Council and Clergy Caucus, these problems are further discussed, prioritized and voted on to determine future CHANGE campaigns. House meetings occur every few years and serve as the beginning point of CHANGE's work cycle.*

STEP 3

Delegates Assemblies are large public meetings held at least twice a year. At these meetings CHANGE leaders provide updates and address issues or propose actions that need to be ratified by a larger representation of the membership. Results of House Meetings are announced and new Action Teams are approved. Public officials may be invited to pledge their commitments to work on issues identified by CHANGE.

STEP 4

Once created **Action Teams** study problems, identify issues, conduct research and propose action plans. After adoption of the plans by the Leadership Bodies, the teams lead the actions and conduct an evaluation of the process and outcomes. The Action Teams and the Leadership Bodies feed information back and forth, deliberating and planning next steps. Results of the Action Teams' work are reported at Delegates Assemblies. Action Teams are shut down or reconstituted at the conclusion of a campaign.

STEP 3

Delegates Assembly

Action Teams

STEP 4

STEP 2

Metro Council

Clergy Caucus

Strategy Team

Leadership Bodies

House Meetings in Member Institutions

STEP 1

*Potential issues also can be acted upon through a democratic process similar to the house meetings. This process may be triggered by a community crisis, unexpected political opportunity or by a significant majority of institutions and leaders who identify a particular concern. The process can be initiated by any part of the organization.

311

APPENDIX C

CHANGE SCHOOL AUDIT MATERIALS

CHANGE SAMPLE FORM

Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment
814 McCreary Street Winston-Salem, NC 27105
336-661-6353/336-776-1979 (fax)

SCHOOL AUDIT (Physical Audit Form)

The purpose of these audits is to physically inspect the facilities and talk with as many people as possible and to document problems/concerns that need to be addressed. It is important to be as specific as possible. Please use the ratings and codes shown to assure consistent reporting.

SCHOOL: _Ibrahum_ CONTACT: _Helen Mack_
AUDITOR & AFFILIATION & PHONE: _Miller, Alice Allen, Mattie Bailey, Vermel Leak, Pam Kregg_
_767-2230_ _692-8115_

I. BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

Codes: Admin. Offices = 1 Cafeteria = 2 Classroom = 3 Computer Facility = 4 Gym = 5
Hallways = 6 Kitchen = 7 Library = 8 Multipurpose Room = 9 Restrooms = 10 Science Lab = 11
Teacher Lounge/Restroom = 12 Teacher Workroom = 13

Ratings: Excellent/New = E Good Condition = G Needs Repair = NR
Poor/Needs Replacing = P Doesn't Exist = DE

CODE	LOCATION	COMMENTS	RATING
1	Admin Offices		G
2	Cafeteria	good except for peeling wallpaper on one wall	G
3	Room 1 Old bldg	no exhaust fan in bathroom, has an odor-musty, dim lights	NR
3	2 Old bldg	no exhaust fan in BR, tile is bad on floor, dim lights	NR
3	3 Old bldg	dim lights, odor	NR
3	4 Old bldg	tile on floor is cracking, odor	NR
3	5 Old bldg	lights are too dim, odor	NR
3	6 Old bldg	lights are too dim, odor	NR
3	7 Old bldg	dim lights, torn area rug, odor	NR
3	8 Old bldg	dim lights, odor	NR
3	9 Old bldg	dim lights, worst smelling room	NR
3	10 Old bldg	carpet stained, dim lights, odor	NR
3	11 2nd floor	dim, odor, not handicapped accessible	NR
3	12 2nd floor	dim, odor, not handicapped access	NR
3	13 2nd floor	dim, odor, not handicapped access	NR

see back page to continue →

312

C.H.A.N.G.E. SCHOOL AUDIT SURVEY

School's Name_____

Names of person completing the survey/phone # _____

_____

Date of Audit _____

Please fill out this survey and return it to member of audit team or mail to office at 814 McCreary Street, WS, NC 27105. For questions, call 661-6353

STAFFING
Administrative:
    A. Principal
        1. Years of Administrative Experience____
        2. Years serving at this school___
        3. Master's Degree ____ Doctoral Degree ____
        4. Number of hours worked during avg. week ____
    B. Assistant Principals
        1. Number on Staff ____
        2. Years of Administrative Experience_____
        3. Years serving at this school_____

Instructional Personnel:
    A. Classroom
        1. Number of Teachers ___
        2. Number of Classroom Aides ___
        3. Number of Teachers/Aides per classroom ___
        4. Student/Teacher Ratio ___
        5. Number of Student Teachers___
    B. Academic Support
        1. # of Social Workers ____   # of hours per week _____
        2. # of Guidance Staff _____   # of hours per week _____
        3. # of Media Specialists____   # of hours per week _____
        4. # of Computer Staff ____   # of hours per week _____
        5. # of Secretarial Staff____   # of hours per week _____
        6. # of Custodians _____   # of hours per week _____
        7. # of Nurses _____   # of hours per week _____
        8. # of Cafeteria Staff_____   # of hours per week _____
        9. Other Support Staff: (Position/# of hours per week)

        _____
        _____
        _____

C. Enrichment teachers
    1. # of Music _____   # of hours per week _____
       Frequency of music class (daily, weekly, etc.)_____
    2. # of Computer _____   # of hours per week _____
       Frequency of computer class _____
    3. # of Art _____   # of hours per week _____
       Frequency of art class _____
    4. # of Dance _____   # of hours per week _____
       Frequency of dance class _____
    5. # of Band _____   # of hours per week _____
       # of Instruments _____
       Frequency of band class _____
    6. # of Drama _____   # of hours per week _____
       Frequency of drama class _____
    7. Other enrichment Instructors: (Position/hours/frequency)
       _____
       _____

D. Demographics of Staff/Faculty
    1. Racial profile _____
    2. Gender: _____% Female   _____% Male
    3. Number fluent in other languages_____
    Languages represented _____
    _____

Teacher Qualifications
A. Classroom
    1. Education (highest level achieved)
       a. # without Bachelor's Degree _____
       b. # of Bachelor Degrees _____
       c. # of Master's Degrees _____
       d. # of Doctoral Degrees _____
       e. % National Board Certified in their teaching area(s) _____
       f. % College Major in subject(s) they teach in _____
    2. Experience
       a. # with 10+ years _____ # 10+ yrs at this school_____
       b. # with 5-10 years _____ # 5-10 yrs at this school_____
       c. # with 2-4 years _____ # 2- 4 yrs at this school_____
       d. # new teachers _____
       e. # lateral entry _____
       f. Average years experience at this school _____

Resources
1. PTA/PTSA
    a. # of members _____   # of meetings per year _____
    b. Avg. Attendance at Meetings _____
    c. Annual Funding Amount _____
       Sources of Funding:
           % from fundraisers _____
           % from membership dues _____
           % from community donations _____
           % from parental/family donations _____
    d. # of parent volunteer hours weekly _____
    e. Activities/Programs administrated by PTA _____
       _____
       _____
       _____

2. School partnerships
    a. List and describe activities/donations/# of volunteer hours of business partners:
       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____
    b. List and describe activities/donations/# of volunteer hours of church/community organization partners:
       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____

3. After-school programs
    a. List programs offered _____
       _____
    b. % of students attending _____
    c. Funding sources _____
    d. Staffing:
        1. # of volunteers_____
        2. # of teachers _____
        3. # of staff (YMCA, etc). _____

4. Enrichment Activities
   a. Field Trips
      1. List of Annual trips by grade:

       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____

      2. Funding Sources _____
      3. Staffing: % school employees ___ % parents/volunteers ___
   b. On-campus enrichment
      1. List any special programs/speakers/additional enrichment activities that have taken place on school grounds in the past calendar year

       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____

      2. Funding Sources _____
5. Media Center Resources
   a. # of books per students _____
   b. Annual Budget for new materials _____
6. Special Programs
   a. ESL # of classes ____ # of students ____
   # of teachers ____
   b. Exceptional Students # of classes ____ # of students _____
   # of teachers ____
   c. Academically Gifted # of classes ____ # of students ____
   # of teachers ____
   d. International Baccalaureate # of classes ____
   # of students ____ # of teachers ____
   e. Other:
   Name of program:
   # of classes ____ # of students ____ # of teachers ____
   Name of program:
   # of classes ____ # of students ____ # of teachers ____
   Name of program:
   # of classes ____ # of students ____ # of teachers ____

Student Population
     1. Size of total student body _____
     2. Capacity of School _____
     3. Number of transfer students _____
     4. Annual attrition rate _____
     5. Racial profile of student body _____
                    _____
     6. % of students receiving free or reduced lunch _____
     7. EOG results:
        % percent passing all exams _____
        % percent passing some exams _____
        % percent **not** passing any exams _____
     8. % of Non-native speakers of English _____
     9. # of ESL students _____

School Discipline
1. % of student body who were suspended or expelled last year _____
2. % of student body who had in school suspension last year_____

Other:
A. Number of trailers used for classroom space _____
B. Other programs offered on-site (Head Start, etc.) _____
_____
C. Athletic Teams (List)_____
_____
_____
D. Extra- curricular Activities _____
_____
_____
_____

High school only:
     1. Tracking:
         a. % of students in college-prep track _____
         b. % of students in technology school track ____
         c. % of students in   track _____
         d. % of students in   track _____
     2. Advanced Placement courses
        a. # of AP courses taught _____
        b. # of students taking 1 or more AP exams _____
        c. # of students receiving 3 or higher score on AP exam _____
     3. SAT
        a. % of students taking SAT _____b. Average SAT score _____
     4. % of Students taking Algebra 1 before or during 9th grade
        _____

CHANGE Education Survey

General Information
 1. Name of Congregation/Institution you attend:_____

 2. Please check all of the following items that apply to yourself:
   ___ Parent of child in WSFC schools   ___ Parent of former WSFC student*

   ___ Student   ___ Teacher   ___ School Staff   ___ School Administration

   ___ Grandparent of child in WSFC schools ___ Guardian of child in WSFC schools

   ___ Business Partner of WSFC school   ___ Volunteer in School ___ Former Teacher

   ___ Concerned Citizen   ___ Graduate of WSFC Schools (Year of Graduation ____)

 3.   Name(s) of school(s) your child/children attend_____

 4. What type of school does your child attend?
   ___ public   ___ private ____ parochial ___ charter

 5. If you work for a school, what type of school is it?
   ___ public ___ private ___ parochial ___ charter

* Note: If you are a parent of a former WSFC student, please answer the questions based on your experiences when your child(ren) attended school. What year did your child(ren) graduate from WSFC schools?_____

General Experience
 1) On a scale of 1 to 5 (with five being most satisfied), how satisfied have you been with your experiences with the Forsyth County Schools

      Highly Dissatisfied   1   2   3   4   5   Highly Satisfied

 2) Please prioritize the following areas on a scale of 1 to 10. Put 1 for the area you think CHANGE should give the highest priority and 10 for the area CHANGE should give the least priority.

   ___ Multicultural Education vs. neighborhood schools
   ___ Quality of Teaching
   ___ Equity
   ___ Curriculum
   ___ Parent Involvement
   ___ Tracking
   ___ Pre K Education
   ___ Post High School Opportunities (college or job)
   ___ Drop-out Prevention
   ___ Quality After-School/Summer Youth Programs
   ___ Other_____

Multicultural education and neighborhood schools

3) How important is it to you that your child attends a neighborhood school?

   Not Important   1   2   3   4   5   Extremely Important

4) How important is it to you that your child receives a socio-economically diverse, multicultural education?

   Not Important   1   2   3   4   5   Extremely Important

5) How important is it to you to have a student assignment plan that would blend both neighborhood schools and socio-economically diverse, multicultural education?

   Not Important   1   2   3   4   5   Extremely Important

6) How much does the importance of educational excellence override your support for either neighborhood or multicultural schools?

   Not At All   1   2   3   4   5   Completely

7) How much support would you give to a system of economic integration such as that of Wake County? This school assignment plan integrates schools based on income rather than race by limiting the percentage of students on Free and Reduced Lunch to no more than 40% of the student body at any school in Wake County.

   No Support   1   2   3   4   5   Complete Support

Quality of Teaching:

8) How would you rank you or your child's experience, on the whole, with her or his teachers?

   Highly Dissatisfied   1   2   3   4   5   Highly Satisfied

9) On a scale of 1 to 5, how much importance do you place on teachers being specially trained to work with students from diverse racial, cultural and economic backgrounds?

   No Importance   1   2   3   4   5   Great Importance

10) How important do you feel it is that CHANGE place a priority on creating and implementing strategies for correcting the teacher imbalance shown in the audit survey?

- Audit found experienced teachers do not appear to be distributed equitably among the schools. The whiter and more affluent the school; the more likely students will have teachers with more work experience. (Most pronounced in the elementary schools).

   Not Important   1   2   3   4   5   Very Important

Equity:

11) To what degree do you feel that it is the responsibility of the school system to compensate for differences in economic background and resources?

   Not Important   1   2   3   4   5   Very Important

12) Do you agree with the following CHANGE statement on equity:

Yes   No

All children in the Forsyth county school system should have access to the same high level of education including equity regarding:
   a. Facilities and equipment
   b. Staff and teachers
   c. Enrichment programs
   d. Technology
   e. Curriculum (including opportunities like field trips)
   f. Extracurricular Activities (After-school program, athletics, etc.)
   g. Access to a home computer

If not, what changes would you make? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Curriculum (Testing and skill emphasis):
   13) Please place where on the following spectrum (of testable basics to creative skills), you feel the Forsyth County Schools are *currently* teaching

Basic Skills   1   2   3   4   5   Creative Skills

   14) Please place where on the following spectrum, you feel the Forsyth County Schools *should be* teaching

Basic Skills   1   2   3   4   5   Creative Skills

Parent Involvement:
   15) On a scale of 1 to 5, how effective do you think the PTA is?

Not Effective   1   2   3   4   5   Very Effective

   16) On a scale of 1 to 5 (five being completely welcome) how welcome do you feel in your child's school?

Not Welcome   1   2   3   4   5   Very Welcome

   17) On the following spectrum circle how you would rank your involvement in your child's school?

(Very involved / Somewhat involved / A little involved / Not involved at all)

18) On the following spectrum circle what level of involvement you would prefer to have in your child's school?

     (Very involved / Somewhat involved / A little involved / Not involved at all)

19) What would need to change to make you more likely to be involved in your child's school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tracking (College Prep. and Vocational Tracks)

20) On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being most strongly), how strongly do feel tracking has affected your child's experience in school?

              No Impact   1   2   3   4   5   High Impact

21) On a scale of 1 to 5, how high of a priority do you believe tracking should be for CHANGE to address?

              Low Priority   1   2   3   4   5   High Priority

ESL: for parents of children in ESL programs:

22) On a scale from 1 to 5, how well do you feel that ESL programs are meeting the needs of your child?

              Least Satisfied   1   2   3   4   5   Most Satisfied

Feedback: please let us know how effective or productive you found these meetings, including parts that worked well or poorly, or areas that you would have liked to have seen covered, or that you would have liked to be addressed differently. Thank you for your help with these surveys/meetings.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment
814 McCreary Street Winston-Salem NC 27105 ph. 336-661-6353

Questions for CHANGE Education House Meetings

Instructions: Use this outline as a guide for questions to ask during your house meeting. It will be impossible for you to cover each question. Start with the first section on General Experience and listen for topics that are most important to the people you are meeting with. We included questions for a wide range of topics to act as a guide. Make sure everyone fills out a survey so they can give input on all the issues.

General Experience
- What have your experiences with the school system been? Good and bad
- What would they like to see done differently?
- What are your hopes and aspirations for what your child will gain from their education? What is your vision for you child when they graduate high school?

Note: Take note of what issues or categories appear to evoke strong interest. Address these issues first if time is limited. Please try to address the question of Multicultural Ed. vs. Neighborhood schools in all meetings.

Multicultural education and neighborhood schools
   A socioeconomically diverse/multicultural education: One where people from diverse backgrounds that are representative of the entire community interact in ways where they can understand, cross and break down socio-economic racial divides
   Neighborhood schools: schools where children attend the school that is closest to where they live.

- How much value do you place in neighborhood schools?
- How much value do you place in a socio-economically diverse/multicultural education?
- If you had to make a choice, where would you place the higher priority?
- Would you support a student assignment plan that would blend these priorities?
- Brief discussion of Wake County's economic integration system. This school assignment plan integrates schools based on income rather than race by limiting the percentage of students on Free and Reduced Lunch to no more than 40% of the student body at any school in Wake County. Would you support this type of plan for Forsyth County?

Teachers:
- What have the positive and negative aspects of your and your child's experience with their teacher(s) been?
- What would you like to be different in this relationship?
- What importance do you place on teachers being specially trained to work with students from diverse racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds?

Teacher disparities: Review of the disparities found in the survey
- Do you feel that CHANGE should place a priority on correcting this imbalance and identifying strategies to help solve this problem?

Equity:
- What is the responsibility of the school system to compensate for differences in background and resources?
  - Poverty
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Initial abilities (already reading)

- o Preschool
- o Academic resources (books, calculators)
- o Language Barriers
- CHANGE has proposed the following statement on equity: That all children in the Forsyth county school system should have access to the same high level of education including equity regarding:
  - o Facilities
  - o Staff and teachers
  - o Enrichment programs
  - o Technology
  - o Curriculum
  - o Cultural Competence Training
  - o Access to a home computer

Do you agree with and support this statement? If not, what changes would you make?

Educational Philosophy:
- How do you perceive that our current curriculum and teaching methods are preparing our children for the future?
  - o Are they creating skillful test takers?
  - o Creative knowledge workers for a knowledge based economy?
  - o Both?
- What relative priority do you place on the assurance that basic skills are being taught, such as EOGs measure, versus teaching of more creative and flexible ways of thinking.

Parents and Schools:
- What are the pressures on parents?
- Which of these pressures is the PTA helping you to address?
- What role do you think the PTA should take to help parents with these pressures?
- Do you feel welcome at your child's school? Please explain.
- For non English speaking parents:
  - o Does the school provide adequate information to you in Spanish (both written and verbal)?
  - o Is bilingual staff available for parent-teacher interactions?

Tracking (Elementary school tracking would be placing kids in AG or HAG/High School would be placing kids on college track versus vocation track):
- What factors do you feel influence tracking/expectations in the schools?
- What positive or negative experiences have your or your child's had concerning tracking or expectations
- Can there be a beneficial tracking system? What would such a system entail?

Discrimination:
- Do you have any examples or stories where you felt either yourself or your child was discriminated against?
- Has your child experienced bullying or harassment? If so, please explain.

ESL: for parents of children in ESL programs:
- Do you feel that ESL programs are effectively meeting the needs of your child?
- If not, in what ways are they ineffective or insufficient?

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION REFORM DOCUMENTS

North Carolina School Board Elections

● – Non-Partisan
● – Partisan

Forsyth County

4-28-09

PETITION CARD (FRONT)

Support NON-PARTISAN School Board Elections!

WHY?

- **Education issues are by nature non-partisan.**
- *Candidates* **who care about education as their top priority, including those unaffiliated with a political party, are more likely to run.**
- **Candidates are more likely to inform** *voters* **about their position**

PETITION CARD (BACK)

As a registered voter in Forsyth County, I support non-partisan school board elections. I petition the local delegation of the North Carolina General Assembly to work with the Forsyth County Board of Education to introduce and support a local bill to establish non-partisan school board elections in Forsyth County.

Printed Name _____ Zip code _____

Signature _____

Return this petition to the volunteer at the polls, or sign online at:
http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/CHANGEnonpartisanschoolboard/

Kids not Politics is a project of CHANGE, a broad-based, non-partisan, multi-racial, multi-faith organization that helps Forsyth County residents participate in public life. Our membership is comprised of 48 dues-paying congregations, neighborhood associations, and other groups; giving the organization an estimated network of 20,000 people. To learn more about CHANGE, call (336) 721-1660 or visit www.changeiaf.org.

CHANGE

Communities **H**elping **A**ll **N**eighbors **G**ain **E**mpowerment

639 S. Green St.   Winston-Salem, NC 27101   336-721-1660
changeiaf@changeiaf.org
www.changeiaf.org

http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/CHANGEnonpartisanschoolboard/

*CHANGE is a **non-partisan, multi-racial, multi-faith, and multi-institutional** organization in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. We come from all economic backgrounds and a diversity of locations within Forsyth County. Our membership is comprised of **53 dues-paying congregations, neighborhood associations, and other interested groups**; giving our organization **an estimated network of 25,000 members.***

Our kids' education is too important for partisan politics!

100 of 115 school districts in NC follow the state statute calling for non-partisan elections. 90% of school boards nationwide are elected on a non-partisan basis. **Forsyth County is the *only* metropolitan county and one of only 15 school districts statewide that passed a local law that allows partisan school board elections.**

We believe non-partisan elections will serve the best interests of *children*, attract better *candidates* and create more informed *voters*.

WHY? Because:

- Education issues are about what is best for our children and are by nature *non-partisan.*

- Non-partisan elections are more likely to attract candidates who care about *education* as their top priority and will not require them to reconcile their positions to a party platform.

- Voters are more likely to be better informed about *education issues*, rather than relying on party labels to guide their votes.

Answers to common questions about non-partisan school board elections:

1. *Will non-partisan elections really change anything?*

   - Most education issues are, by nature, non-partisan – e.g. student performance, family involvement, professional development for teachers. The biggest change with non-partisan elections will be the candidates a non-partisan race will attract (especially well-informed education advocates who are not motivated by partisan politics).

   - Non-partisan elections would require candidates to campaign actively and be clear about their positions on education issues. Voters will be informed on issues, rather than relying on party labels to guide their voting.

   - **Passage of H-833 will allow staggered electoral terms** for the Forsyth County Board of Education. Staggering terms will prevent a complete overhaul of the School Board mid-way through a public school year. This will create more stability for our kids while still allowing citizens to maximize their voice at the ballot box.

2. *How many counties in North Carolina have non-partisan elections?*

   - 100 of 115 school districts in NC follow the state statute calling for non-partisan elections.

   - Forsyth County is the *only* metropolitan county and one of only 10 school districts statewide that passed a local law that allows partisan school board elections.

   - 90% of school boards in NC and nationally are non-partisan, as advocated by National and NC School Boards Associations.

3. *How can the law be changed to allow non-partisan elections in Forsyth County?*

   - A member of the Forsyth County delegation to the NC General Assembly must introduce a local bill to lift our current exemption and allow non-partisan elections.

     (H-833 has been introduced by Rep. Parmon and Rep. Womble)

   - The local delegation is most likely to introduce and support a local bill if the Forsyth County Board of Education supports the change.

     (More than 10,000 petitions were signed by Forsyth County residents)

4. *Will a local bill to create non-partisan elections affect the voting districts for the Board of Education?*

   - No. Under this local bill (**H-833**), the two districts will remain the same, but candidates will no longer be listed by party affiliation.

APPENDIX E

The Tale of the Legislator and his Yoda

Of the many experiences that occurred during my fieldwork, perhaps the tale of the Legislator and his Yoda is most expressive of the complexities of being an action researcher and an engaged citizen committed to political transformation. As I have explained previously, when I began this study of CHANGE I had been thoughtful about how to balance my various roles as researcher, participant, observer, political actor, and so forth. I was diligent about not taking on leadership positions in the organization or publicly representing the group. I intended on engaging in the organization's life by attending meetings and actions and monitoring the activities. Prior to beginning the research study I had only been present at a few organizational meetings on behalf of my congregation since I left as a staff member six months before. I had also attended a couple of North Carolina United Power staff meetings in order to keep my finger on the pulse of what was happening in the North Carolina IAF network, especially as I was in the process of discerning the direction of my research.

During data collection, which entailed primarily distributing surveys and scheduling interviews, I was attending CHANGE related meetings and periodically contributing to discussions but I was not acting on behalf of the organization publicly. However, this changed when a two-year campaign that CHANGE had been working on to reform local School Board elections culminated. As a CHANGE leader and staff member, I had been involved with this campaign from its inception. As a citizen I

327

believed strongly that modifying the school board election process was the right decision for our community. In fact, one of the reasons I had been committed to CHANGE over the years was because of the organization's stated commitment to bring together diverse people across all sectors to build relationships and act on common issues.

The School Board Election Reform Campaign was provocative because it was the first act of CHANGE directly challenging the foundation of the political system in Forsyth County. Shifting the election procedures required the North Carolina General Assembly to pass a bill; thus it moved the organization's work from the local to the state level. Throughout this phase of the campaign, I was on an email list in which strategy was discussed although I mostly followed the discussions. I did email and call state legislators in support of the bill. At one point I was asked for assistance in creating a map representing the counties which had partisan and non-partisan elections, which I did. This map would end up being distributed to the legislators by one of our local representatives who was a co-sponsor of the bill.

When it came time to travel to the State Capitol to lobby legislators for the bill I had decided to participate and observe, but mostly stand in the background. However, when we broke into small groups to visit the legislators, one of the assigned team leaders was not there and I was asked to step in. Internally, I quickly tried to think about the implications of my more active involvement. Ultimately, I followed my political self's voice and consented. As the leader of one of the teams, I spoke directly to legislators on behalf of the bill.

A visit with one of the legislators particularly was endearing, because it revealed how humor can help forge relationships. As I was walking out of the legislator's office, I noticed he had Star Wars figures on his bookshelf. I asked him if he was a fan of Darth Vader and he said no, but that he did like Yoda. He took the Yoda doll down and said that when he couldn't make a decision about a vote, he would consult Yoda. We laughed and I said that I understood; I had a Magic 8 ball that had helped me make more than one decision. I saw the legislator a bit later and he asked about community organizing and if I would be willing to talk with him in more detail about it. I happily agreed.

The next day when the bill went in front of the first committee, I saw the legislator again and told him that I had consulted Yoda and that Yoda said for him to vote for our bill. He said, "Is that right? I didn't have a chance to talk with him this morning". I told him that I was afraid that might happen, so I did talk to Yoda and he told me to inform the legislator of his wishes. We laughed together and then went to our respective seats. He ended up voting affirmatively for CHANGE's bill that day, although his support would be short-lived because of pressure from the Republican Caucus.

I shared the Yoda story with the other CHANGE leaders that day (as well as family and friends), because I thought it was charming and humorous. Although I clearly did not share some of the legislator's views (he had a picture of himself and Dick Cheney on his wall), I had appreciated his warm reception. He had listened to our appeal and had even given us some advice about next steps. In meeting face to face, he had become human to me. Our interaction served as a reminder to me about how easy it is to dismiss or even demonize others just because we may have disagreements about ideologies or

329

political issues. This lesson seemed to be constantly arising during the research process, and it was not lost on me. It became central to my larger analysis of strategies that can be used to work for meaningful cultural transformation that humanizes all of us.

I decided to travel to Raleigh again when the bill was up for vote on the House Floor. Small teams went to shore up support amongst targeted legislators, and I reached out to this same representative again. He was not in his office so I left him a note requesting his support once more for the bill. I smiled as I wrote the note, wondering what else he may have consulted Yoda about and trying to remember where my Magic 8 Ball was. Regrettably, that visit to the House of Representatives would prove to be more contentious. The bill did pass, but on partisan lines pitting Democrats and Republicans against each other. Even more disheartening was a litigious encounter I had with one of our local representatives who was adamantly opposed to the bill. At one point, the representative became agitated, shook his finger in my face and growled, "I am damn passionate about children, and I won't let you or your organization or anybody else get in my way." Needless to say, I was taken aback and immediately became concerned about the potential ramifications of this interaction.

Throughout my fieldwork I diligently labored to ensure that I was as transparent as possible when talking with people. I tried to take care that individuals whom I interviewed knew my relationship with the organization and that I would be providing feedback to CHANGE, as well as anyone else who had participated in the study. Unfortunately, my anxiety level increased after my experience with our local representative. This legislator's behavior was disturbing, and I found myself vacillating

330

between shock, anger, and sadness. Quite honestly, I also lost a fair amount of sleep

concerned about how this interaction may adversely affect my research. It struck me that

if he was one who liked to exact retribution, he could make hay about my study. While I

had not interviewed him, I had attempted to contact him by phone and email. What might

happen if he made the connection between my roles as participant and researcher? Given

that I had not had a chance to speak to him directly, I had not been able to explain the

purpose of the study. Might he think that it was a ruse or a bait and switch scenario?

Reeling from all of these questions and concerns, I debriefed with some

colleagues and my dissertation committee chair. I was beginning to feel a bit better, and

then the next day I received an early morning call with a message from a friend. "Have

you seen the paper this morning? If not, you probably need to call Ryan and have a chat."

Not having had my morning cup of coffee and trying to recover from dissertation-

induced insomnia, I stumbled downstairs to my laptop and pulled up the local paper. It

appeared one of the local columnists, who has a penchant for mockery, had written an

article about the School Board Election Reform campaign. Midway down the column my

mouth dropped open as I read the following:

> "I know I'm tired of hanging around the General Assembly," Eller said. "One
> representative told one of our people that when he doesn't know which way to
> vote on an issue, he asks Yoda. And he showed her this Yoda, a Magic 8 Ball
> kind of thing, that tells him how to vote. He wasn't joking.[63] "That's the sort of
> thing we're dealing with down there." (Sexton, 2009, p. B1)

---

[63] The lack of quotation marks before and/or after the statement, "He wasn't joking," is an accurate citation.
The omission of quotation marks makes it difficult to tell whether the statement should be attributed to the
author or the spokesperson and thus potentially changes whose interpretation is being offered. Nonetheless,
the implications are still the same.

The columnist went on to refer to the legislator as "the unnamed goof (and his Yoda)."
The only saving grace was that the legislator was not named outright. Nonetheless, I was
mortified.

Whereas there were leaders in CHANGE who were concerned about the
blowback from the article which did nothing to cast our legislators in a positive light, I
was more troubled about how my story about the Legislator and his Yoda had been
misquoted, misused, or misinterpreted in such a way that scoffed at the representative's
political credibility. The story *had been* a joke and now it was being used to make fun of
a person with whom I had built some rapport. Furthermore, my gut was that there were
probably not a lot of legislators who had Yodas in their offices; hence, how difficult
would it be for people (including our local Republican legislative representatives who
were already disgruntled) to figure out who Yoda man was?

In subsequent conversations, CHANGE's Strategy Team would discuss lessons
learned from the School Board Election Reform Campaign. There were a handful of
stumbles along the way, which exposed weak spots in strategy. As one of the CHANGE
leaders suggested, the lessons learned from this particular campaign had to do with the
discipline of organizing. In this case, discipline meant clarity about who was authorized
to speak to the press and the fact that nothing is ever really off the record, never sharing
someone else's story without his or her consent (especially with the media because it
could be misused), and the need to do a better job vetting and/or prepping individuals
who spoke with legislators on behalf of the organization. The latter subject arose because
at least one person took the trip as opportunity to vent to legislators about his own issues.

332

Even as these lessons were important, and certainly discomforting, to learn for the organization, I personally found myself more drawn to the questions raised in this whole experience. You see, I must admit that had I not been wearing the lens of a researcher I most likely would have reacted to the article in a different way. I may have concluded that, although the interaction with the Legislator and his Yoda was not captured accurately, the overall tone of the column was close enough and the writer was on "our" side (i.e. let's consider it a win and move on). Yet, that was not my reaction.

When I read the article, I did not feel a sweet victory. I did not feel relieved when someone said to me that the article didn't matter because the legislator would probably never know about it and besides that, he wasn't one of our local representatives so we didn't really need him. This incident, which may have seemed so minor to other people, had upended me. Once again, it made me question why it is so easy to write people off because they aren't useful to us. It forced me to think about the proverbial question about what happens when you stare in the monster's eyes too long. It is possible not to become a monster as well? In other words, how do we engage in dysfunctional, hurtful systems without losing our humanity, an ethic of care, a sense that all of us are necessary (even if we don't agree or even like each other)?

I spent a fair amount of time contemplating the decisions I had made to become more actively involved during the school board election reform campaign. I considered that I might have found it easier to speak publicly for the bill and on behalf of the organization, because I had not interviewed any of the legislators whom we were visiting. Perhaps this lack of interaction created a buffer of sorts between my researcher and

activist roles, and I was not as concerned about the potential interpretation of my involvement in their eyes. This, of course, all changed with the awkward experience between me and the local legislator whom I had previously contacted for an interview.

After great deliberation and some hand-wringing, I had decided not to actively participate in the next "Relational Day" at the State Capitol which would take place in concert with the Senate vote on the bill. I had chosen to listen for participants' accounts of meetings with Senators, follow email exchanges between organizational leaders about strategies, and pull up the Senate session on my computer when it came time for the vote. I would made note of media representation and interpretation of the events. I concluded that this would create some helpful distance between me as the researcher and my other roles. Yet, when the moment arrived I decided that it would be a loss of valuable data if I did not attend the Relational Day. My involvement was different this time, though. I participated in conversations with CHANGE members on the way down, took pictures, and joined one of the groups who went to talk with Senators. I listened more than I talked, took many notes, and had some useful dialogue with Southeast IAF Director Gerald Taylor about the study and his interpretation of some of the data I had collected. Overall, I felt confident about my decision to take part in the Relational Day and the manner in which I maintained my various roles.

Friends and colleagues have asked me if I regret doing this study because of how messy it became at times. Assuredly, there were moments when I was inclined to scream YES! Nevertheless, in truth I am wiser for involving myself in this entire process. First and foremost, I had to hold myself accountable for judgments I made during the study. I

had to honestly examine my decisions concerning how to balance my behaviors as a researcher, participant-observer in the organization, and a politically active citizen. I had to ask myself what were the motivating factors in my decisions to actively contribute in various circumstances and how those choices could affect my interpretation of the data I had collected. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, beyond the intricacies of research methods and procedures the Legislator and his Yoda was but one of many experiences which painfully exposed the pitfalls present in the land of unintended consequences. Such encounters agitated me to wrestle with the political implications of building authentic relationships across divisive lines and the seemingly unavoidable human foibles in the process.

APPENDIX F

CHANGE Member Institutions
(As of January 24, 2010)

Advocacy for the Poor
AKA Connections
Carver Alumni Association
Centenary United Methodist Church
Christ Moravian Church
Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship
Community Mosque
Dellabrook Presbyterian
Emmanuel Baptist Church
Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church
Fanning Rd. Neighborhood Association
First Baptist Church – 5th Street
First Baptist Church – Highland Avenue
First Calvary Baptist Church
Forsyth Futures
Grace Presbyterian Church
Greater Cleveland Avenue Christian
  Church
Green Street United Methodist Church
Hanes Memorial CME
Highland Presbyterian Church
Home Moravian Church
Institute for Dismantling Racism
Knollwood Baptist Church
Lloyd Presbyterian Church
Ministers Conference of Winton-Salem and
  Vicinity
Mt. Zion Baptist Church
Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods

New Liberty Full Gospel Baptist Ministry
North Winston Baptist Church
Our Lady of Mercy/Our Lady of Fatima
  Catholic Church
Parkway United Church of Christ
Peace Haven Baptist Church
PFLAG
Shiloh Baptist Church
Southside Community Church
St. Anne's Episcopal Church
St. Clement's Episcopal Church
St. Mark Baptist Church
St. Paul United Methodist Church
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
Temple Emanuel
Trinity Presbyterian Church
Union Baptist Church
Union Chapel Baptist Church
United Metropolitan Missionary Baptist
  Church
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of
  Winston-Salem
Wake Forest Baptist Church
West End Neighborhood Association
West Salem Neighborhood Association
Winston-Salem Friends Meeting
Zion Memorial Baptist Church