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How Diversity Transforms the Project of Racial Equality

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ABSTRACT

How Diversity Transforms the Project of Racial Equality

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Over the last 35 years, "diversity" has become the orthodox, color-conscious ideology of race and inclusion in many U.S. institutions. My research interrogates diversity as a racialized political project, focusing on the organizational uses of diversity rhetoric. My analysis is based on case studies of a public university, a Fortune 500 company, and a city neighborhood, documented through six years of ethnographic, interview, and archival data. Administrators, executives, and political leaders in these disparate sites rely on a similar ideology of diversity: they present inclusion and difference as both morally good and institutionally beneficial. Their diversity discourse and related organizational initiatives affirm racial identity but downplay problems of racial and class disadvantage. Building on racial formation theory and cultural analyses of law and inequality, my findings demonstrate how decision-makers have adapted the meaning of race and the terms of institutional inclusion to fit better the political and organizational demands of the neoliberal, post-civil rights context. I show that the diversity project supports a wide range of agendas. Only a few of these agendas are concerned with remedying racial or economic inequality, and many of them replace, discredit, and otherwise diminish such remedies.

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CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

In the history of the United States, organizational and political leaders have relied on different strategies to manage issues of race, difference, and inclusion, ranging from violent repression to state-monitored integration to inaction. These strategies have changed markedly over the past thirty years, following an influential period of civil rights activism and political reform. Organizational leaders now negotiate issues of racial inclusion in the contexts of a powerful neo-conservative political movement, the institutionalization of economic neoliberalism, an upsurge in immigration, and growing cultural tolerance. People of color, women, and visible gays and lesbians have moved into the middle and upper class and into professional and managerial jobs. Many of these gains were possible because of affirmative action in employment and higher education. Public support for the principle of "diversity" also has become widespread. At the same time, racial inequalities persist, economic inequalities have increased, and opponents of redistributive government policies have successfully disabled or removed political mechanisms for mitigating racial and economic inequalities.

Within this context, organizational and political elites in higher education, businesses, neighborhoods, and other institutions have moved away from a political agenda premised on remedying racial and economic disadvantage. However, they have not endorsed wholeheartedly the New Right's model of "colorblindness." In fact, they have held fast to race-conscious rhetoric and organizational programs, if not to more controversial interventions to promote racial integration. And they have done so by framing race, difference, and inclusion as matters of "diversity."

Why have organizational decision-makers embraced this notion of diversity? What do they mean by the term, and how do they promote it? I first became interested in these questions while studying gentrification and housing politics in Rogers Park, a racially and economically mixed neighborhood on Chicago's far north side. As I spent time with developers, politicians, social service providers, tenant activists, and even other university researchers, I was struck by the near consensus I found: despite their divergent political and organizational agendas, almost everyone claimed to care about and promote "diversity." In fact, people involved in local housing politics justified radically different visions and political agendas in its name.

As I was completing that study, some nagging questions remained: Why had diversity become so prevalent in so many institutions, beyond neighborhoods? And what are its broader consequences? My findings from the neighborhood alone could not sufficiently answer these broader questions; a single site cannot capture the many dimensions of this widespread phenomenon. So I extended my analysis to include two other sites also considered to be leaders in diversity: the University of Michigan, a prestigious public university, and Starr Corporation, which is the pseudonym for a multinational company.

As my project evolved, so did my questions. I could see that "diversity" was more than just a buzzword or a discourse. What, then, is it a case of? In other words, how do we characterize this era and these politics? What do political leaders across these different settings mean by "diversity," and what do they do in its name? And how has diversity transformed the politics of racial inclusion over the past 30 years? In particular, what does diversity do to the political agenda that emerged out of the civil rights era?

My dissertation answers these questions by examining diversity as a racialized political project, focusing on how organizational leaders communicate and use diversity ideology. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, in their theory of racialization, develop the concept of a racial project to characterize the major ways that race is organized at different points in history (Omi and Winant 1994; Winant 1994)). Diversity, multiculturalism, and colorblindness are the primary projects of the current racial era (Winant 2004).

My research shows that the diversity project is characterized foremost by an ideology of diversity, expressed through organizational discourse such as rhetoric and symbols. Diversity ideology presents race as an important individual and group characteristic but qualifies race as only one of many valuable forms of social difference. This ideology emphasizes cross-cultural and interpersonal experiences of diversity. It underscores the moral value of diversity as an aspirational vision of social life, the institutional benefits of inclusion, and the importance of institutional action and accommodation. The diversity project also consists of organizational programs, policies, offices, and other initiatives pursued in the name of "diversity." Diversity ideology and diversity initiatives are centrally, but not solely, concerned with race.

To explain the diversity project, I draw on ethnographic, interview, and archival evidence about three cases that I collected over the course of more than six years. I analyze organizational participants' rhetoric and actions. My analysis focuses primarily on organizational and political decision-makers such as university administrators, business executives, and politicians, although I also consider political activists such as student organizers. I investigate how organizational elites historically adopted diversity rhetoric and programs, how they construct and promote diversity ideology and initiatives in the contemporary context, the ways in which political

activists contribute and respond, and the consequences for racial formation, neoliberal politics, and political culture.

Organizational elites in my neighborhood, university, and corporate case studies adopted political rhetoric about diversity as early as the 1960s, and they had institutionalized diversity ideology and organizational diversity initiatives by the early 1990s. The reasons that they have turned to "diversity" vary considerably depending on their organizational affiliation and the institutional context. The diversity project also has taken different forms, evolving in different ways, across these sites. For example, the social problems associated with diversity in each case range from student admissions to employee inclusion to low-income housing. Leaders' sources of expert knowledge about diversity differ, as well; university administrators rely on law and social science, while corporate executives appeal to strategic human resource management. Despite these many differences, some common themes characterize all three cases.

Organizational decision-makers have turned to the diversity project in the face different institutional imperatives stemming from their local institutional contexts, their broader organizational fields, and the more general political, economic, and social context of the U.S. These leaders face pressures to demonstrate compliance with law and standard organizational practices. They need to manage political controversies and organizational issues around race while appealing to increasingly heterogeneous constituents that include white people, people of color, and other marginalized groups. Organizational leaders must manage eroding political support for redistributive social policies, such as race-based affirmative action and public housing for poor people, as well as economic pressures to market their institutions, commodities, and services.

Organizational leaders in my cases have relied on diversity rhetoric and initiatives to encourage, manage, and moderate the institutional inclusion of different groups within this context. More specifically, they have invoked diversity ideology and initiatives in seven strategic ways to satisfice on these various institutional pressures. [1]

In the name of diversity, these leaders have reinvented their institutions' symbolic identities and priorities around inclusion. They have framed the terms of local political issues involving race and inclusion. They have shaped the content, meaning, and implementation of law and public policy. They have endorsed pro-integrationist programs while they simultaneously minimize the importance of those programs and redefine the goal of those programs as diversity, not as remediation of social inequalities. Likewise, they have changed the constituents of who can participate in programs for inclusion. They have redefined middle class human and cultural capital. And they have marginalized alternative ideologies and agendas around race and inclusion.

A common theme cuts across these seven strategic uses of the diversity project. Organizational decision-makers have relied on diversity rhetoric and programs to affirm racial difference and identity while they also downplay issues of racial and class disadvantage. My empirical chapters elaborate these strategic uses of diversity and the ways in which they shape the contemporary politics of racial equality and inclusion.

These seven strategies serve as the organizational-level mechanisms through which the project of diversity transforms the project of racial equality. The project of racial equality, as

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[1] Herbert Simon (1997 [1947]) developed the notion of "satisficing"—an amalgamation of "satisfy" and "suffice"— to characterize organizational and human behavior that attempts to attain a minimum result rather than fully maximize an outcome.

promoted by mid-century social movements advocating for social justice and by bureaucrats supporting civil rights reforms, has called for political remedies to racial and economic disadvantage. Diversity ideology and initiatives grew out of this context, but they differ from the politics of racial equality in many respects.

The diversity project represents organizational leaders' taming of what began as a radical fight for African-American equality. Diversity ideology and initiatives broaden the discourse and politics of inclusion beyond race and class and beyond problems of inequality. Diversity ideology and initiatives frame racial inclusion in terms that are more politically palatable to white people and middle class interests. They depict a positive view of racial minority identity and emphasize the ways in which *everyone* contributes to and benefits from an inclusive environment. Moreover, the diversity project often divorces racial inclusion from state intervention, and it can diminish problems of racial and economic disadvantage by reinforcing white racial domination, class privilege of the affluent, and bureaucratic authority.

By constructing, implementing, and mobilizing the diversity project in these strategic ways, organizational decision-makers have transformed the racial politics in the U.S. They have established diversity as the orthodox, color-conscious ideology of race, difference, and inclusion. Diversity now is the liberal counter to colorblindness and the moderate alternative to remedial racial justice. In so doing, organizational elites have adapted the terms of institutional inclusion to fit better the political demands of the neoliberal, post-civil rights era.

The diversity project and its strategic uses support a wide range of agendas. Some of these agendas support the institutional integration and acceptance of racial minorities, women, and other marginalized groups, particularly those who make up the middle and upper class or

hold in positions of organizational authority. Organizational and political leaders rely on diversity rhetoric and programs to signal that institutions are receptive to constituents of color and to white people alike. Organizational leaders have used ideas about diversity to gain support for integration from white people and the middle class. They have contributed to a cultural climate that heralds the principles of tolerance, inclusion, and cross-cultural understanding. In some instances, leaders have invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives as a defense against political movements for "colorblind" rhetoric and policies. The University of Michigan's defense of race-based affirmative admissions is one such example. In short, the diversity project is not the hostile and overt racism of my grandparents' generation.

But, at the same time, the diversity project is not the redistributive promises of my parents' generation. Many of the agendas pursued in the name of "diversity" are unrelated to promoting institutional integration, and some of these agendas actually discredit, diminish, and otherwise displace policies and programs that have helped to mitigate racial, class, and gender exclusion. Diversity rhetoric and programs can affirm, in subtle and overt ways, white privilege and the economic status of the middle and upper class. For example, many popular organizational diversity initiatives target resources to people who are affluent. Organizational decision-makers leaders have justified diversity initiatives by posing "diversity" as distinct from and superior to more controversial redistributive, integrationist policies that researchers have shown to be very effective at promoting institutional integration, such as affirmative admissions. They often contribute—at times, unintentionally—to political, economic, and social pressures that have undermined a political program premised on remedying racial and class inequities.

Organizational and political elites also have invoked the diversity project in ways that delimit and even undermine the concerns of political activists on both the left and the right. These activists have responded by avoiding rhetoric about diversity altogether or, more often, by redefining the meaning of diversity and developing a street-level semiotic analysis and critique of political elites' language around diversity. Diversity ideology and initiatives represent organizational leaders' taming of what began as a radical fight for African-American equality.

My dissertation builds on critical studies of diversity, racial formation theory, studies of neoliberalism, and analyses of political culture and power by elaborating these processes and highlighting their similarities and divergences across three different cases. I develop the concepts of the diversity project and diversity ideology, which have been empirically and theoretically underexamined. I show how organizational processes around diversity serve as mechanisms through which racial formation in one era both incorporates and undermines the racial projects that prevailed in prior periods. I also demonstrate how the diversity project, in line with both neoconservative and neoliberal pressures, can discredit state regulation: it easily divorces the imperative of racial inclusion from the mandate of government intervention. The story of diversity reveals, in the most general sense, key cultural dimensions of race, power, and inequality in our current historical epoch.

The Case Studies and Research Design

Universities, workplaces, and neighborhoods have been key sites of political conflict over racial, gender, and class integration and sites in which diversity rhetoric and policies are now common. I selected as my cases for study the University of Michigan (or "Michigan"), Starr Corporation,

and the Rogers Park neighborhood, all of which have reputations as leaders in diversity. By oversampling "extreme cases," I knew I could collect a great deal of evidence about the phenomena that interested me and maximize the power of my observations (Stinchcombe 2005).

I determined the contours of each case study inductively, based on how local organizational participants have invoked language about diversity and the political and organizational issues they consider relevant to it. Across all three sites, organizational participants generally have treated "diversity" as part of the solution to particular social problems in their local milieu. Therefore, each case study focuses on these social problems: college admissions for racial minorities at Michigan; hiring and advancement for women and racial minorities at Starr Corporation; and neighborhood redevelopment and housing for disproportionately poor and racial minority renters in Rogers Park.

My dissertation focuses on local organizational elites—university administrators, corporate executives, high level managers, political officials, the leaders of business interest groups, and staff of mainstream community agencies—although I also examine political challengers like student and tenant activists. Because my project examines organizations and organizational actors, the data illuminate rhetorical, normative, and regulatory processes within the field sites. They do not capture individuals' private perceptions (see Schneiberg and Clemens 2006). I do not try to decipher whether participants really believe what they say about diversity, the personal meanings that they assign to diversity, or the processes through which organizational elites transform their personal views into political symbols (see e.g., Stromberg 1991). Rather, I attend to organizational actors' public performances of diversity, particularly on

decision-makers' construction of diversity rhetoric and the structure of organizational diversity programs, and to the cracks in the diversity project that inspire skepticism and critique.

I organized my data collection strategies around this focus. As I explain in the methodological appendix, I collected my ethnographic and interview data over the period of 6 years. I did more intensive data collection during four of those years, meaning that I did observations or interviews at least multiple times a month and often multiple times a week. There were a few times in each site where I spent all day following an individual or group, doing what ethnographers sometimes call "shoe leather" fieldwork (Duneier 2004). But my primary interest was not everyday life in these settings. So most of the time, I did more strategic observations of formal events.

My contemporary chapters are based on ethnographic case studies that I conducted of Rogers Park (2000-03), Michigan (2002-05), and Starr Corporation (2005-06).[2] Research participants were administrators, politicians, entrepreneurs, activists, and other individuals involved in formal organizations. In the neighborhood case, I studied multiple organizations involved with housing politics, focusing in particular on local political officials, the local real estate industry association, social service agencies, and tenant activists. In the university and corporation cases, I investigated different bureaucratic units of the larger central organization, although I spent most of my time in one such unit—the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Michigan and the Diversity Management Department at Starr. In the university case, I also

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[2] For the Michigan and Rogers Park cases, I use the real names of organizations and elected officials, individuals who gave me written permission to do so, and individuals who are identified in the public record. To indicate that I am using someone's real name, I identify their first and last name and, in subsequent text, refer to that person by their last name. I use first name pseudonyms for all other individuals. For Starr Corporation, per my agreement with the company, I disguise the company, all participants, and some organizational details easily identified through public sources.

studied organizational actors other than the university administration, most notably campus and national activists and representatives of national organizations that oppose "racial preferences," such as the law firm that filed lawsuits against Michigan challenging the university's admissions policies.

My evidence about my contemporary cases is based on ethnographic observation, interviews, and organizational texts and images, although I also rely on legal documents, media coverage, and secondary statistics. I conducted hundreds of hours of participant observation. I chronicled routine organizational activity such as meetings, panels, large forums, public presentations, and training sessions as well as marches, press conferences, and other political events. When appropriate, I took handwritten field notes. I also conducted 85 semi-structured, open-ended interviews that lasted, on average, one hour each. I tailored the questions to the participant's organizational position and the relevant social problems. The interviews were tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed with my field notes. The organizational documents ranged from promotional materials like admissions brochures to policy and mission statements to internet and intranet documents.

The histories of the three cases are based primarily on archival sources. For each case, I selected a primary document source that revealed the topics of interest, such as minority admissions, and that was produced consistently over the last thirty-five or forty-five years. These key sources were application view books produced by the University of Michigan's Office of Undergraduate Admissions, annual reports from Starr Corporation, and coverage of Rogers Park by *The Chicago Tribune*. I analyzed the content of these sources and coded key terms, such as "diversity" and "opportunity," and discussions of key topics, such as low-income housing or the

student body. I identified some of these themes and topics through my contemporary participant observations and interviews, and I then looked at the historical sources retrospectively, to understand the emergence of these themes. I identified other terms and topics inductively, from the historical texts themselves. I supplemented my analyses of my primary source documents with other primary sources, such as organizational newsletters and brochures, and secondary sources. The Methodological Appendix details my specific methods, bases of evidence, and noteworthy travails of fieldwork for each site.

My research design is based on qualitative cases that I selected as parallel demonstrations of concepts and theory. Although it is multi-site and ethnographic, it is not a multi-site ethnography as conceptualized by practitioners of the craft (Hannerz 2003). Although I have multiple cases, my central objective is to not to analytically compare one case against another or to explain the variation across my cases (Ragin 1994). My critics may wish for greater explanation of this variation, but I am most interested in the commonalities that cut across these disparate sites.

Not surprisingly, this unusual case design complicated my task of identifying comparable findings across my cases and building a unifying conceptual framework. I drew upon insights from qualitative and comparative methodology and cultural analysis to manage the variation I was encountering. I began by treating diversity as a "cultural object" with symbolic meaning that different groups of people produce, comprehend and consume within a broader social context (Griswold 1994). As I sought to identify what, exactly, that object was, I arrived at some of the basic concepts that I use to characterize my topic. I came to see diversity as ideology promoted primarily by organizational decision-makers but also by some organizational activists. To

contextualize these phenomena, I took inspiration from ethnographic and other qualitative studies that locate their subjects in a historical moment shaped by state structures, material power, and other aspects of political economy (di Leonardo 1998; Klinenberg 2002; Pattillo-McCoy 1999; Pattillo 2007; Wacquant 2002).

Other important analytical strategies grew out of my schooling in research methods at Northwestern University, which stressed the use of qualitative methods to refine concepts (Ragin 1994; Ragin and Becker 1992; Stinchcombe 2005). While conducting my field work and analyzing my evidence, I looked for terms, phrases, ideas, policies, and practices that organizational participants associated with diversity (e.g., exchange of ideas) as well as those that people perceived as distinct from diversity (e.g., workplace affirmative action) or antithetical to diversity (e.g., a concentration of poverty). Along these same lines, I looked for instances when I expected people to talk about diversity and related themes but they did not (Katz 1983). Although I do not view my research in terms of hypothesis-testing, these techniques approximate such tests. I relied on them to try to falsify my findings and to rule out randomness as an explanation for why and how organizational participants communicate about diversity. By using multiple sources of data, I could triangulate my evidence and make more valid analytical inferences about my findings (Stake 1995).

Finally, I applied cross-case analogical comparison to identify common themes cutting across my cases and to elaborate theory. Analogical comparison is an analytical strategy for analyzing a similar, abstract process across dissimilar organizational units and at micro, meso, and macro levels of organization (Vaughan 1992; Vaughan 2004). Diane Vaughan developed cross-case analogical comparison as a strategy for building theory based on generic processes,

such as organizational misconduct, that cut across generic cases, such as families or bureaucracies. It is particularly well-suited to studies based on general, conventional case designations—such as organizations or neighborhoods—while at the same time it does not require strict empirical boundaries on the case (Ragin 1992). Analogical comparison provided me with an analytical framework and a theoretical justification for examining diversity ideology at different levels of analysis, across different empirical units, and across different sites.

The Cases and the Local Problems Associated with Diversity

Diversity ideology and initiatives emerged and evolved under different social, political, and economic circumstances in each of my cases, and the distinct institutional contexts of my cases shape the ways in which people define diversity, communicate diversity rhetoric, and enact diversity programs and policies.

University of Michigan

The University of Michigan is a large, prestigious, well-endowed public research university. Much of the university's administration and operations are decentralized across nineteen schools and colleges, numerous research institutes, and other facilities. In 2004, nearly 38,000 students were enrolled on the flagship Ann Arbor campus, including approximately 25,000 undergraduates. Diversity ideology is apparent in the public rhetoric used by the university president, the members of the Board of Regents, directors of various offices, and other administrators. It also appears in a range of university policies, programs, and offices. Many institutional factors have shaped the diversity project at Michigan, most notably law, campus

activism, the changing demographics of the college-bound, growing demand for elite education, and heightened competition among universities for resources, students, and faculty.

Concerns about "diversity" at Michigan and other elite universities primarily have played out around admissions for racial minority students. Student activists at Michigan first organized around minority admissions in the 1950s and 1960s when fewer than 200 black students attended the university, comprising less than 0.1% of the student body (Peckham 1994). Like most universities and colleges in the U.S., Michigan historically had limited opportunities for students of color through exclusionary practices and discriminatory policies. These ranged from substandard housing for African-American women in the 1920s to white fraternities' secret "bias clauses" that excluded racial minorities through at least the 1950s (Peckham 1994).

Since then, the university has taken numerous actions to remedy such problems among the faculty, staff, and study body. By 2004, around 8% of undergraduates were African-American and an additional 6% were Hispanic American or Native American.[3] However, exclusionary practices continue today, as do deeply entrenched structural barriers that prevent students of color from gaining admission and from fully accessing Michigan's resources once admitted. For example, university admissions officers often give preferential treatment to "legacy" applicants whose close relatives attended the university. They also rely heavily on standardized test scores despite research showing that African-Americans tend to perform more poorly on these tests for reasons unrelated to their intelligence and that such tests poorly predict future academic success (Alon and Tienda 2007; Steele and Aronson 1995).

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[3] University of Michigan, Office of the Registrar, Report 872a.

At the time of this study, the university was in the midst of two historically significant legal cases, *Gratz et al v. Bollinger et al* and *Grutter v. Bollinger et al.,* which challenged the constitutionality of the university's race-conscious admissions policies and were decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. These cases, including the process of litigation and the limitations of legal precedent, profoundly shaped university leaders' public rhetoric about diversity and many of their related organizational initiatives.

Starr Corporation

Starr Corporation is a multinational public company that produces consumer goods. Headquartered in a Midwestern suburb, Starr employs approximately 100,000 people in over 80 countries and sells products in 140 countries. In the early 2000s, the company had over $35 billion in annual net revenues. Diversity ideology appears in the public rhetoric used by corporate executives and managers, and the company supports a broad platform of diversity management policies and programs. The Global Diversity Management Department in the corporate headquarters oversees many of these policies and programs. Civil rights laws, deregulation, trends in corporate human resource management, changing workforce demographics, and the pressures of market competition all have influenced the diversity project at Starr Corporation. These influences are set against declining enforcement of federal affirmative action workforce policies, the threat of discrimination lawsuits, and the more distant backdrop of political activism around workplace inclusion.

Like many of their peers at similar companies (Kelly and Dobbin 1998), Starr executives and managers adopted diversity management in the early 1990s. These efforts focus on hiring

and promoting racial minority and female employees, particularly managers and executives. Exclusionary practices and explicitly discriminatory policies long have prevented people of color and women from securing jobs—especially the most powerful and best-paid positions—at Starr and its subsidiaries. Prior to the 1980s, Starr Corporation, particularly the company's leadership, was predominantly white and male. In 1965, racial minorities made up about 6% of Starr's total workforce, and in the early 1970s, women constituted about 14% of the company's professionals, managers, and officials.

The company has made a number of changes, both voluntary and government mandated, to rectify this situation. By the mid-2000s, over one third of Starr's employees were women and about one fourth were people of color. Of Starr's exempt employees—those non-unionized employees who have administrative, professional or executive responsibilities and receive annual salaries over $23,600—approximately one third were women and about 17% were people of color. About 22% of the executive team members were female and 7% were racial minorities. However, despite anti-discrimination, affirmative action, and diversity policies, routine practices and entrenched structural barriers still limit opportunities for people of color and women at the company. These range from harsher disciplinary actions taken against employees of color to a conformist workplaces culture to common expectations that exempt employees arrive at the office early and work late, making it difficult to care for children.

Rogers Park

Rogers Park is a largely residential community on Chicago's North Side, with over 60,000 residents. This politically active neighborhood is home to Loyola University and is known for its

liberal politics, beach-front location, crime, new immigrants, and racially and economically-mixed population.

In Rogers Park, diversity ideology is most apparent in decision-makers' rhetoric. Political leaders such as the Alderman do not have a comprehensive set of diversity initiatives comparable to those at Michigan or Starr Corporation. Rather, politicians, leaders from business interest groups, and some community activists advocate for different organizational programs, government policies and planning strategies as relevant or detrimental to the community's "diversity." Some of the most salient institutional factors shaping the local project of diversity have been community activism around racial integration and housing, changing residential demographics, government policies for subsidized housing, fair housing law, and real estate investment trends.

Since the 1960s, organizational leaders' concerns about diversity in Rogers Park have centered on low-income housing and the racial and economic composition of neighborhood residents. Throughout the 20th century, political leaders and white and wealthy residents in Chicago neighborhoods—and in other communities around the country—relied on discriminatory housing policies, exclusionary practices, and violence to maintain racial and economic segregation (Hirsch 1983). In 1970, 96% of Rogers Park residents were white, although they varied ethnically and religiously and many were recent immigrants (Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984). The median family income was $48,736, and 8% of the population lived in poverty.[4] Over the next thirty years, the neighborhood's demographics changed considerably with real estate disinvestment by landlords, low rents, and white flight out of the

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[4] Family income reported in 1999 dollars. See also Greater Chicago Housing and Community Development Website. www.chicagoareahousing.org. Accessed March 13, 2007.

neighborhood. By 2000, the neighborhood's racial composition was divided almost evenly among white (32%), African-American (30%), and Latino (28%) residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The family median income had dropped to $34,728, with the poverty rate at 20%.

The U.S. government made racial discrimination in housing illegal in 1968, and the City of Chicago has banned housing discrimination based on additional classes, such as source of income. However, racism and classism continue in Rogers Park and other local housing markets, abutted by historical residential patterns and by institutional and individual practices (Yinger 1986). For example, between the late-1990s and mid-2000s, Rogers Park underwent uneven but observable gentrification. Predominantly white buyers had greater access to mortgage loans, and many of them purchased newly converted condominiums, displacing predominantly African-American, Latino, and lower-income tenants (Lakeside CDC 2006).

Variation across Cases

These three cases vary along many dimensions. Perhaps the greatest divide is between Michigan and Starr, as large bureaucracies, and Rogers Park, as a geographic community that I define in terms of non-profit organizations and state actors affiliated through their interests in a similar physical space. Neighborhoods are not formally structured or goal-oriented in the ways that universities and corporations are. Neighborhoods also differ in the degree to which political representatives and the leaders of non-profit organizations represent the broader collectivity, control membership in that collectivity—namely, who can live or work in the neighborhood—or determine the structural relationships among members. These decision-makers have relatively less control over policy decisions and basic resource allocation, as well.

These differences shaped the local diversity project and my research methods in many ways. Perhaps most importantly, in Rogers Park, there was not a single "official" position on diversity. As scholars of urban political economy have shown, however, political leaders, business interest groups and mainstream non-profit organizations in cities typically have a shared interest in promoting growth—what Harvey Molotch dubbed the "growth machine" (Logan and Molotch 1987; Molotch 1976). I relied on this construct to identify shared cultural meanings, common political and economic interests, and manifest political alliances across these groups. At the same time, their ideology of diversity was comparatively less coherent than the ideologies of diversity supported by leaders at Michigan or Starr. Community leaders have relatively less control over the content, budget, and cultural framing of both public and private programs and policies around housing and development. So, local organizations often openly debated and disagreed over which initiatives would improve the neighborhood and promote diversity.

Another salient difference across my cases involves political activism. In Rogers Park and at Michigan, political activists played an important role in questioning and, sometimes, shaping contemporary diversity ideology and initiatives. For example, in Rogers Park, tenant organizers persistently raised the issues of low-income and affordable housing, and the Alderman and local business people sometimes made decisions about development in response to or out of fears about these pressures. Although I do not have empirical evidence to prove it, I have a strong sense that these tenant organizers also shaped the diversity project by insisting that community diversity include poor people. Even if the Alderman and other leaders in the neighborhood did not necessarily agree, they were sometimes on the defensive in public forums.

In the case of Michigan, conservative activists went so far as to file two lawsuits with constitutional claims and pursue those cases to the U.S. Supreme Court. This points to the differing role of law in each site. Constitutional law, legal precedent, and litigation centrally shaped the political context at Michigan, the meaning and importance of "diversity," and the connection between diversity and admissions policies. At Starr, civil rights law also shaped the broad contours of the diversity project; I cannot imagine that diversity management could exist in the absence of equal opportunity and workplace affirmative action policies. Company managers and executives understood diversity management as related to but distinct from legal regulation, anti-discrimination policy, and mediation of workplace discrimination. In Rogers Park, law also shaped local diversity ideology and programs, although integrationist programs like integration maintenance plans and civil rights law have been comparatively less influential in neighborhood contexts. Likewise, for political actors on the ground, law had less of an immediate impact on what they said and did in the name of diversity.

* *

Chapter Two of the dissertation is explicitly comparative. It describes the key components of diversity project: the logic and language of diversity ideology; the organizational program and policy initiatives pursued in the name of "diversity;" and the broader historical, social structural, and ideological context shaping the largely ideological phenomenon of diversity. This broader context shapes the organizational and political pressures on local institutions, particularly on institutional decision-makers. I discuss the seven strategic ways in which organizational elites

invoke diversity rhetoric and initiatives to satisfice various pressures. These strategic uses serve as mechanisms through which organizational elites have transformed, modified, and displaced the project of racial equality. In the name of diversity, these leaders accommodate and even trumpet racial identity, and sometimes they even mitigate disparities along racial and other lines. They simultaneously help to discredit and displace a political agenda concerned with remedying racial and economic disadvantage.

Then I turn to my individual empirical cases. The dissertation includes a historical chapter and a contemporary chapter for each. I have organized all of these chapters to highlight decision-makers' strategic uses of diversity ideology and initiatives, the common themes across cases, and the unique divergences. In all of these chapters, I also consider the relationship between the project of diversity and the project of racial equality to show how "diversity" has replaced such goals and concepts as affirmative action and opportunities for the disadvantaged in much public rhetoric and in many organizational programs. In the case of Michigan, I also examine how organizational leaders have relied on diversity as a counter to the political project of colorblindness.

The historical chapters describe the local project of racial equality, the early emergence of the diversity project, and the ways in which rhetoric and programs around diversity coexisted with or supplanted rhetoric, programs, and policies intended to promote racial integration and remedy racial and class disadvantage. Each history illustrates different patterns of accommodation and displacement.

The contemporary chapters detail the modern day political and organizational issues and the rhetoric, policies, programs, and practices associated with the diversity project. I describe the

organizational imperatives on which they try to satisfice and the political and organizational tensions and conflicts that arise. I start with my Michigan case and devote an additional chapter, Chapter Four, to this case because of its national and historical significance. The university's legal arguments and political campaign changed law and the political context surrounding affirmative admissions, in part through their rhetoric of diversity. So, in Chapter Four, I discuss executive leaders and administrators' public relations campaign around the Court cases.

Chapter Ten is an explicitly comparative chapter about political activism in the diversity era, with a focus on my university and neighborhood cases. The conclusion revisits the key dimensions of diversity ideology and leaders' seven strategic uses of the diversity project. I return to the broader theoretical implications of the diversity project and I elaborate my contributions to critical studies of diversity, racial formation, and political culture and power.

CHAPTER TWO. THE DIVERSITY PROJECT AND HOW IT TRANSFORMS THE PROJECT OF RACIAL EQUALITY

In the summer of 2005, Starr Corporation, a Fortune 500 company that makes consumer products, held a two-day Woman's Summit at an upscale suburban hotel. The conference was for the two hundred most powerful women in the company: executives, senior managers, professionals. One afternoon, the company's CEO —a white, middle-aged man— spoke to the attendees. His appearance was a bit like having a rock star in the room. The audience enthusiastically laughed and clapped throughout his speech. He told us, "I take a very broad view of diversity." He recounted growing up in different parts of the world, from Berkeley, California in the late 1960s to racially segregated Tennessee to Zurich, Germany.

> My view of diversity has been shaped by this. It is gender. It is race. It is any overt culture or nationality. It's as much educational background. I got concerned that Starr was taking too many students from [a nearby university]. Nothing against that university, but you need different perspectives… Style—I think that's the most important.

He went on to make what is commonly called the business case for diversity, "Sure, diversity is good for business. Importantly, we're a consumer goods company. So we need to reflect the consumers we sell to."

Diversity here was more than just rhetoric—this networking event was emblematic of some of the company's diversity programs, which primarily are for women and people of color

in high status occupations. And Starr is not the only company where executives and managers approach race, gender, and other forms of difference as matters of diversity (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Kelly and Dobbin 1998). In 1998, 75% of Fortune 500 companies in one survey reported having a diversity program (Ryan, Hawdon and Branick 2002).

Nor are diversity rhetoric and initiatives confined to companies. Over the last thirty years, "diversity" has become a new language and a new politics around race, difference, and inclusion in numerous institutions in the U.S. By the late 1990s, an orthodoxy had developed about the value of diversity in the universities (Lipson 2007), the diversity consulting industry (Lynch 1997), urban planning (Duany and Plater-Zyberk 1993), neighborhood civic associations (Berrey 2005; Goode 2001a), law (Schuck 2003), charitable foundations (Shiao 2005), churches (Becker 1998), media corporations (Benson 2005), and some governmental entities such as the military (Moskos 1999). And this phenomenon is not confined to the United States. Political rhetoric and policies exalting diversity have became prevalent in other Western countries such as Australia (Ang 2005), Belgium (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998), and Canada (Valverde forthcoming).

Americans also profess support for diversity in public opinion surveys and interviews. A 2003 nationally representative survey found that 92% of respondents valued diversity in their cities and towns and 94% valued diversity among their friends (University of Minnesota American Mosaic Project 2006 see also Bell and Hartmann 2007). Similarly, a 1998 survey of popular attitudes about diversity in higher education found that 94% of respondents agreed that "'the nation's growing diversity makes it more important than ever for all of us to understand people who are different than ourselves'" (Campus Diversity Initiative 1998 in Downey 1999).

The language and politics of diversity contrast with the language and politics of race that emerged between the 1940s and the 1960s around. Of course, civil rights activists and legislative reformer did not share a single position on race during this time, and political leaders and activists were divided amongst themselves on many issues (Biondi 2003; Skrentny 1996). But many prominent organizational leaders framed the issue of race in quite different terms than "diversity."

Take, for example, President Lyndon Johnson's famous Commencement Address at Howard University in June 1965. Johnson, a white man, stood in front of the university's library, before an audience of mostly African-American graduates who repeatedly interrupted his speech with their applause (Chicago Defender 1965). He said

> In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope. [F]reedom is not enough …. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. We seek… not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.

Johnson emphasized the problems experienced by black people, especially problems related to poverty. He framed race in terms of equality, opportunity, and remedying disadvantage. Johnson's speech and his administration's political support for these issues are one of many possible examples of what I refer to as the project of racial equality. The state, particularly the

federal government, has played a central role in this project by ending *de jure* discrimination and promoting integration in order to remedy racial and economic disadvantage.

Johnson's vision of race differs considerably from the views of the Starr CEO. For the CEO, race is not primarily about African-Americans. Race is one of many categories of difference. And inclusion is not a challenge to common institutional practices, as it would help the company profit. "Diversity," here and elsewhere, is not just a new buzzword for racial equality. It represents something distinct from rhetoric, policies, and politics concerned with solving racial inequality and expanding civil rights.

In this chapter, I characterize this current era and politics of race, difference, and inclusion as the racialized political project of diversity, and I demonstrate the organizational and political mechanisms through which organizational leaders support, transform, and ultimately compromise the political ideal of remedying racial and class disadvantage articulated in President Johnson's speech.

I begin this chapter by briefly reviewing the social scientific literature on diversity. Then I outline my formulation of diversity as a racialized political project, detailing the content of diversity ideology and describing diversity initiatives. I locate the diversity project in the broader U.S. historical context, showing the emergence and appeal of diversity rhetoric and initiatives amidst major social structural and ideological transformations. I then outline the seven strategic uses of diversity rhetoric and initiatives that I observed across my empirical cases. These seven uses provide insights into how the diversity project has transformed the project of racial equality, and I preview some of these insights here.

* *

I. Critical Studies of Diversity

Given the popularity of "embracing diversity," surprisingly few empirical studies have investigated critically the content of diversity ideology or initiatives, the organization of diversity initiatives, or their implications on the ground for racial formation or political culture. Scholars tend to treat diversity as a commonsensical moral directive, taking its meaning for granted rather than analyzing it as an "object for scrutiny" (Bhattacharyya 1999:149). Like many of the participants in my cases, scholars often do not question the meaning of diversity but rather rely on it to signal many different things or groups at once, often involving people of color.

Scholars have equated diversity with such topics as racial and ethnic minority groups (Takaki 2002), racial and economic geographic integration (Putnam 2007), fragmentation of the social order (Smelser and Alexander 1999), and differing points of view. The term can index social differences at the individual, group, or national level. Alternately, scholars may associate diversity with experiences of empowerment in which people of color and women advance into positions that are typically the province of white men (e.g., Horton 1995).

Many scholars, like the practitioners they study, have characterized various business and non-profit management approaches as "diversity" programs (e.g., Lipson 2007), and a few have demonstrated the varying effectiveness of different approaches. Workplace programs for inclusion that assign responsibility for results, such as affirmative action programs and diversity departments, have the greatest impact on the representation of white women, African-American women, and African-American men in management (Kalev, Dobbin and Kelly 2006). Research in the field of management has tested the impacts of individual-level demographic and value

diversity on workgroup effectiveness and organizational performance (Harrison et al. 2002; Williams and O'Reilly 1998).

Many scholars who do scrutinize diversity as a concept take a philosophical, theoretical, or polemical approach, producing both controversial and insightful conclusions (e.g., Michaels 2006; Parekh 2000). Or, they focus on doctrinal issues and legal implications of diversity in law, especially Supreme Court decisions concerning higher education (Ancheta 2003; Schuck 2003). Yet as some social scientists have noted (Downey 1999; Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Hartmann and Gerteis 2005), we lack empirically grounded analyses of the meanings and uses of diversity, especially the ways that different interests coalesce around this political symbol and the implications for marginalized groups.

My research builds on the small but growing body of empirical research that, over the last ten years, has examined critically the meanings and uses of language about diversity (Becker 1998; Bell and Hartmann 2006; Bell and Hartmann 2007; Bonilla-Silva, Lewis and Embrick 2004; Downey 1999; Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Goode 2001a; Hartmann and Gerteis 2005; Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Lipson 2007; Litvin 2006; Shiao 2005). These empirical analyses tend to follow either the tradition of "critical multiculturalism" (Goldberg 1994) with a skeptical eye towards the discourse of diversity in specific sites (e.g., Goode 2001a). Or they build on theories of organizational change and workplace inequality to understand diversity discourse or initiatives in organizational (usually corporate) contexts (e.g., Kalev, Dobbin and Kelly 2006).

Scholars in this area conceptualize diversity in different ways, often focusing on its discursive dimensions. Dennis Downey (1999) approaches diversity as a political or

"condensation symbol" with a multivalence and indefiniteness that enables different constituencies to attach different meanings to it (see also Edelman [1964] 1985). For many, diversity is a discourse or, more specifically, a rhetoric (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Litvin 2002; Urciuloi 2003; Zukin 1995). Politically-motivated accounts tend to treat diversity as a value or a concept. Conservative critics have suggested that liberal administrators have unfairly thrust this concept upon others (American Enterprise Institute 2002; Glazer 2005; Lynch 1997; Wood 2003), while liberal commentators and other advocates defend its virtues (Orfield and Whitla 2001; Thomas 1994; University of Michigan 1999).

The critical research about diversity has produced a number of important insights. At the most basic level, it points to key empirical events and historical trends that led to the proliferation of rhetoric about diversity. In the U.S. Supreme Court's 1978 decision in *The Regents of the University of California v. Bakke,* Justice Lewis Powell introduced and elaborated diversity as a key legal concept (Schuck 2003). Powell argued that universities can consider race in admissions decisions in the interest of building a diverse student body. College and university administrators subsequently rewrote the text of their admissions policies (and some revised their actual admissions procedures) to indicate compliance with Powell's opinion (see e.g., Edelman 1992). Over time, these administrators came to see race-based affirmative action as central to their responsibilities around diversity management (Lipson 2007).

In the 1980s, Ford Foundation and other major foundations targeted resources to support African-Americans while they expanded their discourse to include other "diverse" groups, particularly other racial minorities (Shiao 2005). This move legitimized the term diversity and associated it with multiple racial categories. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, following a

decade of deregulation and hostile attacks on affirmative action, corporate consultants and managers began to support diversity programs (Kelly and Dobbin 1998). As I discuss later in this chapter and throughout the dissertation, administrators in higher education and corporations turned to diversity in response to New Right campaigns against race-conscious policies and conservative appeals to "colorblindness" (MacLean 2006).

Research to date also has identified key features of diversity rhetoric. In organizational and popular rhetoric, the content of diversity rhetoric includes explicit racial references and often connotes people of color. In the most systematic study of individuals' perceptions of diversity, Joyce Bell and Doug Hartmann (2007) found that interviewees in different U.S. cities express an abstract, optimistic, and universalizing discourse on diversity—what one respondent describes as "happy talk." Respondents define diversity as including a broad range of categories but, when asked for specific experiences with diversity, mention their interactions with people of other ethno-racial backgrounds. This study and others (Berrey 2005; Goode 2001a; Valverde forthcoming) have shown that diversity discourse often assumes white people's experiences and viewpoints as the norm.

Diversity discourse also represents a historical shift away from discourse about race, equality, and civil rights. In the most extensive documentation of organizational discourse on diversity to date, Lauren Edelman and her colleagues (2001) show that corporate managerial rhetoric in the 1990s added non-legal categories of "diversity," such as viewpoints and culture, to protected classes such as race and gender. This managerial rhetoric about diversity appropriates and transforms legal ideals, portraying a management style that encourages harmonious productivity. In so doing, it disassociates issues of difference from civil rights law.

Some scholars point to an ongoing distinction between diversity and equality. In the context of higher education, leaders at the University of Michigan involved in the *Gratz* and *Grutter* lawsuits elaborated, popularized, and eventually codified into law Justice Lewis Powell's legal opinion about diversity. These leaders posed diversity as an alternative and preferable argument about affirmative action, in contrast to arguments about colorblind or remedial social justice (Green 2004b). Similar findings hold for individuals' perceptions of diversity. Bell and Hartmann's respondents had difficultly talking about diversity and equality at the same time, reflecting "the ability to explicitly talk about race and never accept the unequal realities and experiences of racial differences in American society" (2007:905).

Organizational and political actors have relied on symbols and rhetoric of diversity to commodify and market experiences such as college (Urciuloi 2003) and restaurant dining (Zukin 1995) or locations such as a neighborhood (Berrey 2005; Hoffman 2003). Their discourse of diversity constructs, for the media and broad public audiences, the appearance of inclusiveness and group cooperation along such lines as race, gender, and age (Berrey 2004). The commodification of diversity is commensurate with expanding global markets, consumer consumption, growing service sector, and market-based logic of neoliberalism (Downey 1999). Diversity discourse can complicate political activism, as well. It can exclude political issues that are important to poor people and people of color, such as low-income and tenants rights (Berrey 2005), and interfere with multiracial coalition-building by reifying ethno-racial identities, as it did among community residents in Philadelphia (Goode 2001a).

Cultural analyses of political economy have highlighted the role of political elites and business leaders in promoting diversity discourse, in pursuit of different political and economic

agendas (e.g., Berrey 2005; Zukin 1995). Some organizational sociologists have pointed to human resource professionals who were concerned with protecting their professional authority and positions as the primary advocates of diversity discourse (Kelly and Dobbin 1998). Others have argued that broader shifts in American political culture, rather than elite interests, led human resource managers to reach a "diversity consensus" (Lipson 2007).

These critical studies of diversity have pointed to important factors shaping the historical evolution and key distinguishing features of the diversity project. But, these analyses of diversity, rooted in disparate fields and disciplines, rarely come into dialogue with each other. They tend to rely on single case studies or analyses of a single organizational field such as human resource management, or they lack empirical data altogether. Most scholars do not focus on diversity rhetoric and initiatives as their central objects of study, nor do they theorize the political and organizational importance of these phenomena. They also have paid closest attention to spoken and written language without attending to routine practices and actions around diversity. Because there is little agreement in the "field" on how best to conceptualize diversity, the current research lacks an overall coherence.

Howard Winant (2004) observes that diversity is central to contemporary racial formation, but we have much to learn about the racialized project of diversity as an empirical phenomenon. Only a few disparate studies—notably, Jianbinn Shaio's analysis of foundations, Nancy MacLean's magisterial history of workplace integration, and Bell and Hartmann's study of diversity discourse—are concerned with the relationship between diversity and race, racism, and racial inequality. Because diversity is *the* dominant language and politics of difference in so many major institutions and the language through which elites deliberate and decide access to

resources—such as schools, jobs, and homes—these kinds of empirical studies are vitally important.

My dissertation fills some of these gaps. I investigate diversity as racialized political project that spans multiple institutions, characterized by common patterns of logic and strategies of action but also by tremendous variation in local practice. I leverage findings from three very different cases to make general claims and to illustrate them with qualitative nuance. I draw on these findings to develop our understanding of racial formation, power, and political culture in what critical analysts call the post-civil rights context. The result, I hope, is a comprehensive statement about the contours and consequence of this historically significant, politically charged project.

II. Diversity as a Racialized Political Project

Diversity is one of the major racialized political projects in the contemporary U.S. The concept of a racial project is based in Michael Omi and Winant's theory of racial formation (Omi and Winant 1994; Winant 1994; Winant 2000; Winant 2004), which argues that the notion of race, racial group categories, and racism are not biologically determined or static constructs. Rather, they are actively formed, institutionalized, and experienced through processes of racialization (see also Bonilla-Silva 2001; Jackman 1994; Lewis 2004). Racial projects represent the primary ways that race is constructed and mobilized in a racialized society like the U.S. According to Howard Winant (1994:19 see also Omi and Winant 1994), racial projects are "efforts to institutionalize racial meanings and identities in particular social structures." Racial projects articulate, bureaucratize, or challenge racial categories.

Racial ideology is the primary feature of a racial project (Wilson and Braddock 1997). In any given racial project, processes of racialization occur through symbolic forms such as discourses and images and through structural features such as resource distribution, political activity, and market processes (Omi and Winant 1994). Although these processes of racialization are "always embedded in other structurations, they acquire autonomy and have 'pertinent effects' in the social system" (Bonilla-Silva 1996:469, citations removed). Throughout world history, there have been many overlapping, competing racial projects (Omi & Winant 1994). They span the political spectrum and may be led by elites, intellectuals, the state, religious organizations, or social movements). Comparable political projects exist around such categories as caste, class, gender, and sexual orientation.

Racial formation also involves racial domination, particularly domination by white people (Lewis 2004). Omi and Winant describe the pattern of domination in contemporary racial projects as hegemonic. Hegemony involves efforts by elites to create and reproduce the popular "common sense" and social conditions they need in order to rule (Gramsci 1971). According to racial formation theory, race operates one of many "'regions' of hegemony" (Omi and Winant 1994:68).

The concept of racial projects can help to account for the broader phenomenon of diversity, but it requires some modification. Racialization theory tends to overstate the determinant power of race (Bonilla-Silva 1996; Nagel 1988). Such a criticism holds true for the case of diversity, which has been centrally but not solely concerned with race. To be clear, racialized representations and social structures are at the heart of the diversity project. Elites turned to diversity rhetoric, in part, as a response to political struggles for African-American civil

rights and public and private policies to promote racial integration. The logic of diversity ideology depends on race as a modal category of difference—in other words, race is the template for other categories of difference and for organizational activity around these differences (see also Skrentny 2002). Similarly, African-Americans are frequently the modal "diverse" group in diversity initiatives.

Today, diversity rhetoric and initiatives are often concerned with race, racial identity, and racial differences, particularly those associated with people of color. Leaders commonly insist on the importance and relevance of race for contemporary social relationships. In fact, their insistence distinguishes diversity from colorblindness, which is another pervasive racial ideology expressed by people—especially white people—who claim that they do not see race at all and that racial discrimination is largely a relic of the past (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Brown et al. 2003).

Yet, the diversity project is not now, nor has it ever been, only about the issue of race. In fact, the diversity project, like colorblindness, emerged as a shift *away* from rhetoric and politics that focused primarily or exclusively on race. Diversity programs frequently cater not only to people of color, but also to women, gays and lesbians, and others. As I show throughout the dissertation, the categories that count as "diverse," especially in organizational decision-makers' rhetoric, are vague and variable. This mercurial quality of diversity ideology is a tremendous strength and, at times, a source of vulnerability for proponents of the diversity project. Moreover, the term "diversity" need not be tethered to race at all. Scott Page's well-received new book, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies,* defines diversity as cognitive differences, using mathematical models and case studies to demonstrate that such "diversity" can improve organizations.

Racial formation theory also asserts that contemporary racial projects in the U.S. are hegemonic, with consent gained from those who are governed, in contrast to racial projects that are forced upon a populace through violence and repression (Omi and Winant 1994). According to Antonio Gramsci, elites construct hegemony in large measure by influencing what he calls "common sense." Gramsci understood common sense as "the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become 'common' in any given epoch[,]… half-way between folklore properly speaking and the philosophy, science, and economics of the specialists" (1971:322,325). The processes through which certain ideas become taken for granted as common sense is an empirical question. As Ann Swidler (1986:284) observes, some ideologies "may become so uncontested that they are no longer organized as self-conscious belief systems." (This progression can occur in the opposite direction, as well, with a common sense notion becoming a contested ideology (Hays 1994)).

Perhaps the diversity project is hegemonic, but my study cannot show this. I focus on political and organizational leaders and activists, not on the implicit and personal understandings and assumptions of race, difference, and inclusion held widely by students, faculty, or staff at Michigan, by employees at Starr, or by residents and organizational participants in Rogers Park. I do not know that these individuals and groups have internalized diversity ideology or have consented to the premises of diversity initiatives, in comparison to the ways that, say, Americans have internalized and consented to the notion of participatory democracy through voting. I certainly know that most people in my sites *acquiesced* to diversity ideology and initiatives (Gaventa 1980). But as many of my chapters show—especially Chapter Seven about Starr— many of my research participants also expressed ambivalence about diversity rhetoric and

programs and, as Chapter Ten shows, activists strongly contested some of the diversity project's fundamental precepts and goals.

What I can explain are the ways in which university, corporate, and neighborhood leaders *tried to* legitimize diversity ideology and initiatives. They have constructed and communicated diversity ideology as organizational common sense, and they have incorporated and reinforced various precepts of diversity ideology through their organizational diversity initiatives. These practices symbolically construct ideas about diversity as legitimate and instantiate them into social life (Thompson 1990), making certain social relations appear justified and worthy of supporting (see also Weber 1978 [1908]). This is how ideology operates and supports relations of power and domination.

For these reasons, I describe diversity as an orthodox racialized political project.[5] The diversity project is an interpretation of racial, ethnic, gender, class, and other social categories that seeks to redistribute resources along these lines. Like other racial projects, the diversity project is characterized by cultural representations—particularly an ideology of diversity—and by organizational structures and political processes in specific historical, social, and political economic contexts. I draw on empirical data and insights from studies of racial politics, ideology, and organizations to elaborate these features. I begin with organizational diversity ideology, which is the central focus of my dissertation.

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[5] Detractors might argue that I, as an analyst, am committing the same fallacy as those who promote diversity (or, for that matter, as colorblindness) by downplaying the centrality of race.

The Cultural Representations of the Diversity Project

In my three cases, organizational decision-makers and participants commonly use the word "diversity" descriptively, to refer to a mix or a variety of things. Sometimes the word just means racial minorities. But it is more than a vague, descriptive word. Organizational leaders communicate a broader set of ideas in the name of diversity, and these ideas often represent, protect, and legitimize their political and organizational goals.

More specifically, diversity serves as the official, color-conscious ideology of race, difference and institutional inclusion at the University of Michigan, at Starr Corporation, in Rogers Park, and beyond. By ideology, I mean a set of ideas and meanings that can create, sustain, or challenge unequal power relationships (Steinberg 1993; Thompson 1984; Thompson 1990). Ideologies are usually expressed through the language that people use in particular social contexts (Fairclough 1989; Gouldner 1976).[6] The language and logic of an ideology are malleable, multivalent, and open to interpretation and adaptation. Depending on the social and historical context, people may interpret a similar set of ideas in vastly different ways, or they may modify or highlight different elements. The same ideology can reinforce a range of policies and practices, thus serving a variety of interests and ends.

Diversity, like other ideologies, primarily manifests through discourse (Moaddel 1992; Steinberg 1999; van Dijk 1997; Wuthnow 1989). According to Marc Steinberg (1993:317), discourse consists of "complexes of semiotic practices and signs through which actors create, reproduce, and struggle over ways of making sense of social existence." The discourse on diversity can take many forms, such as spoken language, written texts, images, symbols,

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[6] I do not mean to imply that a single "dominant" ideology or set of ideologies exists, imposed on society by the upper class and blindly endorsed by the masses.

stereotypes, tropes, or conversational exchanges between individuals. In the organizational contexts that are the focus of my research, people communicate diversity ideology through organizational discourse, particularly through organizational rhetoric. Organizational rhetoric consists of formal public messages and narratives used strategically to persuade internal and external audiences and to identify an organization's image and goals (Cheney et al. 2004). It is a key form of communication within organizations and among organizational participants. Organizational rhetoric is a particularly important form of diversity discourse and my primary focus in the dissertation.

Sets of ideas are ideological because they serve political ends. Ideologies express the interests and commitments of the people who produce these ideas and the logic of ideological production (Bourdieu 1991). The ideologies of people in power provide meanings that make particular power arrangements, social differences, and hierarchies appear natural, standard, or ideal (Steinberg 1999). Oppositional ideologies provide alternative interpretations, often based on the experiences of a subordinated group (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

So, why call diversity an ideology, a term which, for many, summons up images of the wool being pulled over our eyes? Critical scholars of race and racial domination have called for analyses that locate the sources of racial ideas in socially structured, racialized contexts, rather than in individuals' attitudes, individual or social psychology, or de-contextualized local contexts and interactions (Bonilla-Silva 1996; Bonilla-Silva 2003; di Leonardo 1998; Steinberg 2001). The notion of ideology draws our attention to this social context. It compels us, as analysts, to attend to the relations of power and domination that undergird, inform, and are shaped by cultural ideas (Bourdieu 1991; Thompson 1984). By interrogating diversity's ideological

dimensions, I hope to illuminate the processes through which organizational elites construct and promote the diversity project and its relationship to other ideological projects and social hierarchies (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Hays 1996). In so doing, I show how people in power construct an orthodox ideology by delimiting meaning and silencing the less powerful.

Qualitative data, particularly ethnographic observations, are particularly well-suited to showing us the mechanisms through which people communicate ideologies and the consequences. My experience interviewing Franklin, an African-American man who had been a high-level officer in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for many years, is illustrative. Franklin invited me into his office, saying that he had heard good things about me from his staff. We made some small talk and then he pulled out a print-out of Power point slides titled "Diversity in Higher Education." Franklin then proceeded to talk through his slides. It turned out that he uses this presentation to explain the university's position on diversity to people like alumni. Although I managed to insert a few interview questions throughout and asked more questions at the end, I felt awkward and put upon. It was not the interview that I had hoped or planned for.

I would describe this interaction as an example of someone communicating an orthodox ideology. He was setting the agenda of what we would talk about, and I was going along with it by being polite. He allowed me to join him at the table but on very limited terms. I was consenting or at least acquiescing to his authority, but I did not necessarily believe the ideas he was communicating. Luckily, not all my fieldwork experiences were like this. Once I got over the disappointment of this interview—I wondered if I could even count it as a complete interview—I realized that it provided a window into some important empirical insights. In each

of my sites, people at the top of the local power hierarchy like Franklin had a very official script about diversity (at least in my presence and in my observations). I found that as I moved down the power structure, people were less and less wedded to this official ideology, even as they were responsible for communicating it publicly. This interview experience also helped me see that the *content* of diversity ideology may challenge the institutional exclusion of people of color, women, and other marginalized groups. But, organizational leaders often invoke diversity ideology in ways that protect and reinforce their bureaucratic authority and the power of white people, men, and affluent people.

I turn now to the actual content of diversity ideology.

The Organizational Ideology of Diversity

Some key elements of contemporary diversity ideology cut across my cases. Each of these elements may not appear in every individual statement about diversity, but they constitute the broader set of ideas that organizational leaders communicate in the name of diversity. Most activists supported some of these themes but not others, as I note below.

Diversity as Description: Race and More

Despite the historical and contemporary association between diversity and race, organizational leaders in my three cases have defined the meaning of "diversity" as broader than race and as somewhat vague. From their first political invocations of diversity rhetoric, the term "diversity" has referred to multiple socially valuable forms of difference, and its meaning has expanded to include more categories over time. Some common categories of diversity—such as gender, class,

and sexual orientation—are associated with disadvantage and may be protected classes under civil rights law. Other categories—such as culture, viewpoint, and intellectual style—are not associated with disadvantage or protected by law (see also Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001). Recall, for example, the comments of the Starr CEO that opened this chapter. He described diversity as ranging from race to *alma mater* to style.

For the CEO and others, these myriad forms of diversity are somehow comparable with one another. The forms of diversity about which leaders have statistical data, such as race, are more commensurate and, thus, play a more consequential role in defining social relationships, reifying entities, and directing organizational action (Espeland and Stevens 1998).

Leaders in each of my cases attend to different kinds of diversity depending on their organizational and political affiliations and their specific social and political circumstances. For example, the *Gratz* and *Grutter* lawsuits against Michigan challenged the university's use of race in admissions decisions. Building on Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke,* the university administration developed legal arguments about racial diversity on campus. When university executives and administrators discussed the legal cases in their speeches, panels, and public forums, they reiterated this focus on race but simultaneously qualified their comments with such statements as, "We interpret diversity very broadly."

Their ideology of diversity emphasizes the cultural expression of so-called diverse groups. These often take the form of cross-cultural and interpersonal experiences and interactions, especially across racial lines. These could be exchanges between a graphic designer and a multicultural marketing specialist on the same work team or the pleasures of buying *mangos con chile* from a Mexican street vendor.

Given this variation, organizational elites in my cases all express a broad vision of what counts as the local diversity and use it to characterize people and things in their respective institutions. Activists in my sites tended to have narrower definitions of diversity. They would focus specifically on racial and, sometimes, economic diversity, although opponents of affirmative action called for intellectual and political diversity, as well.

Diversity as a Moral Value

The logic of diversity ideology goes beyond vague, reminiscently racial categories. It presents diversity as a positive moral value (see also Glazer 2005). As University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman, a white woman, told a Detroit congregation in winter 2005, while she campaigned to attract African-American applicants, "Diversity in all of it forms is a crucial, central ethic of the University of Michigan." Likewise, diversity ideology provides an aspirational vision of how the world should work, posing interpersonal coexistence and cooperation as social ideals. As Alderman Joseph Moore, who represents Rogers Park in Chicago's city hall, often says, "Our community is a model for the rest of the city and nation." These organizational leaders imbibe and communicate such statements with a moral inflection, sometimes invoking the African-American political struggle for civil rights. Many activists put a stronger emphasis on the moral value of diversity (although challengers who opposed Michigan's admissions policies and Starr's support for gays and lesbians stressed the immorality of some forms of diversity).

Any ideology contains implicit contrasts (Thompson 1990). Such aspirational expressions of moral value juxtapose diversity to institutional models that repress or limit difference. The

contrasts here—what these leaders do *not* value—are suburban enclaves, racial segregation, the old boys club, lily-white campuses, or just a bland and dull homogeneity. Diversity ideology also communicates implicit assumptions about the types of people to be valorized. When managers at Starr describe the company's workforce as "diverse," they present individuals as representative of different views and cultures pursuant to their identities. In so doing, they reconstruct the racial subject as someone who expresses their identity through cultural traits rather than, say, an employee with civil and economic rights.

Diversity as an Institutional Advantage

Diversity ideology provides a rational justification for inclusion, as well. Organizational leaders commonly claim that broad institutional benefits ensue when people from different backgrounds live together, work together, and learn together peacefully. These benefits could be community growth, more sales, or better learning in the classroom. As Michigan President Coleman told that same Baptist congregation, "We firmly believe that diversity is essential to a robust and successful education."

According to diversity ideology, difference and inclusion are not just compatible with basic institutional goals such as providing education. Diversity actually can give their organization or geographic location an edge over competitors. A recent version of Starr's business case for diversity stated:

> We care about diversity because we care about the success of our business.
> Understanding and leveraging diversity is critical to Starr's growth. We believe that
> diversity is essential for our leadership in this industry. It is fundamental to our

relationships with our consumers, our customers, our employees and our
shareholders.

Such statements suggest that diversity's benefits are not limited to disadvantaged groups. These benefits extend to everyone and to the organization or neighborhood writ large, and they may be visible in tangible, measurable results.

Across my three cases, organizational leaders cite different benefits of diversity and emphasize different ways that diversity enhances local needs. Politicians and business leaders in Rogers Park suggest that diversity is compatible with development and growth, both central imperatives of urban politics (Logan and Molotch 1987). These neighborhood leaders imply that diversity can coexist with growth, as in the Alderman's oft-repeated phrase, "a diverse community cannot only survive but grow and thrive." They point to diversity as an indicator of economic vitality and assert that development *improves* diversity. The Chamber of Commerce's mission statement claims, "We value the diversity of Rogers Park and will diligently work to enhance it through balanced growth." Meanwhile, activists across these cases put little or no emphasis on the demonstrable institutional benefits of diversity.

This emphasis on institutional benefits distinguishes diversity from other pluralist ideologies such as multiculturalism, which stresses "equality among multiple cultures" (Gordon and Newfield 1996:4) but not necessarily measurable results. By emphasizing difference as a competitive asset, diversity ideology resonates with neoliberalism's vision of the free market as the best mechanism for defining social relationships, assigning value, and allocating resources.

Diversity as a Call for Institutional Action and Accommodation

Finally, the logic of diversity ideology provides prescriptions for achieving diversity. Organizational decision-makers rely on diversity rhetoric to suggest that institutions, organizations, and even individuals in positions of power should change to accommodate and foster diversity. These calls for institutional action sometimes justify initiatives intended to support "diverse" groups, especially racial minorities, and improve their numerical representation.

Sometimes, leaders' stated objective is to improve the institutional climate to better accommodate the needs and styles of "diverse" groups. At the Starr Women's Summit where the Starr CEO spoke, a number of the speakers and participants discussed changes they wanted to see in the "corporate culture" to make it more supportive of women in leadership positions. During speeches and small group sessions, participants discussed changes at the company made thus far, additional changes that the company still needed to make, and the extent to which women managers and executives should conform by, say, hiding their emotions. Political challengers often rely on similar calls for institutional change and adaptation.

This logic of institutional change contrasts with assimilationist ideology, which locates the barriers to inclusion in the behavior, psychology, or culture of the minority group (Steinberg 1989). This is not to say that organizational leaders never suggest that a group in the minority needs to adapt to the broader institutional culture. They often do. But they frequently invoke diversity rhetoric to acknowledge problems beyond the level of individual behavior and to underscore the importance of institutional action.

In my cases, organizational leaders point to a wide variety of organizational policies, practices, and structures as institutional examples of how they institutionally accommodate

diversity. However, organizational elites often endorse diversity rhetorically without necessarily backing specific initiatives to create or encourage it. In this sense, rhetoric about institutional action is an especially important component of diversity ideology. Political activists, in turn, use this disjuncture between rhetoric and action as a point of contention.

These four features constitute my inductive definition of diversity ideology. Organizational leaders in each of my sites sometimes disagreed about exactly how they should define or support diversity. Sometimes, they expressed doubts about their organization's support for diversity. Nevertheless, their rhetoric and representations of diversity generally fell within these parameters.

To analyze the relationship among ideologies, social inequalities, and power, analysts must look at both the ideas themselves and their manifestations in material and social life (Althusser 1984). Put somewhat differently, the content of ideology cannot be divorced from its uses. How people employ ideas makes them ideological or not.

The Organizational Structures and Political Processes of the Diversity Project

People instantiate the diversity project through mechanisms other than language use and communication (see also van Dijk 1997). They rely on organizational processes and formal, rationalized structures, most importantly policies, programs, and offices. The organizational structures of the diversity project are those initiatives, programs, policies, practices, political issues, positions, and departments that local organizational actors view as relevant to "diversity." I refer to these, in shorthand, as diversity initiatives. In a corporate setting, for instance, they include the Department of Diversity Management, multicultural marketing projects, company

metrics for reporting the representation of female employees and employees of color, and sometimes workforce affirmative action plans.

Organizational studies of diversity (e.g., Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001), in step with the broader research agenda of organizational studies (e.g., Stinchcombe and Heimer 1985), have paid closer attention to these organizational structures. However, they receive scant attention in most critical empirical studies of diversity discourse, and Omi and Winant's original formulation of racial projects does not feature them prominently. As anthropologist Annegret Staiger (2004) observes, racial formation theory provides insufficient guidance for explaining the links between the micro- and macro-level processes of a racial project. This theory often leaves underanalyzed the meso-level of organizational processes through which people communicate, institutionalize, and negotiate the concept of race and specific racial categories.

Organizations play a critical role in the creation and reproduction of racial categories and racism (Bonilla-Silva 1996). Empirical research shows that organizations may authorize race as an official category, such as the racial classification schemes used by government bureaucracies (Marx 1998, Skrentny 2002) and universities (Stevens and Roksa 2005). Organizations may treat race as an explicit feature of their formal programs, such as school curricula (Binder 2004). They also may construct race through more subtle mechanisms. Workplace jobs, for instance, commonly are structured around race, gender, and class and perpetuate stratification along these lines (Salzinger 2003). Organizational practices can ameliorate certain racial inequalities (Kalev, Dobbin and Kelly 2006) and exacerbate others (Massey and Denton 1993). In these and other examples, organizations are key structures for creating, mediating, and transmitting racial meanings and practices.

The effects of organizational "structures" are difficult to study, especially ethnographically, but the organizational processes and practices that constitute these structures are more accessible (Miller 2008; Schwartzman 1993; Vaughan 1996). Some of the most tangible processes and practices of the diversity project include the physical evidence through which people communicate their views of diversity. In the university setting, these range from mission statements to legal arguments to gallery exhibits. Other relatively accessible sites for studying such structures are formal organizational events, such as meetings and marches, and the preparation that surrounds them.

In the imprecise but useful language of cultural sociology, diversity ideology and initiatives are mutually constituted. Diversity ideology does not exist outside of concrete organizational processes, as an abstract system of ideas. Its expression depends on specific organizational and political practices, whether those are speeches, sensitivity trainings, or web pages. A particular event or program is a diversity initiative if leaders or participants designate it as such. The organizational and political processes considered to be central to the diversity project are heavily contingent on the views of political and administrative leaders. Organizational leaders' ideology of diversity both justifies and shapes the content, structure, and objectives these initiatives. These diversity initiatives, in turn, constitute key mechanisms through which organizations explicitly and deliberately distribute resources among people depending on their race as well as their class, gender, and sexual orientation.[7]

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[7] Organizations often distribute resources in ways that are *not* explicitly marked by race, gender, class or sexual orientation but that have differential impacts along these lines, such as—the use of informal networks to hire new employees or community policing campaigns to thwart "gang bangers."

Organizational and political leaders elaborated diversity ideology and pursued diversity initiatives within a broader social structural and ideological context. They made diversity the orthodox ideology of race, difference, and inclusion within this context and in response to organizational and political pressures that this context has established.

The Social Structural and Ideological Context of the Diversity Project

The rise of the diversity project in the U.S. has been one of many dramatic shifts in the politics of inclusion over the past fifty years. Through most of U.S history, white, affluent, visibly heterosexual men controlled major institutions such as the government and business, and ideologies such as white supremacy affirmed and buttressed these power arrangements. Federal and state laws, organizational policies, and individual practices were often explicitly discriminatory. Institutional discrimination against people of color, women, gays and lesbians, and poor people was commonplace, widely sanctioned, and often legal.

The Civil Rights Era and the Project of Racial Equality

World War II and the rise and fall of Nazism in Europe in the 1940s heightened concerns in many countries about assaults on minority groups (Wieviorka 1998), while the response of the U.S. government inspired greater faith among Americans in the ability of the state to promote social welfare. Amidst the tensions of the Cold War, the U.S. government faced political pressure from anti-racist activists at home and from leaders in Communist countries abroad who accused American politicians of condoning racial discrimination (Layton 2000). These pressures

helped to make many politicians in the U.S. more receptive to redressing racial inequalities at home (Skrentny 2002).

In the 1950s and 1960s, political activists concerned about African-American civil rights organized mass mobilizations to challenge legal racism and economic discrimination on the grounds of civil rights, justice, and equality (Klinkner and Smith 1999; Morris 1984). They made demands for "'complete equality—economic, political, social and cultural'" to government officials, private employers, and the U.S. public (Biondi 2003:16). Movements representing other marginalized groups—such as women, Mexican-Americans, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities—soon gained momentum and struggled for similar recognition and accommodation (e.g., MacLean 2006; Piven and Cloward 1977). Activists questioned discriminatory practices and brought attention to the rights of groups based on their racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender identities. These civil rights-era efforts reached their zenith between the mid-1950s and the mid-1970s but have continued in different organizational and political forms since then.

Many government lawmakers and bureaucrats in the U.S. supported this so-called minority rights revolution. They extended the New Deal, Fordist welfare state to ameliorate inequalities of race, gender, and (in some instances) class (Graham 1990; Schuck 2003; Skrentny 2002). Through legislation, executive orders, and judicial decisions, public officials institutionalized civil rights law that prohibited racial, gender, and other forms of discrimination in such areas as employment, education, housing, voting and public accommodations. This period of new law premised on non-discrimination peaked in the mid-1960s.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, federal policies shifted away from a standard of equal protection. Government leaders, federal agencies, and courts created and supported some limited redistributive, integrationist, and accommodationist policies. They include workplace affirmative action, race-conscious affirmative admissions, and housing programs such as integration maintenance, affirmative marketing, and scattered-site public housing. Many of these programs have relied on numerical goals and other race-conscious mechanisms to promote racial integration in workplaces, schools, and even neighborhoods. Their primary intent has been the integration of black people into white institutions, although workplace affirmative action covers women and other racial minorities and many public housing integration programs are based on income.

Civil rights historian Hugh Davis Graham explains that, in this interpretation of civil rights

> black disadvantage was explained not only as a legacy of slavery and segregation
>
> but as a consequence of institutionalized racism woven into the fabric of
>
> American life. Discrimination was thus seen to persist, even in the absences of
>
> conscious prejudice and specific acts of discrimination…. (1992:57)

The urban riots of 1965-68 and the 1968 Kerner report supported this particular vision and led many political leaders to conclude that a short-term, outcome-based policy strategy around race was needed (ibid). The underlying logic was that institutional actors—particularly the federal government—could help to remedy the disadvantages experienced by black people and poor people, especially poor black people. This logic undergirds non-discrimination law, but it more

directly informs the pro-integrationist platform, eloquently articulated in President Johnson's speech that opens this chapter.

The project of racial equality is characterized by this logic of remedying racial and class disadvantage and the political efforts that it justifies. The pro-integrationist programs of this project—especially those concerned with race—have been the most controversial in communities and the courts, as I discuss below.

The project of racial equality, like the diversity project, is necessarily a loose construct, as it took on different forms depending on the institutional context, geographic location, and historical moment. The policies and programs of this project are commonly associated with African-Americans even though they do not serve African-Americans alone or may not rely on racial minority status as a criterion for participation.

Civil rights law and affirmative action programs are fraught with many ironies and their own exclusions (Skrentny 1996). Implementation and enforcement of these provisions has been uneven and inconsistent (Dobbin et al. 1993; Edelman 1992). Scholars and practitioners continue to disagree over whether the intent of civil rights law is to end discrimination or to promote actively the integration of workplaces, schools, and communities. Many of the pro-integrationist policies have not (and probably could not) fully achieve their programmatic goals of integration. Elites have been able to shape and implement these and other civil rights laws in ways that maintains the status quo conditions while creating the illusion of change (Edelman 1992). Moreover, political conservatives have successfully challenged many integrationist policies, hampering their effectiveness or eliminating them all together.

At the same time, many integrationist programs still exist. Organizational and political leaders sometimes support them and often must assert their legal and normative compliance with these programs and with other civil rights protections.

Further, numerous studies have shown that these integrationist efforts have played a critical role in de-segregating workplaces, universities, and communities and have had positive effects on the African-Americans, Latinos, poor people, and women who were the intended beneficiaries (e.g., Bowen and Bok 1998; Briggs, Darden and Aidala 1999; Goodwin 1979; Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000; Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007). Also since this period, it has become less acceptable for people in positions of power to publicly disparage people of color or other minority groups (Omi and Winant 1994). Many institutional leaders now have strong imperatives to appeal to white people, men, and the middle class without alienating people of color, women, and other marginalized and underrepresented groups. They also face pressures and some incentives to accommodate or at least moderate and manage the demands of civil rights and other progressive activists. [8]

Many basic precepts of diversity ideology and many diversity initiatives are rooted in the project of racial equality. Civil rights era activists helped popularize such principles as interracial tolerance and the notion that mainstream and elite institutions should not exclude people based on their race. A directive by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for gathering data and monitoring civil rights reified five ethno-racial categories—black, white, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Hispanic (Hollinger 2000)—and these are now among the key

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[8] Today, the term progressive colloquially refers to a very liberal political stance. It indicates a preference for government intervention on social and economic issues, like income redistribution from rich to poor (Rempel 1997), and protection of civil liberties. It is associated with a style of discourse that expresses "moral outrage, universal claims of justice, and visions of a better society" (Hart 2001:4).

categories that comprise diversity rhetoric and programs. Affirmative action in the workplace and higher education began in this period.

But "diversity" was neither central to the demands of civil rights activists nor was it a cornerstone of federal civil rights legislation. Political activists were more likely to endorse rationales and remedies premised on social justice, equality, and legal rights (e.g., MacLean 2006), while government bureaucrats often preferred a logic of administrative pragmatism (Skrentny 1996).

Political scientist Anthony Marx (1998) shows that, when national governments end their official rules of racial domination, such as Jim Crow, and when organized resistance to those rules dissipates, black and white leaders in different countries have transformed race into an expression of cultural distinction. The racial reconstructionist projects of cultural pluralism, multiculturalism, and diversity and the reactionary politics of colorblindness emerged in response to this civil rights period. Proponents of these various, often overlapping political agendas have claimed some kind of affinity to the black civil rights movement or at least have borrowed from its rhetoric, concepts, and political strategies. While their political objectives differ in many respects, they tend to downplay or wholly deny structural inequalities of race (and gender and class) and instead emphasize cultural expressions of racial identity (and other identities, such as ethnicity and gender).

The Projects of Cultural Pluralism and Multiculturalism

The cultural pluralism of the 1970s, advocated by U.S. president Richard Nixon and white people who began to identify as "ethnic," celebrated the cultural worth and distinctiveness of

different ethnic and racial groups (Goode 2001b; Spillman 1997). The notion that different people can and should co-exist was not new to the U.S. Intellectuals and activists of the Progressive Era originally invoked cultural pluralism to affirm the existence and preservation of human differences, in hopes of countering the prevailing norms around assimilation and Americanization (Gleason 1984). The cultural pluralist revival of the 1970s valorized the cultures of minority groups, including white ethnics while it also obscured civil rights activists' concerns about structural racism, sexism, and economic inequality.

An ideology and rhetoric of multiculturalism began to develop in the mid-1970s in primary and secondary education as well. Grassroots groups trying to achieve racial reconstruction through local public schools were the initial advocates for multiculturalism (Newfield and Gordon 1996). Around the same time, governments in Canada and Australia were establishing official policies of "multiculturalism" (Ang 2005). Multiculturalism insists on recognizing the citizenship rights and cultural identities of ethnic minority groups and women, differentiating such recognition from assimilation into the mainstream, Anglo, male-dominated culture (Kymlicka 1995). It also emphasizes culture as the medium through groups express their differences (Downey 1999).

In the U.S., the popularity of multiculturalism peaked in the early 1990s on college campuses. It proponents, especially in higher education, challenged widespread assumptions about knowledge and truth as premised on the experiences and viewpoints of elite white men. Multiculturalism affirms the general value of cultural diversity and has helped to popularize diversity as a goal. Many proponents and commentators (especially in other Anglo countries) do

not differentiate it from diversity management (Ang 2005), nor do many conservative critics in the U.S. (e.g., Glazer 1997).

Randall Collins (1999) pinpoints diversity and these related ideological strands to the slight weakening of the United States' hegemonic geopolitical power in the 1970s. Around this time, the once-lofty éclat of Anglo-American culture began to lose some of its appeal. An international class of globe-trotting, cosmopolitan elites was growing, connected through transnational networks. They adopted a romanticized "lingua franca" of multiculturalism, diversity, and equality and institutionalized these concepts in both discourse and policy.

These projects of racial reconstruction paralleled major changes in the demographic make-up of the U.S. The passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act amendments of 1965 enabled massive waves of immigration from Africa, South and Central America, and Asia, the so-called "browning" of the U.S. By 1990 the U.S. was the country with the largest immigrant population in the world (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). The demographic composition of the U.S. class structure also changed during the 1970s and 1980s. More women and racial minorities entered the professional workforce and joined the middle class, in large measure because of intervention by the federal government through policies such as affirmative action (e.g., Collins 1983). A very small but noteworthy number of women, people of color, and visible gays and lesbians eventually became part of the country's economic and political elite (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2006). These changes create new and different pressures on local institutional leaders to learn to manage increasingly heterogeneous student bodies, workplaces, and residential communities (Glazer 2005; Schuck 2003). It even led to new industries and professional specializations, such as corporate diversity management (e.g., Lynch 1997). Within this context,

Powell authored his opinion in *Bakke* and codified diversity into law, particularly for higher education.

Racial categories, as socially constructed artifacts, are inherently simplistic and malleable. Immigrant newcomers—along with the growing number of people who identify as bi- or multi-racial—complicated the popular racial binary of black and white. These changing patterns of mobility and discrimination also have put into flux the current U.S. racial hierarchy, a hierarchy that is fluid, contingent on geography, social location, and individual identification (e.g., Jacobson 1998; McDermott 2006). It is unclear which groups constitute the key ethno-racial categories in this hierarchy—will Latinos become "white"?—but analysts largely agree that African-Americans make up all or much of the bottom tier and that many inequalities along racial, class, and other lines persist (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Gans 1999; Gold 2004; Twine and Warren 2000).

"Diversity," not cultural pluralism or multiculturalism, has became the primary rhetoric of racial reconstruction in many mainstream institutional contexts. All three ideologies recognize and valorize ethno-racial differences, particularly the identities of racial minorities. But diversity ideology extends this recognition to groups other than people of color and women. It prioritizes interpersonal interactions across racial and other lines, and it highlights the rational institutional benefits of inclusion. Such attributes make the project of diversity especially well-suited to such settings as universities, companies, and urban politics. The fuzzy language of diversity also fits with the shifting and uncertain nature of the current ethno-racial hierarchy.

Diversity also serves as the primary, race-conscious alternative to the racialized project of colorblindness, which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s to directly discredit the integrationist efforts of the civil rights era.

The New Right and the Project of Colorblindness

A reactionary neoconservative movement developed in response to the civil rights gains of the 1960s and 1970s and the growing political and economic power of groups such as African-Americans and women (MacLean 2006). This movement gained momentum, political clout, and power with the 1980 election of U.S. president Ronald Reagan. Bolstered by think tanks and foundations, these New Right adherents have challenged legally and politically the left-liberal and egalitarian politics advocated by civil rights advocates, feminists, civil libertarians, gay rights activists, environmentalists, and the labor movement. In unison with proponents of neoliberalism, they have worked to rollback redistributive government programs and regulations that interfere with the so-called free market (di Leonardo 2008; Harvey 2005).

Conservative and libertarian opposition to social programs for disadvantaged groups has included particularly vociferous opposition to affirmative action for African-Americans (Brown et al. 2003; Krehely, House and Kernan 2004). The most vocal proponents have been conservative political figureheads, but many white Americans also subscribe to these principles. Colorblind ideology (or what Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2003) calls "color-blind racism") asserts that the civil rights movement was a positive force in society and successfully established into law important abstract liberal principles, such as fairness (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Brown et al. 2003; Gallagher 2003). These proponents claim that racism largely has ended, so continuing

inequalities are the personal fault of black people who have failed to take advantage of opportunities. Colorblind ideology attributes racial minorities' inferior status to cultural deficiencies, and it naturalizes racialized phenomena like segregation.

Proponents of colorblindness see no need for race-conscious policies such as affirmative action and, in fact, view such policies as an affront to Martin Luther King Junior's calls for a color-blind America. They have protested such policies as racial quotas, preferential treatment, and group rights (Stryker, Scarpellino and Holtzman 1999). New Right activists and hostile government administrators, especially under the Reagan-Bush regime, led campaigns to discredit the logic of remedying racial and class disadvantage and to disable and dismantle the policies of racial integration. The U.S. courts have become more hostile to race-based integrationist policies. Decisions from *Bakke* in 1978 to *United States v. Starrett City Associates* in 1988 to *Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.* the following year found many such programs to be "racial quotas" and limited them or banned them altogether. The most consequential campaigns for colorblindness have ended race and gender-based affirmative action at the state level.

The success of the New Right and the campaigns for colorblindness have changed the institutional context for local decision-makers by reframing and changing the stakes of (what have become) political controversies, such as subsidized housing and affirmative action. Organizational and political leaders face new restrictions on race- and gender-conscious policies and further imperatives to demonstrate legal compliance. Some leaders have actively resisted these campaigns—Michigan's defense of race-based affirmative admissions is an especially important case—while at the same time they have new pressures and incentives to accommodate the demands of conservative advocates and political leaders. Proponents of colorblindness are

not just located outside mainstream institutions, applying pressure; they very often are members or even leaders, particularly in the U.S. government.

In politics and law, diversity is the primary race-conscious alternative to colorblindness. At the same time, colorblindness and diversity can co-exist within the same institutional context, as organizational leaders consider some racially-consequential practices as "colorblind" and other such practices relevant to "diversity." Diversity ideology and colorblind ideology share some features: both emphasize cultural expressions of race; appeal to abstract notions of fairness; and can reinforce white domination. But, diversity ideology, unlike colorblindness, insists that important differences exist between racial groups, that these differences shape people's social experiences in meaningful ways, and that they can be the basis of institutional exclusion. Likewise, diversity ideology asserts that institutions should recognize and take action to support such differences.

Neoliberalism and the Project of Diversity

Decision-makers in companies, universities, urban communities, and other sites of historical civil rights agitation led the call for diversity. They eschewed the New Right's extreme model of colorblindness by using race-conscious rhetoric and by supporting race- and gender-based programs. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a few administrators in predominantly white universities and civic leaders in white neighborhoods began to implement voluntary racial integration initiatives that they justified in terms of "diversity" (Goodwin 1979; Skrentny 2002 see also Chapter 7). Powell's 1978 opinion in the *Bakke* case provided further incentives to do so, particularly in higher education (Schuck 2003). During the 1980s, these organizational and

political leaders increasingly framed race, difference, and inclusion as matters of "diversity" (Downey 1999; MacLean 2006; Schuck 2003).

By the early 2000s, organizational and political elites had made diversity the orthodox, color-conscious language of race, difference, and inclusion. Racial equality, cultural pluralism, and multiculturalism are by no means "dead." Workplace affirmative action, ethnic and racial heritage celebration months, and revisions of the Western canon have not disappeared, and they sometimes find expression in diversity rhetoric, symbols, and programs. But organizational and political elites have made "diversity" their primary discourse of racial inclusion.

The diversity project gained hold in tandem with global neoliberalism. The transnational service economy was expanding and both economic capital, and people had become more internationally mobile (Castles and Miller 1998; Wieviorka 1998; Winant 2004). Under neoliberalism, governments in the U.S. and many other countries have shifted towards structures of taxation that facilitate the accumulation of capital, rather than income redistribution (Harvey 2005; Prasad 2006). Likewise, political leaders have favored policies that reduce the state's role in private industry while cutting welfare spending. Changing economic conditions in this era have included worsening wage and wealth inequality as well as ongoing ethno-racial and gender inequities (Krugman 2002; Reed 1999).

Neoliberal ideology reasons that the logic of the "free market" should govern the economy and state regulation thereof. Policymakers and bureaucrats have introduced market competition and free market logic to new institutional contexts, such as city government's public services (Klinenberg 2002). In the 1990s, the Democratic Party advocated for "reinventing government" according to market-oriented notions of efficiency and fiscal responsibility (Reed

1999). Like the other social structural and ideological currents I have described thus far, neoliberalism creates new pressures and incentives for organizational and political elites, many of whom subscribe to neoliberal principles or at least uphold them through their organizational practices. These imperatives include marketing their institutions and their commodities, whether those are consumer products, professional credentials, or a unique cultural climate.

Neoliberal ideology is not centrally concerned with race. But, in the U.S., neoliberalism is often accompanied by a racial logic that de-emphasizes race and adopts an ambivalence about or disdain for many pro-integrationist programs. Clinton and his supporters, for example, took the position that the Democrats needed to distance the party from racial issues. His policy on affirmative action—"mend it, don't end it—supported the basic goals of affirmative action, while he pledged to eliminate any program that "'creates a quota, creates preferences for unqualified individuals, creates reverse discrimination or continues even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved'" (Klinkner 1999:24). The racial logic of neoliberalism also refashions the meaning of race for a competitive market (Downey 1999; Zukin 1995).

The diversity project communicates this racial logic in numerous ways. For example, diversity ideology and initiatives mirror neoliberalism's emphasis on measurable payoffs. They convey the message that racial inclusion and the proper orientation towards race can produce beneficial market and organizational outcomes. Admissions staff at Michigan pledge to applicants that, at Michigan, they can gain that experience with diversity that employers are looking for, so students will have an edge in the global market. Many leaders at Starr and in Rogers Park expressed disdainful ambivalence about government programs to promote racial, gender, and class integration. As my research also shows, diversity rhetoric is especially

conducive to communicating about inclusion and difference among the people most valorized by neoliberalism—the affluent and those in prestigious occupational positions—and diversity initiatives often target these groups. In these and other ways, the diversity project refashions race for the neoliberal context (see also Duggan 2003).

IV. How Diversity Transforms the Politics of Racial Equality

Organizational elites led the call for diversity in the face of these broader social structural and ideological shifts and new institutional pressures. These leaders have sought to manage changing demographics, signal legal compliance, defuse both progressive and conservative activists, and compete in the market economy.

Large, abstract, macro-level trends alone have not driven the diversity project. The meso-level organizational and political influences of path dependency and mimetic isomorphism have shaped how and why organizational leaders have adopted diversity rhetoric, symbols, and initiatives. Take, for example, Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke.* Powell's opinion included the most restrictions on how admissions policies could consider race and the clearest rationale for doing so, but his was not the majority opinion and so it was not clearly the legal precedent. But colleges and universities took their cues both from Powell's opinion and, importantly, from each other when they adopted diversity as a goal and characterization of their admissions policies (Lipson 2007). This is a classic case of what organizational theorists call mimetic isomorphism, in which organizations duplicate practices common in their organizational field, in an attempt to demonstrate legal and normative compliance (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Similar patterns of mimetic isomorphism characterized large companies' adoption of corporate diversity

management in the early 1990s (Kelly and Dobbin 1998), and, in all likelihood, the adoption of diversity as a rhetoric and planning principle in some urban politics. (My findings about diversity suggest that such mimetic isomorphism happens *across* institutional fields, but a different research design would be necessary to confirm this).

Moreover, and more relevant to my findings, organizational and political leaders have needed to adapt diversity ideology and initiatives for their local institutional contexts. They have needed to communicate about diversity in ways that gain at least the acquiescence of most organizational members and political constituents. My research reveals a number of key strategic processes through which organizational leaders construct diversity ideology as orthodoxy, as an official characterization, explanation, and aspirational model of race, difference, and inclusion. Qualitative data are uniquely positioned to reveal processes, which I outline here as the strategic uses of the diversity project.

The Strategic Uses of Diversity Ideology and Initiatives

Organizational leaders in my three cases use diversity ideology and initiatives in a variety of strategic ways, seven of which emerged as particularly important in my three field sites. Not all seven uses are evident in all three cases nor do they matter equally in each case. But, collectively, they represent the key ways in which local decision-makers have exercised power in the name of diversity.

Some common themes cuts across these seven uses: leaders acknowledged race as one of many salient social categories that organizes social experiences and they affirm racial identity. At the same time, they downplay issues of racial inequality and the importance of remedying

racial and class disadvantage. Often, decision-makers are trying to encourage white people to accept some institutional integration of African-Americans. Organizational and political leaders long have relied on diversity rhetoric to signal that racial minorities should have access to their institutions but that white people need not be threatened.

I identified these themes inductively from my qualitative data, and throughout the dissertation, I elaborate the ways that they manifest in my cases.

★ *Framing the Terms of Institutional Inclusion: Diversity as Ideal and as Solution*

Organizational and political leaders in my cases have relied on diversity ideology and initiatives to frame the terms of institutional inclusion. Framing is a self-conscious, interpretive process that renders ideas and practices familiar and salient, and thus more accessible for others to understand and adopt them (Strang and Soule 1998 see also Snow and Benford 1992). Organizational leaders in my sites frame the terms of institutional inclusion in language that is recognizable to their organizational constituents, that their constituents would *expect* them to use. Such framing is a means by which organizational leaders try to construct the symbolic meaning of reality in ways that, they hope, will resonate with their constituents (Bourdieu 1991; Snow and Benford 1988).

One way that university, corporate, and neighborhood decision-makers frame institutional inclusion is through their characterizations of the political issues commonly associated with diversity (see e.g., Edelman 1974). Diversity rhetoric and initiatives enable elites to define the issues, delineate sides, and establish one side as legitimate. In Rogers Park, local politicians and real estate interest groups framed local political debates over gentrification by

contrasting the diversity created through "mixed-income housing" with the "concentration of poverty" created by low-income and subsidized housing.

Another way that leaders frame institutional inclusion is by communicating diversity ideology and diversity initiatives through local expert discourses. They draw on public relations techniques, pedagogical exercises, and discourses of law, social scientific authority, individualism, urban planning, and market competition. Many of these discourses and practices are manifestations of what Anthony Giddens (1990) describes as expert systems: the professional expertise and knowledge that orders much of social life, especially by means of formal organizations (see also Scott 1998).

At Starr, for example, human resource professionals and experts couch the inclusion of racial minorities, women, and other "diverse groups" in terms of strategic human resource management and corporate profits. They invoked discourses of organizational efficiency and corporate restructuring to assert that diversity management programs are relevant to corporate goals. In so doing, they attempt to communicate diversity ideology as organizational common sense.

★ *Constructing and Reinventing a Symbolic Institutional Identity as Inclusive*

In my three cases, local leaders commonly draw on diversity ideology to construct their institutions' symbolic identities as inclusive and progressive. As scholars of urban neighborhoods, public agencies, and large corporations alike have shown (Czarniawska 1997; Hatch and Schultz 2004; Hunter 1974; Zukin 1995), people construct narratives and identities for their institutional homes. Organizational and political leaders have the power to designate and

diffuse"official symbolic institutional identities. These identities may characterize their institutions as unique and cutting-edge, or mainstream and traditional.

Political and organizational elites characterize their respective organizations or, in the case of Rogers Park, their location in the language and symbols of diversity. For example, Michigan executives describe the university in terms such as "a diverse center of academic vitality" and, as headlined on the undergraduate admissions office's 2003 web site, "Distinguished. Diverse. Dynamic."

These decision-makers rely on diversity ideology to describe the populations in their sites, such as Starr Corporation's employees and its consumer base, which is heavily female and includes niche markets for African-Americans and Latinos. Leaders also invoke "diversity" to describe objects and services available for consumption. For instance, the promotional brochure for the Rogers Park real estate industry association heralds the neighborhood's "retail shops, galleries, and restaurants that reflect the fascinating diversity of more than a dozen ethnic heritages."

Leaders have invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives to reinvent their institutions' identities and priorities, as well. Often, they have done so to shed an image as unreceptive to people of color, but sometimes they have sought to attract capital investment. In Rogers Park, politicians and business leaders began to describe the neighborhood as a "diverse" community just as developers and local newspapers began to identify the community as primed for gentrification (e.g., Hopp-Peters 1988).

By characterizing their institutions' identities as inclusive and the local populations as diverse, these organizational leaders seek to demarcate their respective sites in various arenas of

institutional competition (Bourdieu 1990). Those arenas might be consumer promotion campaigns, public relations advertising to lure homebuyers, or employee or student recruitment. Starr Corporation, for example, advertises its merits as an "employer of choice" in industry magazines such as *Diversity, Inc.*

★ *Endorsing—but Redefining and Downplaying—Integrationist Programs*

Decision-makers in my three cases have, in the name of diversity, endorsed and defended integrationist programs such as workplace affirmative action. At the same time, leaders have redefined the meaning of those programs, minimizing their role in remedying racial and economic disadvantage.

These decision-makers are not the only actors to do so. They are situated in broader political and organizational fields that are beholden to and confined by—and therefore following and mimicking—government policies and law. Yet they still play a role in reinforcing the distinction between diversity and redistributive private and state-led initiatives. University leaders made these distinctions to defend diversity as a compelling governmental interest. In Rogers Park and at Starr, these distinctions have helped to distance the ideal of racial inclusion from mechanisms of state intervention. In all three cases, leaders rely on these distinctions to legitimize the ideology of diversity and to pose diversity as compelling, preferable, and legitimate alternatives to an ideology and political platform of remedying racial disadvantage.

★ *Changing the Constituents: Allocating Resources for Other Marginalized Groups and for Economic Elites*

Organizational leaders' discourse on diversity designates particular kinds of policies and programs as relevant to diversity. These diversity initiatives target different types of people than those targeted by integrationist polices, past and present, in each site. It is through these initiatives that organizational leaders have changed the constituents of their programs for inclusion.

Sometimes, the new and additional constituents are disadvantaged in some respect. Gays and lesbians are one such group. Often, organizational leaders have made changes in response to social movement pressures and pressures from internal organizational members (Briscoe and Safford 2005).

Sometimes these constituents are privileged, especially along class lines. The shift at Starr from affirmative action, which technically covers all workers, to diversity management, which explicitly targets the one-third of the workforce in the U.S. that is salaried and non-unionized, exemplifies such a change. This represents yet another way that white people and economic elites have managed to hoard opportunities and resources in the face of integrationist efforts such as public school reform (Walters forthcoming see also Tilly 1999). These efforts also are compatible with the neoliberal and neoconservative shift towards redistributive public policies that favor the wealthy or that serve the most "deserving" of the disadvantaged (Bennett and Reed 1999; di Leonardo 2008).

★ *Shaping the Content and Implementation of Law and Public Policy Concerning Race*

Yet another way that organizational leaders have invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives strategically to shape the content and implementation of law and public policy. Their efforts range from Michigan's successful legal arguments, which changed legal doctrine, to the support that Rogers Park politicians give to set-aside programs for "affordable" condominiums. The ability to shape the logic, the content, the popular meanings, and the actual enactments of state policy and law is a classic hallmark of power, and such laws are the central object of much activism and resistance (e.g., Scott 1998).

★ *Defining Middle Class Human and Cultural Capital: The Skills of Diversity*

Power is also marked by skills, habits, and bases of knowledge and, especially, by the ability to designate which skills and knowledge are valuable in a given context and to inculcate these in children, students, employees, and others (Bourdieu 1984; Lareau 2002). Organizational and political leaders in my sites—particularly at Michigan and Starr—have defined middle class human and cultural capital in terms of skills and experiences of diversity. Michigan and Starr supported deliberate educational and training programs to teach such skills and elaborate arguments about why such skills were necessary for interracial and cross-cultural communication, human resource management, democracy, national defense, and the competitive global market. These institutions also have created some mechanisms for measuring such skills and, supposedly, impose sanctions on those who fail. In Rogers Park, leaders and organizational participants express the skills of diversity in terms of a cosmopolitan, tolerant outlook on

different types of people and a penchant for exploring different cultures, especially through food and music.

★ *Marginalizing Alternative Ideologies and Political Agendas*

Finally, decision-makers' diversity rhetoric and initiatives have excluded alternative political ideologies and agendas around race and inclusion, including the more radical demands of left-wing activists. Organizational leaders also have relied on the diversity project, particularly diversity rhetoric, as a defense against political attacks by conservative activists, especially those who call for colorblind language and policies.

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These seven strategic uses of diversity ideology and initiatives are the primary mechanisms through which the project of diversity has transformed the project of racial integration and equality. The New Right has led the campaign to disable and dismantle racial integration policies and to discredit the principles of remedying racial and class disadvantage through government intervention. The neoliberal agenda of the New Democrats has done little to resurrect them. But my research shows that the political project of diversity also plays a role in this process.

These strategic uses of the diversity ideology and initiatives support a variety of political agendas, interests, and commitments. Some of these agendas are concerned with remedying disadvantages of race and class, but many have worked against the goals of institutional access and integration and, especially, the goal of remediating racial and class inequality. The diversity

project broadens the politics of inclusion beyond race and problems of inequality. Diversity rhetoric and initiatives present racial inclusion in language and terms that are more politically palatable to white people and the middle and upper class. They refashion the terms of institutional inclusion to fit better the organizational and political demands of the neoliberal, post-civil rights era. In so doing, the diversity project transforms and, in many instances, undermines rhetoric, politics, and policies concerned with remedying racial and class disadvantage.

CHAPTER THREE. UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FROM OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISADVANTAGED TO THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

In the 1960s and 1970s, the University of Michigan pioneered the Opportunity Awards Program to admit and support racial minority students. According to university administrators, this program would "provide opportunities to that group of citizens whose race and/or economic status has met social and cultural disadvantage from generation to generation."[9] This public rhetoric about opportunity and disadvantage was the university's early color-conscious language about race, difference, and inclusion. Administrators at other universities and some federal agencies commonly used such language, as well.

By the late 1980s, university administrators at Michigan still supported programs targeted to students of color, and they expanded the scope of such programs beyond recruitment, admissions standards, and financial aid to include greater attention to the campus environment. They also changed their rationale for supporting such programs and minority inclusion on campus more generally. Instead of emphasizing disadvantage or minority students, university representatives instead invoked an expansive ideology of "diversity." For example, in the 1987 undergraduate admissions viewbook, which the university distributes to potential applicants, the opening letter from university president Harold Shapiro states:

> The University of Michigan is committed to being a racially, ethnically, and
> religiously heterogeneous community. This commitment stems from many

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[9] Office of Admissions. *The University of Michigan Bulletin: Information for Prospective Undergraduate Students.* 1971. p. 8

sources, including the conviction that such diversity is essential to creating an intellectual and social climate.[10]

Through the mid-1990s, administrators modified rhetoric by elaborating the ways in which diversity benefits learning, the importance of varying viewpoints, and the relevance of diversity to white students. The welcoming letter from the interim president in the 1996 viewbook proclaimed:

> The more varied the lessons and the perspectives of teachers and students, the richer and more resonant our education, and the more exciting our collective and individual efforts to achieve knowledge and understanding. The University of Michigan today embodies much of this vision, in part because of efforts to promote diversity in our classrooms, residence halls, and offices.

These discursive changes in the university's undergraduate admissions materials embody an important ideological shift. University leaders and administrators at Michigan, and beyond, made diversity their official discourse of race, difference, and inclusion.

In this new rhetoric, the meaning of diversity was vague and positive. It emphasized race and inclusiveness but included categories other than race and class. It increasingly indexed viewpoints as an important form of diversity and as the medium through which people express their differences. It underscored the moral and institutional benefits of diversity—in this case, how diversity enhances academic excellence.

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[10] Undergraduate Admissions Office. *The University of Michigan Bulletin*. 1987. p. 6.

This ideological shift accompanied important changes in law and in organizational practices, policies, and priorities.

The diversity project emerged in higher education at a time when multiculturalism and accommodationist policies to include minority groups were becoming more common but also facing more political fire (MacLean 2006; Skrentny 2002). Accounts of the so-called culture wars and identity politics of the 1980s and 1990s commonly portrayed university campuses and American society as wracked by cultural and religious clashes (Hunter 1990; Schlesinger 1991). Some have questioned the grounds for these divisions and the degree to which such divisions actually exist (Rieder and Steinlight 2003; Smelser and Alexander 1999). Others have criticized the erasure of social class and the economy from much of the discourse about identity politics, both on the ground and in academe (di Leonardo 2008; di Leonardo forthcoming; Gitlin 1996). Universities' race-based affirmative admissions policies have been a lightning rod in these campus, political, and legal debates (American Enterprise Institute 2003; Cokorinos 2003; Entman 1997; Hochschild 1999; Orfield and Whitla 2001).

The U.S. Supreme Court's 1978 decision in *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* introduced and legitimized diversity rhetoric and established an association between "diversity" and minority college admissions. Subsequently, leaders and administrators at Michigan framed various affirmative action initiatives to recruit and support students (and faculty of color) as pursuant to the goal of "diversity." Through much of the 1980s, the content of diversity ideology on campus closely mirrored Justice Lewis Powell's opinion in *Bakke,* and administrators' uses of diversity rhetoric remained tethered to the topic of admissions. The majority of justices in *Bakke* did not approve what is commonly called the compensatory argument for affirmative action, so

this case also gave university leaders an incentive to discard their earlier rhetoric about creating opportunity for the disadvantaged.

But administrators and leaders at University of Michigan did not adopt diversity rhetoric solely to demonstrate legal compliance with *Bakke* or to copy standard organizational practices in the field of higher education (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Diversity ideology and initiatives made sense with organizational circumstances at the local level. They served a variety of strategic purposes, within and beyond the admissions office. In the two decades after *Bakke,* university administrators expanded the meaning of "diversity" to encompass an even wider variety of differences, most notably viewpoints and white students. University leaders used diversity rhetoric to describe the student body and the university's values, reconstructing the university's symbolic institutional identity as amenable to people of color and other minority groups. Leaders invoked "diversity" to describe and appeal to white students and students of color alike. They designated particular race-targeted initiatives, including affirmative admissions programs, as pursuant to the goal of diversity and expanded these programs. They simultaneously developed new diversity programs for all students, including white students, and for other minorities such as gays and lesbians.

At the same time, administrators redefined the purpose of race-targeted programs; they justified these programs *and* the new diversity programs that were not race-targeted by emphasizing the institutional benefits of diversity. In so doing, they rhetorically downplayed the association between "diversity" and racial minorities, and they expanded the groups who counted as "diverse" and were eligible to participate in diversity initiatives.

In this chapter, I relay the history of how diversity ideology became the preferred way of representing race, difference, and inclusion at the University of Michigan between the 1960s and the mid-1990s. This is one piece of the larger story in which the diversity project became orthodox.[11] I begin by describing the project of racial equality on campus. I then trace the rise and evolution of diversity rhetoric in the 1980s and through the mid-1990s and university leaders' strategic uses of diversity ideology and programs. I locate these trends in the racialized political project of diversity within the social, political economic, and organizational context of Michigan and higher education. The chapter concludes by discussing the implications of the shift on college campuses from the project of racial equality to the project of diversity. In the next chapter, I turn to the political debates over campus diversity in the contemporary context, including the ongoing distinction that university leaders make between remedying inequality and promoting diversity.

I. The Project of Racial Integration on College Campuses: The Opportunity Years

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, affluent white men from the local area and from gentile backgrounds made up most of the student bodies at prestigious colleges and universities in the U.S. (Lemann 1999). The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment had prohibited racial preferences, and state colleges in all regions except the Jim Crow South were supposed to be open to everyone. Yet, openly discriminatory policies and structural barriers made most universities and colleges inaccessible to African-Americans, white

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[11] As described in the methodological appendix, my primary source for this chapter is the set of application view books produced by the University of Michigan's Office of Undergraduate Admissions between 1970-2005. I also rely on minutes from the university regents, OUA newsletters, and other primary and secondary sources.

women, and other minority groups (if they attended college at all). Most black college students went to sex-segregated black colleges, while white women studied at women's colleges.

Following World War II, a number of political economic, social, and organizational changes gave people of color, women, Jews, and other minority groups relatively greater access to prestigious, historically white colleges and universities and more incentives to attend. The role of higher education in American society was changing. In the post World War II economy, a college degree was becoming more important for ones career prospects and for a middle class income in the U.S. Federal and state governments made massive investments in public research universities, community colleges, and student loan and grant programs, following the rationale that government could improve people's economic circumstances by providing opportunities to go to college (Stevens 2007).

The college-bound population mushroomed following WWII. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944—colloquially known as the G.I. Bill—subsidized college and vocational training for returning veterans, including African-Americans and women. By 1956, millions of veterans swelled the ranks of student bodies at universities and colleges across the country.[12] At Michigan, 13,000 students were enrolled in the fall of 1939 just before the war began; nine years later, the university enrolled more than 21,000 students, at least half of whom were veterans (Peckham 1994, pp. 210,236).

College student activism gained momentum in the 1950s and culminated in the late 1960s; at Michigan, students organized around such issues as civil rights, the Vietnam War, women's rights, and campus childcare services. In the 1950s, activists and some leaders at elite

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[12] http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/history.htm. Accessed January 31, 2008.

universities began to challenge popular ideas and widespread practices governing who should go to college and how they should gain admittance. Many universities began to adopt new organizational policies and practices that encouraged the enrollment of groups other than affluent white men, such as affirmative admissions programs and standardized tests in college admissions (Chen and Stulberg 2007; Lemann 1999). Around this same time Congress passed legislation such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination in educational and other institutions (Harper and Reskin 2005).

The University of Michigan had long been a predominantly, but not exclusively, white and male institution. African-Americans, women, and foreign students were first admitted to the university in the late 1800s (Duderstadt 1995; Peckham 1994). Although the 1960s were a time of growth for the university, as the administration increased the size of the university's campuses and faculty, fewer than 200 black students attended the university—under .1% of the student body (Peckham 1994). Until the early 1970s, female students could not belong to the Student Union or participate in varsity sports or many student clubs, and evening curfews in the dorms restricted their movement. The university hired new faculty primarily through "old boys" networks, systematically excluding those women and racial minorities who, albeit small in numbers, were eligible to become professors. This was common practice beyond Michigan, as women rapidly pursued higher education but then faced outright discrimination when applying for faculty jobs (MacLean 2006).

Students on Michigan's campus, concerned about these conditions and inspired by the national movement for black civil rights, mobilized for racial inclusion in the 1950s and 1960s. They held demonstrations and letter drives to demand greater minority enrollment, support

services for minority students, and an end to practices like fraternities' secret "bias clauses," which kept out racial minorities (Peckham 1994:278).

The Rhetoric and Programs of Racial Integration at Michigan: Creating Opportunities for the Disadvantaged

In the early 1960s, administrators at Michigan endorsed a racial integration initiative for the university on the grounds that it would create opportunities for racially and economically disadvantaged students. They began the undergraduate Opportunity Awards Program in 1964, which featured recruitment, admissions, financial aid, special orientation, and counseling services for black students. One of the first of its kind in the country, this voluntary affirmative admissions initiative was soon expanded to other students but continued to target African-Americans. As the undergraduate admissions office explained in a newsletter for high school principals and guidance counselors, "The composition of this group of persons is primarily Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans (American Indians); although other persons from socially, economically, and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds are also included."[13] Administrators admitted students using "both the regular and special criteria."[14] The university committed $66,000 for financial aid in the program's first year and increased this amount to $980,000 for the 1969-1970 school year.[15]

The university president, Harlan Hatcher, developed the program with Roger W. Heyns, the director of the Detroit Urban League, who rationalized it on the grounds of "'extend[ing]

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[13] *University of Michigan: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors*. Sept. 1974, p.2.
[14] *University of Michigan: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors*. Sept. 1973, p.1.
[15] University of Michigan, Board of Regents. 1979. *Proceedings of the Board of Regents*. Mar. 1970: 391.

educational opportunities for academically qualified students who are presently disqualified for reasons which are largely financial" and improving the status of black people (Chen and Stulberg 2007:47). Through the mid-1970s, administrators continued to justify the program on the grounds that it would increase opportunities for students disadvantaged by their race or economic status. Administrators described the goal of these efforts in terms of numerical representation: the "increased enrollment of minority and low income students."[16]

Although university leaders at Michigan were at the forefront of affirmative college admissions, they were not alone in this effort. Across the country, administrators at selective universities and colleges were starting new initiatives in response to civil rights activism in the South, student protest, and urban riots and, for some, out of a seemingly genuine concern for improving racial minority representation (Chen and Stulberg 2007; Skrentny 2002; see also Welch and Gruhl 1988). These special programs primarily focused on admitting and academically supporting African-Americans, particularly very poor blacks from urban communities, although some programs included Latinos (Bowen and Bok 1998). University administrators commonly believed that both race and class influenced college access. However, they used racial minority status as their standard for conferring benefits, and they often characterized their affirmative admissions programs as compensation for past and present racial discrimination (Skrentny 2002).[17]

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[16] *University of Michigan: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors.* Sept. 1972, p.1.

[17] Administrators usually did not include Asian Americans in university affirmative admissions programs, as Asian Americans commonly were not viewed as educationally disadvantaged (Skrentny 2002). Similarly, universities considered affirmative admissions for female applicants unnecessary because women had sufficient access to higher education when universities terminated sexist admissions policies (ibid; see also Harper and Reskin 2005).

At Michigan, the university accommodated female undergraduates by amending the criteria and rules for various programs and organizations, such as the marching band, to make them accessible to women (Peckham 1994). Administrators did show active interest in boosting female student enrollment in the sciences; in materials

In 1969, with black students comprising 3% of Michigan's student body, many student activists felt the university was not making enough effort to enroll black students and other students of color, (Peckham 1994). Over the next five years, the Black Action Movement (BAM), the Third World Coalition, and the new Black Student Union organized to demand more radical change. They continued to hold sit-ins and demonstrations—including a boycott of classes that lasted two weeks— and called for such improvements as a black studies center and the goal of 10% black admissions by 1973 (Greene 2000).

When student protests over minority admissions threatened to become violent, university leaders faced a major public relations problem. Some of these administrators also felt compelled to act out of their sympathy with student activists' concerns. At their March 1970 meeting, the university Board of Regents unanimously agreed to expand funding for the Opportunity Program to $3 million by the 1973-74 school year.[18] They endorsed BAM's goal of 10% enrollment of black students as well as substantial increases in the numbers of "other minority and disadvantaged students." The undergraduate admissions office subsequently lowered academic requirements for racial minority applicants to a 2.5 grade point average and a 600 score on the Standardized Aptitude Test.[19] (Around this same time, the university considered non-minority applicants minimally qualified if they had a high school grade point average of 3.0 and a

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distributed to high school guidance counselors throughout the 1970s, the admissions office stressed that female students were underrepresented but welcomed in the College of Engineering (e.g. University of Michigan: Admissions Bulletin: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors Sept. 1975 p. 4). But administrators' concerns about women largely focused on the faculty and staff, following a 1969 charge by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare that the university discriminated against female employees. HEW found gross underrepresentation of female employees and unequal salaries for men and women. The university had to create an Affirmative Action program to satisfy federal employment guidelines for women and racial minorities, and it subsequently pursued a number of initiatives for compliance, such as the creation of the Center for the Education of Women.

[18] *Regents proceedings*, March 1970: 391.
[19] *Regents proceedings* Mar 1987: 1095.

composite SAT score of 1000.)[20] The university also instituted new academic programs, curricula changes, student lounges, racial sensitivity trainings, support services, and research about minority and female representation in response to demands made by black student activists, Native American students, students with disabilities, feminist activists, gay and lesbian activists, and their allies.

Through the early 1970s, university administrators and leaders continued to claim that minority admission would help remedy disadvantages of race and class and create opportunities for black students and other students of color. For example, when the regents made their commitment to expand the Opportunity Program in 1970, they cited rationales such as "improving the position of black students as well as that of other minority and disadvantaged groups" and "correcting social wrongs." They noted the importance of bringing black people into the "mainstream of life" and "achieving harmony and unity in the country."[21] They also referenced the university's responsibility and "distinct obligation" in these matters.

At subsequent meetings in the 1970s, the regents' discussions and administrators' presentations about student admissions focused on the annual "Minority Student Enrollment Report," the administration's efforts to increase the numbers of racial minority students—especially black students—and the university's support services for these students.[22]

The Opportunity Program had a considerable impact on the representation of students of color, especially black students. Most of the racial minority students who entered the university in the 1960s through the mid-1970s entered through the Opportunity Program.[23] By 1973, 7.3%

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[20] The University of Michigan: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors, September 1973.

[21] *Regents proceedings*, March 1970: 391-4.

[22] E.g. Regents Minutes. Feb. 1979, p. 192.

[23] *University of Michigan Admissions: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors*. Sept. 1975. p. 2.

of the student body was African-American (Peckham 1994). By 1978, however, black students were dropping out of the university at a higher rate than white students, and some black students felt stigmatized by their association with the program. So, university leaders changed the program criteria by increasing the minimum standardized test score requirement for black students.[24] In the following five years, the enrollment of black students declined but their graduation rates improved.

The Opportunity Program and the rhetoric administrators used to describe it represent the clearest manifestation of the project of racial equality on Michigan's campus. The Opportunity Program at Michigan, like affirmative admissions efforts at other universities, was voluntary and institutionally driven. The federal government did not require universities and colleges to practice affirmative admissions, nor did it provide the university with support or funding for such activities. In other words, in elite universities like Michigan, the key policy initiative for promoting the project of racial equality had fewer ties to the federal government than did comparable projects in neighborhoods—where open housing law and government subsidized housing were the focus—or in companies mandated by the government mandated to practice workforce affirmative action.

The federal government did not oversee affirmative admissions (or even set parameters on it until the late 1970s). However, government legislation, new public agencies, and a number of Court rulings provided demographic categories, language, and rationales that university leaders relied upon. As John Skrentny (2002) shows, the Office of Civil Rights required universities and colleges to submit admissions data for "official minorities" (presumably,

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[24] *Regents proceedings*, Feb. 1984, p. 255.

African-Americans, Latinos, and women). In so doing, the agency, which oversaw enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, indicated that the institutional inclusion of these particular minority groups mattered. The Higher Education Act of 1965 relied on the term "disadvantaged," defining it to mean low-income students who had "cultural needs" (ibid, fn 21). However, people commonly interpreted the term, as used by the federal government, to mean black people (Spearhead 1981).

By the mid-1980s, there was a major sea change in university leaders' public rhetoric about race, difference, and inclusion. "Diversity" became the new *lingua franca*, replacing earlier language about creating opportunities and remedying disadvantages of race and class.

II. The Emergence of the Diversity Project at Michigan: Early Strategic Uses of Diversity Ideology and Initiatives

Diversity Ideology at the University

In the early 1980s, administrators and leaders at Michigan began to use consistently diversity discourse. Michigan's undergraduate admissions viewbooks provide a window into this new rhetoric. The viewbook first heralds campus diversity in 1982, explaining to prospective students, "You will become appreciative of the infinite variety of people and their individual uniqueness—and ultimate value—through associations at a university with an incredibly diverse population."[25] By 1985, diversity had become a prominent theme in the viewbook, which stated,

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[25] The term "diversity" appears in an ambiguous quote from a student in the viewbooks in the late 1970s. The quote, which is printed next to text about why students choose to attend Michigan, says, "With the code of the time and all, Michigan just seems the place to satisfy everything the college student wants because of the diversity, and it's big."

"diversity is one of the assets of the University."[26] The following year, the viewbook details the "diversity of social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds" represented by Michigan students, and it highlights the percentage of minority and foreign students. [27] The text also elaborates a rationale for supporting diversity based on both moral conviction and the institutional benefits of interacting with different kinds of people:

> The University … strongly believes that diversity fosters an exchange of ideas and a world-view that greatly expands the learning experience and prepares students to understand and interact with those from different cultural, religious, and philosophical backgrounds.

As the viewbooks indicate, diversity became a major theme in the public rhetoric of the undergraduate admissions office. The viewbooks highlighted quotes from different students praising campus diversity. The featured letters from the university president and the undergraduate director of admissions heralded such diversity, its benefits, and the university's commitment therein.

Over the next two and a half decades, university administrators made "diversity" their primarily public discourse on race, difference, and inclusion, within and beyond the undergraduate admissions office. Between the 1980s and the early 1990s, a few themes remained consistent. Administrators remained concerned with the numbers of racial minority students enrolled and graduating from the university and, increasingly, they turned their attention to the campus climate for racial and other minority students. In the viewbooks, "diversity" included but

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[26] *University of Michigan Bulletin* 1985 p. 4
[27] *University of Michigan Bulletin* 1986 p. 3

was not limited to race, and over time, the association between diversity and race became more tenuous. Students could experience diversity through interactions, including intellectual exchange. Diversity is an important campus value. Diversity is compatible with and contributes to academic excellence. And the university administration supported diversity, both as a principle and through various initiatives.

Diversity ideology also evolved over this period, with the viewbooks emphasizing slightly different goals and rationales for diversity, depending on the political climate and the administration of the university president. At first, Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke* provided the template for university administrators' rhetoric about diversity, and diversity ideology was closely connected to the topic of admissions.

By the end of the 1980s, university leaders had expanded the meaning of diversity, and diversity ideology became more common in areas of campus life other than undergraduate admissions. Administrators often invoked "diversity" to designate various policies and initiatives—especially race-targeted programs—as relevant to diversity. This association was sealed by university president James Duderstadt's Michigan Mandate in 1990, which relied on an expansive vision of diversity and connected diversity to a variety of institutional benefits. In one of his 1995 Legacy Documents, Duderstadt lists an even broader range of forms of diversity than the forms featured in the Mandate:

> diversity in all of the characteristics that can be used to describe humans: age, race, gender, disability, ethnicity, nationality, religious belief, sexual orientation, political beliefs, economic background, geographical background (University of Michigan 1995:8).

The 1996 undergraduate admissions viewbook highlighted another type of diversity that would become increasingly important over the next decade: points of view. That year, the letter from the interim president explained, "We want your perspective to find a place at Michigan, because we want to benefit from it, just as we believe you will benefit from the perspectives of others." This also was the first time that the undergraduate admissions materials explicitly stated that *everyone* contributes to diversity, and they do so through their differing viewpoints.

Michigan administrators also developed more nuanced rhetoric about how diversity precisely influences the intellectual environment. The university president's letter in the 1995 viewbook, for example, states that "Different groups of people have different ways of conceptualizing and addressing intellectual issues." University leaders cited new institutional and societal imperatives that benefited from campus diversity, as well. In winter 1998, the Faculty Senate Assembly passed a Value of Diversity Statement that declared diversity "a resource that needs to be tapped" to produce better knowledge. The statement alluded to new rationales, such as the competitive edge that Michigan had over other universities because of its diversity. It proclaimed that recruitment and inclusion of "all who comprise our diverse society" would "facilitate the development of new ideas in our intellectual enterprise" and enable "the University to retain its leadership role within the educational community."

University leaders and administrators did not only communicate about race as a matter of diversity during this period. Through the 1980s and early 1990s, their public rhetoric consistently referred to "minority" students, although they made fewer references to black students in particular and many eventually switched to language about "students of color." Through the mid-

1990s, university leaders continued to stress the need to increase the numbers of these students and to target special recruitment efforts towards them.

But, over this time period, university leaders' public discourse included fewer and fewer suggestions that the university should support minority students in order to remedy any racial or economic disadvantages that students might experience. Take, for example, the university's rhetoric about the Opportunity Program, which was incorporated into a larger academic support program in the mid-1980s. Through the 1980s, the Opportunity Program remained targeted to minority students and administrators' rhetoric about it emphasized numerical representation, but they no longer pointed to disadvantages of race or class. Instead, they described participants in the Opportunity Program as "educationally disadvantaged but academically promising students who need special support services."[28] In 1987, the last year the program is mentioned in the admissions viewbook, the text makes no reference to participants' race or ethnicity. Of course, this does not mean that university executives and administrators altogether stopped talking about how to remedy racial disadvantage. Such language, however, dropped out of public view, and university leaders' rhetoric about diversity became far more pervasive.

Why did this ideological shift occur in the university's public rhetoric about race and student admissions—from providing opportunities for disadvantaged racial minorities to crafting a diverse class? Towards what ends did university leaders use diversity rhetoric? Administrators adopted diversity rhetoric in their admissions materials as a gesture towards legal compliance, particularly with *Bakke,* and in step with organizational practices in the field of higher education. Diversity ideology served a variety of other strategic purposes, as well.

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[28] *The University of Michigan Admissions Bulletin,* 1985, p. 22.

With a growing sense of competition among universities for funding, students, and faculty, university public relations were becoming increasingly important. Student demographics were changing, and resentment of affirmative action was growing, especially among white students. Activists continued to pressure university leaders to attend to minority admissions, and administrators remained committed to maintaining some race-based affirmative admissions.

Diversity ideology communicated a vision of race, difference, and inclusion that was compatible with these and other new legal, political and organizational imperatives that university leaders confronted. University leaders invoked "diversity" for a variety of strategic uses. They sought to demonstrate, at least rhetorically, their compliance with law. They reinvented the symbolic image of the university to affirm minority inclusion, in an effort to appeal to white students and students of color alike, to justify but redefine the purpose of race-targeted programs, and to expand the constituents for diversity initiatives to include marginalized groups other than people of color as well as white people.

★ *Asserting Compliance: Diversity as a Rhetorical Adaptation to Law*

The Bakke Decision

The U.S. Supreme Court's 1978 decision in the *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* played a decisive role in defining and popularizing the term "diversity" at Michigan and at other colleges and universities (Schuck 2003). In fact, the opinion of Justice Lewis Powell in this case was probably the pivotal historical moment in the institutionalization of the diversity project, in higher education and beyond. The *Bakke* decision also provided the first legally-sanctioned

justification for race-based preferences in affirmative admissions in higher education (Harper and Reskin 2005). According to Peter Schuck (2003:384, fn 164), "The Supreme Court had alluded to the benefits of diversity in higher education long before *Bakke*, though not in so many words, not as a rationale for affirmative action, and only as to how blacks would benefit from being with whites, not the reverse."

Supreme Court decisions can have a legitimizing effect, making people more likely to accept concepts or arguments that they previously found objectionable (Clawson, Kegler and Waltenburg 2001 in Richardson and Lancendorfer 2004). Court decisions, like other legal arguments and concepts, also may become part of public discourse, individual perception, and organizational practices, far removed from formal legal arenas. There, they take on new meanings and significance (Ewick and Silbey 1998; Nielsen 2000; Sarat and Simon 2003). This was the case with *Bakke*. Although *Bakke* applied only to higher education, it provided and legitimized a definition of diversity. Following the decision, the word "diversity" and many elements of the definition soon became commonplace in other contexts, such as workplaces and neighborhoods.

In the 1970s, Allan Bakke, a white man and undistinguished student, applied twice to the medical school at the University of California at Davis and was twice rejected. With some support from the nascent neoconservative movement (MacLean 2006), Bakke filed a lawsuit against the university. He challenged a university program that set aside sixteen of the one hundred available seats for minority students.

The Court announced six separate opinions in this very divided decision. Powell and four justices, led by John Paul Stevens, found the UC-Davis admission plan to be an unconstitutional

quota. This made *Bakke* one of a number of legal decisions prohibiting explicit numerical racial quotas, goals and set-asides. Yet Powell joined the other four justices—the "Brennan Four"—to concur that university admissions offices could take race into account in their decisions. The Brennan Four had cited as acceptable a rationale similar to what the University of California had argued: the state had an interest in compensating for injuries of racial discrimination and inequality. They argued that the state "may adopt race-conscious programs designed to overcome substantial, chronic minority under-representation where there is reason to believe that the evil addressed is a product of past racial discrimination." Powell, however, disagreed with this rationale.

In a solo-authored opinion that would become the enduring legacy of the case, Justice Powell reasoned that "diversity" was a compelling goal in admissions decisions. He relied heavily on a brief submitted by administrators from Harvard and a few other prestigious universities. These administrators were the first influential advocates of diversity ideology. Like their counterparts at other universities, they oversaw affirmative admissions programs for minority students, but they formulated a new justification for such programs (Skrentny 2002).Their brief spelled out an early version of what is now known as the "diversity rationale." The authors argued that individual students bring different valuable qualities to the mix of students on college campuses, and a student's race or ethnicity should be considered a "plus factor" for that mix.

Powell elaborated on the universities' brief. His opinion identified "diversity" as an acceptable goal for college admissions and as a rationale for accounting for race in admissions decisions. He reasoned that institutional benefits—in this case, "the robust exchange of ideas"

central to the educational mission—ensue from an environment that is diverse along many dimensions. These dimensions include but are not limited to race and ethnicity. His statement about diversity was not the majority opinion in *Bakke,* but it included the most restrictions on how race could be considered in admissions decisions, making it that much more legally influential.

Powell's opinion signaled to university and college administrators that they could consider race in their admissions decisions within certain parameters and that they should frame their admissions objectives in terms of diversity. After 1978, leaders at universities across the country, including Michigan, adopted much of Powell's language and reasoning in their public rhetoric and admissions policies. They treated his opinion as settled law until 2003, when it was affirmed by the Supreme Court in *Gratz* and *Grutter.*

The legal language in Powell's opinion directly influenced the meaning of diversity ideology at Michigan. The text of Michigan's undergraduate viewbooks clearly reveal this influence. Powell defined diversity as encompassing "a far broader array of qualifications and characteristics of which racial or ethnic origin is but a single though important element." Similarly, Michigan's viewbooks referred to many forms of diversity, including "people with diverse social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds who come from all 50 states and more than 90 foreign countries."[29]

Powell's opinion emphasized that diversity benefits the broader institution by enhancing the learning environment. Echoing Powell's statement, Michigan's viewbooks detailed the ways that diversity creates educational benefits for students, the academic community, and the

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[29] *The University of Michigan Bulletin.* 1985. p. 4.

institution at large. The opening letter from president Harold Shapiro in the 1987 viewbook announced,

> The University of Michigan is committed to being a racially, ethnically, and
> religiously heterogeneous community. This commitment stems from many
> sources, including the conviction that such diversity is essential to creating an
> intellectual and social climate which promotes the freedom of thought,
> innovation, and creativity so fundamental to an academic community.[30]

And, like Powell, Michigan leaders asserted that *everyone*—and not just racial minorities—benefited from diversity. In other words, the advantages of diversity were not confined to students of color. As president Shapiro's notes in his 1987 opening letter, the university's goal was to create a community "in which all may thrive."

Although administrators changed the language they used in Michigan's promotional materials for undergraduate admissions, they did not necessarily change the university's admissions practices in accordance with *Bakke*. [31] According to Deane Baker, a white male Republican regent who was skeptical of the university's policies on racial minorities, the university had implemented a "'dual-track admission system'" for minority and majority students in the 1970s and continued to use this system through at least the mid-1980s.[32] In 1997, the university's differential treatment of racial majority and minority applicants became the center of a major court case, and the Supreme Court found iits undergraduate admissions policy

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[30] *The University of Michigan Bulletin,* 1987.

[31] The University of Michigan Law School reviewed and revised its admissions policy in the early 1990s to ensure the policy was in accordance with Powell's opinion in *Bakke*.

[32] *Regents proceedings* Mar 1987:1096. Baker described this new system as driven by both federal and state law and university policy.

unconstitutional. Jim Vanhecke, who oversaw minority admissions from 1985 to 2000, offered a different account from Baker's. During an interview he asserted that, in the mid-1980s, "The philosophy in the [admissions] office that we started with was that any minority student admitted… had to at least meet fully standards that we felt were predictable in saying they will graduate. So you had to be fully qualified." Regardless of the university's actual admissions policies, Powell's endorsement put diversity at the center of the university's rhetoric about admissions.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action

The *Bakke* case was not the only legal influence on this burgeoning ideology of diversity at Michigan (see e.g., Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Kelly and Dobbin 1998), nor was diversity ideology at Michigan confined to student admissions.[33] Starting in the 1950s, the federal government and courts endorsed a series of laws and decisions that granted rights, legal protections from discrimination, and in some cases, targeted resources to people of color, women, and other institutionally marginalized groups. Government bureaucrats and lawmakers did not typically couch these in the language of diversity (Skrentny 1996), but "diversity" proved to be a useful way for the university administration to talk about the objectives of their new compliance policies and the groups covered. Michigan administrators gradually began to formalize diversity rhetoric in policy statements, strategic plans, speeches, and public documents outside the admissions office.

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[33] Erin Kelly and Frank Dobbin (1998) argue that companies instituted corporate diversity programs in the early 1990s in response to the federal government's retrenchment of workforce affirmative action funding and enforcement in the 1980s.

For example, in the late 1970s, pursuant to changes in federal law, the university expanded the groups covered by its non-discrimination employment policy. The policy already included race, sex, color, religion, creed, and national origin or ancestry, and the university added age, marital status, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status.[34] Although federal legislation did not specify diversity as a goal of Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action law, administrators at Michigan revised the language of the policy to say that the university "shall strive to build a diverse community in which opportunity is equal for all persons." This goal has remained part of the university's EEO/AA policy since then.

The university's adoption of diversity ideology was likely a classic case of mimetic isomorphism. In this case, colleges and universities took their cues from Powell's opinion and, moreover, from each other (Lipson 2007). At the same time, organizational leaders and participants must adapt such practices and imbue them with meanings that make sense in their local milieu. Through the 1980s and 1990s, university administrators and leaders continued to adopt, amend, and invoke diversity ideology to serve a variety of strategic objectives.

★ *Reinventing the University's Symbolic Institutional Identity*

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, university administrators paid more attention to admissions of racial minority students than in the past, but they still did not feature people of color or minority inclusion as central to the university's public image or its mission as an institution. In 1971, the only reference to race or minorities in the viewbook was the description of the Opportunity Program. Between 1974 and 1979, the first page of the viewbook described

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[34] *Regents proceedings* 1979. p. 314.

Michigan students as varied along many dimensions, including their ethnicity, but similar in their academic commitments:

> [Michigan students] differ considerably in their ethnic, social, [and] economic backgrounds, academic interests, [and] career goals. They come mostly from the State of Michigan but also from all other states and 83 foreign countries. Some are rich, some are poor, most are neither. One-third of the undergraduates receive some form of financial aid… What most have in common, though, is that they're bright, academically oriented young people who did well in high school and want to do well in college.

The viewbooks presented more images of students of color during the early 1970s, as well. One admissions brochure from the late 1960s had 34 photographs of people, and only four included a visible person of color. In the 1971 viewbook, four of the 23 photos of people had a visible person of color, all African-Americans (in two of these photographs, people of color are portrayed as students). This proportion stayed roughly the same through the 1970s.

In the 1980s, the university continued to characterize the student body in similar terms but identified the differences among students as "diversity." For example, the 1986 viewbook pronounces:

> New undergraduate students at Michigan will join a group of 22,000 young people representing a diversity of social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, all 50 states, and more than 90 foreign countries. Minority

student enrollment has grown to approximately ten percent over the past

few years; foreign students comprise more than five percent of the total

enrollment. [35]

By 1984, students of color became more central to the images in the viewbook, featured in over a

third of the photographs of people

Admissions materials and other university documents also made diversity central to

Michigan's institutional identity and its values. By 1992, the university's vision statement

included the goal of being "recognized as a University that honors human diversity."[36]

As evident here, university administrators' new diversity rhetoric was not a complete

disjuncture from their previous depictions of Michigan's campus community and institutional

identity. Leaders continued to describe Michigan students as a mix, united by their shared

intellectual drive. Likewise, in the 1980s, administrators presented diversity as a "special

responsibility" of the university, just as they had justified the Opportunity Program in the 1970s.

Still, diversity constituted a new discourse about race and difference.

University leaders reconstructed the university's public image amidst important social

and political economic shifts. The 1970s had been a period of financial crisis throughout higher

education. At Michigan, this crisis was propelled by a national economic downturn, the decline

of the automobile industry in the state of Michigan, and cuts in federal and state funding for

universities (Peckham 1994).

Prior to the 1960s, the university had been funded primarily by state appropriations and

student fees. Although the primary function of higher education at this time was to teach

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[35] *University of Michigan Bulletin* 1986 p. 3

[36] http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/slfstudy/ir/criteria/

students, Michigan and some other major universities began to expand their research and development capacities (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Starting in the 1960s, Michigan leaders and faculty increasingly pursued grants from government agencies, like the Department of Defense, and relationships with private industry. By the 1980s, student tuition and alumni donations had become more important sources of funding, as well (Bok 2003; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). This quest for dollars, combined with a growing number of students entering higher education, heightened anxiety among students and their families about securing a slot at a prestigious college and fueled growing competition among elite universities for the best students, including top students of color (Stevens 2007).[37]

As they vied for private and public dollars and competitive applicants, university leaders at Michigan, like their counterparts throughout higher education, carefully cultivated a public image of the university. Diversity ideology provided one mechanism for crafting such an image (see also Urciuloi 1999).

During the 1980s and early 1990s, the demographics of the college bound population were changing. At Michigan, the total enrollment of undergraduate African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans reached around 13% in 1988 and then leaped to almost 25% by 1995 (see Figure 1). More foreign students and women enrolled in the university. Some minority groups, such as gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, organized on campus for greater recognition and resources. By the late 1980s, a backlash against affirmative admissions was mounting, both on campus and across the country, and racial tensions at Michigan ran high. The federal government and courts also increasingly opposed race-targeted programs; in 1990, for

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[37] See e.g., Regents proceedings, 1983 p. 268.

example, the U.S. Department of Education decreed that universities that receive federal financial aid could not distribute scholarships for students of a specific race, and in 1995, the Supreme Court upheld a similar ruling by a lower court. [38]

Given these changing circumstances, university administrators strategically employed diversity ideology to manage campus inclusion and race relations. The vagueness of the term "diversity," its association with students of color, and its positive connotations made it a practical and useful term for characterizing the university. Along these same lines, university leaders relied on diversity rhetoric to appeal to students of color and white students alike.

Appealing to Students of Color and White Students

Political discourse and routine everyday conversations are commonly peppered with code words for racial minorities (Edelman 1977; Eliasoph 1999; Neubeck and Cazenave 2001). These euphemisms often have a negative connotation, such as neighborhoods labeled "dangerous" because most residents are Africa-American. "Diversity" frequently connotes racial minorities but its meaning is simultaneously positive and ambiguous. This ambiguity, in and of itself, is sociologically meaningful, as it suggests that ambiguity enables group members to achieve some kind of objective (Eliasoph 1998). For instance, members may perceive more precise language as risky or inappropriate . Although researchers often cannot discern what people truly mean by vague terms such as diversity, especially when we work from archival documents, we can gather some clues from the social context in which people speak and write.

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[38] E.g., Stewart, Linda and Louis Aguilar. 1990. "Schools ready to fight for racial scholarships." Dec. 13. Detroit Free Press. Dec. 13. 1A; Associated Press. 1995. "Justices refuse college aid case: lower court scuttled race-based program." Detroit Free Press. May 23, p. 5A.

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Figure 1. Percentage of undergraduate students at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor by race, 1965-2007
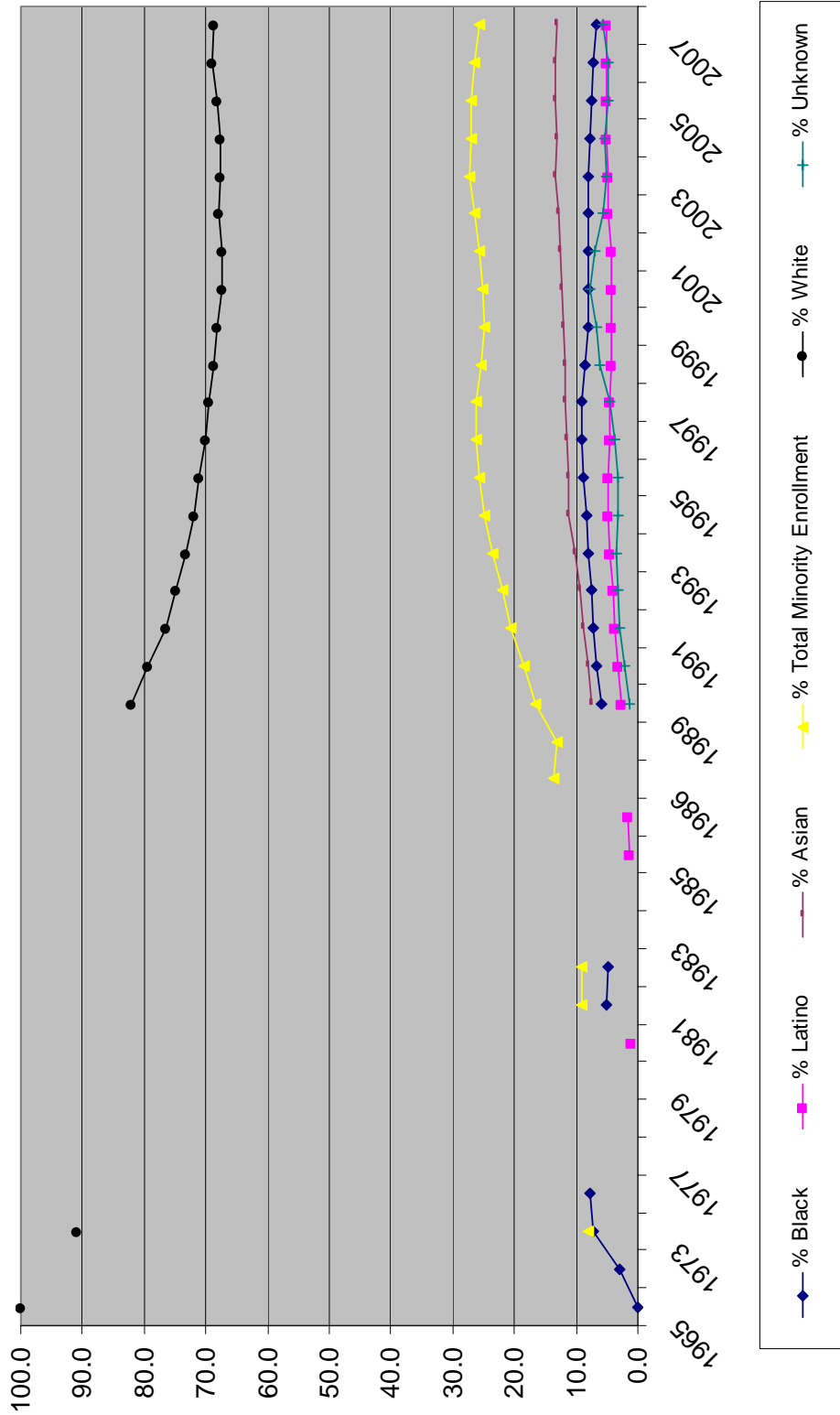
Sources: 1965 to 1988: Peckham (1994), Matlock et al (nd), Monts and Matlock (2002), Proceedings of the Board of Regents, University of Michigan multiple years); 1989-2007: University of Michigan Office of the Registrar Report 837 (multiple years)

Along these lines, administrators at Michigan used "diversity" euphemistically, to connote racial and ethnic minorities. For example, the admissions office opened an adjunct office in Detroit in 1990 to promote racial minority recruitment. At this time, the city was 76% African-American, and the metropolitan region was the most racially segregated region in the country (Farley et al. 1993). The opening ceremony was presided over by university president James Duderstadt and the director of undergraduate admissions at Michigan, both white men. The African-American woman heading the new office told the 350 educators and community leaders at the event, "'I am excited to be a part of the U-M admissions team. The commitment to meeting the goal of diversity will be realized as we all work together.'"[39]

Administrators in undergraduate admissions also replicated diversity rhetoric in their recruitment materials specifically for applicants of color. The Undergraduate Admissions Office created and distributed a pamphlet, *Consider Michigan: Blacks, Asian Americans, Hispanics, American Indians,* in the early and mid-1980s.[40] The office recommended to guidance counselors that they share this pamphlet with applicants to the Opportunity Program.[41] The pamphlet featured photographs and quotes of African-American, Latino, Asian-American, and other minority students. The text read

> The University of Michigan is committed to excellence. The quality and diversity
>
> of the University's academic programs, resources, faculty, students, and student

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[39] Office of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Michigan. 1990. *Points of Entry* Fall Vol. 3, No. 2; Stewart, Linda and Maryanne George. 1990. "U-M opens up an admissions office in Detroit." *Detroit Free Press*. Oct. 18. 1C.

[40] Box 1, Office of Undergraduate Admissions (University of Michigan) publications, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. The office initially titled this pamphlet "Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans;" Asian-Americans were added by the mid-1980s.

[41] University of Michigan, Office of Director of Admissions: A Report to Michigan Principals and Counselors Concerning the Admission of Freshman for 1981, Sept. 1981.

life are important contributors to this excellence. A major goal of the University is
to attract a diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial population including increased
numbers of Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and American Indians who can
benefit from and contribute to the continuation of our tradition of academic
excellence.

(This quote also reflects administrators' ongoing attention to and discourse about the numerical
representation of students of color.) So, diversity rhetoric both implied racial minorities, and
university administrators invoked this rhetoric to appeal to students of color.

However, Michigan administrators also referred to white students and appealed to these
students with the broadly inclusive language of diversity. For example, the Office of
Undergraduate Admissions sponsored a High School Scholars Day in 1989, which brought in
170 top student "scholars" from non-metropolitan areas of Michigan. The office described this
recruitment effort as "part of the effort to increase the diversity of students on campus."[42] Thus,
students from rural Michigan communities, which are predominantly white (Center for Urban
Studies 2002), also constituted "diversity."

Furthermore, racial minorities were not the sole, or even the primary, campus audience
for university leaders' diversity rhetoric. Rather, white students were, given that they made up
the vast majority of applicants and enrolled undergraduates. (Similarly, the university's
employment policies applied to the entire university community, which was also majority white.)
University administrators seemed to believe that white applicants would find the idea of diversity
appealing. In the early 1980s, just as administrators made diversity a theme in the admissions

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[42] Office of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Michigan. 1989. *Points of Entry* Spring Vol.2, No.2

materials, the undergraduate viewbooks began to feature white, Asian-American, Latino, and black students praising the diversity at the university. For example, a white female student quoted in the 1985 viewbook says, "The best thing about U-M is its diversity."

University administrators indicated an even greater recognition that diversity was relevant to white students during the 1990s. In a 1993 regents meeting, one dean noted that white students came to the campus eager to experience diversity.[43] A survey of Michigan students in the class of 1994 corroborated this perception. The Michigan Student Study found that just over 50% of the African American students, just under 50% of the Asian American and Latino students, and 30% of white students cited Michigan's "racially and ethnically diverse student body" as an important reason in their decision to attend the university (Matlock, Gurin and Wade-Golden nd). Across the country, the early 1990s were a time when college students reported a heightened awareness of and concern about racial issues. In 1992, the same year that riots erupted in Los Angeles over police brutality against Rodney King, 46.2% of first year college students nationwide agreed that the promotion of racial understanding was an essential or very important goal (Pryor et al. 2007).

★ *Endorsing but Redefining Integrationist Programs on Campus*

Yet another strategic use of the diversity project, at Michigan and in my other two cases, is to defend but redefine programs targeted to people of color and poor people. University leaders faced a major public relations problem and protest in winter 1987 after a series of racist incidents on the Ann Arbor campus. The incidents began when a group of black women convened in a

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[43] Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993: 222.

dorm lounge and someone slipped a piece of paper under the door declaring "open season on porch monkey." A few days after this event, which was reported in local papers, a d.j. with the student-run radio station WJJK, made a series of offensive racial jokes on air. Students began to speak out against racism on campus and organized the United Coalition Against Racism.

In the wake of continued student protests, national media coverage, and involvement of state legislators, area ministers, and Rev. Jesse Jackson, university executives and the University Housing Division invoked the value of "diversity" in response to these attacks. President Shapiro gave a speech in which he decried "discrimination, harassment, exclusion, abusive or insensitive language, or any other manifestation of bigotry or racism."[44] He announced that the university would further its efforts towards these goals with $1 million for "programs designed to enhance and sustain the diversity of the University community." These included staff training and new programs in dormitories and through the student services office that would encourage

> an intensive dialogue and reaffirmation of the right of every student to explore
>
> and develop their personal identity and values without being harassed or made to
>
> feel uncomfortable because of color, religion, unconventional lifestyles or
>
> political beliefs

Under Shapiro's administration, the number of black students had decreased from 1,791 in 1980 to 117 fewer in 1987, while the number of black faculty declined from 71 to 64.[45] After meeting with Rev. Jackson, Shapiro affirmed a six-point plan to increase the numbers of black students on campus, which included the creation of a new vice provost position. Under university president James Duderstadt, these initiatives evolved into the Michigan Mandate, a major

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[44] Regents proceedings, Feb.1987: 1058.
[45] Karen Schneider, "U-M chief under fire for decrease in blacks" *Detroit Free Press*, March 22, 1987.

strategic plan to commit organizational resources to African-American, Latino, and Native American students and faculty, justified on the grounds of promoting "diversity" rather than remedying disadvantage.

I detail the Mandate below, but the Mandate only makes sense within the context of university leaders' changing ideas about minority admissions and campus inclusion. Starting in the early 1980s, administrators at Michigan developed a more nuanced understanding of the barriers that students of color faced as they applied to the university and once they reached campus. Before then, university leaders had primarily focused on increasing the numbers of admitted minority students. But the university confronted serious difficulties with retaining students of color in the mid-1970s, and more administrators and faculty turned their attention to this situation.

For instance, at the May 1983 regents meeting, director of the affirmative action office Virginia Nordby, assistant vice-president for academic affairs Robert Holmes, and sociologist Walter Allen presented the annual Minority Student Report and a study by Allen. They drew attention to the myriad academic, financial, social and environmental factors that contributed to the lower retention and graduation rates for racial minorities at Michigan and across the country. University leaders gradually devoted more attention and resources to improving minority student retention and the campus environment at large. They took such steps as creating a position for director of minority admissions in the undergraduate admissions office, new outreach programs, and more scholarships for racial minority students, including a new merit scholarship, and new programs for minority outreach. In 1983, 32% of the $24.2 million in university financial aid

went to students of color, who constituted 12.7% of the total study body.[46] Applications from and enrollment of African-Americans, Latinos, and Asians increased somewhat by 1987, after dropping in the early 1980s.[47]

Up until then, just two or three staff people had been dedicated to recruiting racial minority students. According to Jim Vanhecke, who was put in charge of this effort and oversaw admissions for racial minorities until 2000, "The first thing we did in our office was to integrate minority recruitment into the daily recruitment of all the professional and counseling staff, which was separate in the past…. My goal was to involve all of our staff in the many functions of personal, one-on-one [racial minority] recruitment." Under Vanhecke, the undergraduate admissions office vastly expanded its minority outreach to high school students of color in the 1980s. New initiatives included a Minority Student Spring Visitation Program for admitted students of color to visit the Ann Arbor campus (later called Spring Welcome Weekend) and the Ambassador program, with 175 Michigan student volunteers who, among other things, made calls to admitted students of color in the late 1980s. Concerned that not enough qualified students of color from Michigan were graduating from high school or applying to the university, the office also expanded its financial aid for such students who lived in other states.[48]

During this same time period, the admissions office also expanded its outreach and recruitment programs for all applicants to include programs such as Campus Day, when admitted students could visit the campus. Special efforts were made to reach students from counties underrepresented at the university and to "personalize" the university's public image for

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[46] Karen Schneider, "U-M chief under fire for decrease in blacks" *Detroit Free Press*, March 22, 1987, sidebar on p. 18A cited in http://m3peeps.org/vr87.htm accessed Feb. 7, 2008.
[47] Regents minutes, 1987. Mar., p. 1098.
[48] Regents Proceedings, Feb. 1984:952; May 1983: 698

applicants, their parents, and high school guidance counselors [49].Admissions to the university became more competitive over the 1980s, as applications grew by 50% but the numbers of students admitted stayed about the same (Peckham 1994).

University administrators continued to justify their efforts to recruit and support racial minority students in terms of creating "opportunity" and fulfilling a university "responsibility." The May 1983 Regents minutes reported, "The University is not responding to government regulations in this direction. This is something the University has adopted because of its belief in the importance of the University's responsibility as an educational institution in this state and as an obligation to society as a whole." Despite these efforts, racial minorities made up just 13.6% of undergraduates in 1987 (Monts, Matlock and Wade-Golden 2002). The campus climate was less than welcoming for students of color. In the late 1980s, a series of racist incidents alarmed black students and some faculty and led to more student protests, this time led by BAM III (Peckham 1994).

University leaders made similar changes to the structure and goals of the Comprehensive Services Program, into which the Opportunity Program was folded in the mid-1980s. CSP initially undertook "responsibility for the academic performance of minority students."[50] By the late 1980s, CSP director Melvin Williams, an African-American professor of anthropology, told the regents that the purpose of CSP was "to have minority retention programs completely integrated into the rest of the University; they are available for all students, not just minorities." Despite these stated intentions, the racial demographics of students participating in CSP did not

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[49] E.g., Fletcher, Sherryl. 1991. *University of Michigan Office of Undergraduate Admissions report on the Cook Project.* January. Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan
[50] Regents proceedings, Dec. 1988: 113.

change considerably. Minority students made up 99% of CSP participants in 1993 and constituted over 90% until 2004.[51]

In their discussions and presentations at regents meetings, university leaders and administrators rarely invoked diversity rhetoric to justify these programmatic changes. They rationalized such changes on the grounds that separate race-targeted initiatives were organizationally redundant, duplicating services provided elsewhere, or potentially stigmatizing.[52] However, administrators did describe such changes as commensurate with the university's general mission of improving the quality of education. They rhetorically underscored the relationship between minority student programs and academic excellence. This connection appears in the changing names of different offices and positions. For example, in 1993, a university committee concluded that the Vice Provost for Minority Affairs should be renamed as the Vice Provost for Academic and Multicultural Affairs and that this office should work more closely with the other campus units.[53]

Thus, changes in administrators' rhetoric about programs targeted at racial minorities, and sometimes changes in the actual organization of these programs, relied on a key principle communicated through diversity ideology: the connection between campus diversity and educational excellence. This connection was yet another departure from the notion that race-targeted programs would assist disadvantaged racial minorities and poor people. And it was more fully elaborated in the Michigan Mandate.

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[51] http://www.umich.edu/~regoff/enrollment/ethnicity.html, reports 872a. Accessed March 25, 2007
[52] E.g., Regents proceedings Jan. 1993.
[53] Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993: 219. Some programs remained focus on students of color, despite name changes. This happened, for example, with the Office of Minority Student Services, which became Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs in 1995. See http://www.mesa.umich.edu/history/history.htm Accessed May 23, 2007.

The Michigan Mandate: "A Strategic Linking of Academic Excellence and Social Diversity"

The Michigan Mandate was a major strategic plan that justified and expanded resources for students, faculty, and staff of color, while it also redefined the rationale for race-targeted programs. These resources included university funding, new staff and faculty positions and hires, and new and expanded programs, policies, and administrative bodies. The Mandate also led to the creation of new diversity initiatives targeted at all students. James Duderstadt, who became university president in 1988, championed the Mandate and its themes of diversity, globalization, and knowledge (Peckham 1994).[54]

The Mandate expanded and further formalized—in the name of diversity and multiculturalism—campus programming and recruitment targeted primarily at racial and ethnic minorities on campus. Subtitled "A Strategic Linking of Academic Excellence and Social Diversity," the Mandate further elaborated the link that Justice Powell had made between diversity and learning. The text read:

> The fundamental premise of the Michigan Mandate is that for the University to achieve excellence in teaching and research in the years ahead, for it to serve our state, our nation, and the world, we simply must achieve and sustain a campus community recognized for its racial and ethnic diversity. But beyond this, we believe that the university has a mandate… to build a model of a pluralistic, multicultural community for our nation. We seek to build a community that values and respects and, indeed, draws its intellectual strength from the rich

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[54] See also, e.g., Jones, Stephen. 1988. "New U-M president to pursue diversity. *Detroit Free Press.* Oct. 6.

diversity of peoples of different races, cultures, religions, nationalities, and

beliefs. (University of Michigan 1990).

The purpose of the Mandate, according to its proponents, was to change the institution so that it better accommodated minorities, especially people of color.[55] The Mandate emphasized enrollment and hiring but, compared to early programmatic efforts, it paid relatively more attention to changing the campus climate.

The Mandate document listed a range of forms of diversity—race, ethnicity, culture, religion, nationality—but university leaders' early discussions about it focused on racial minorities, particularly African-Americans.[56] Similarly, the initiatives promoted by the Mandate focused primarily, but not exclusively, on racial minorities. The Mandate deployed over 100 programs for faculty and staff recruitment and retention, support groups, and multicultural awareness training (Lynch 1997). The Diversity Directory published by the Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI) in the early 1990s included entries ranging from the Affirmative Action office to a CAAS faculty fellowship program to University Library seminars on valuing diversity (Lynch 1997:283-7).[57] New administrative positions and bodies, such as the President's Committee on a Multicultural University, supported and monitored these efforts.

Although no formal evaluation was done of the Mandate, it coincided with—and likely contributed to—considerable changes in the representation of racial minorities on campus and in

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[55] Regents proceedings, May 1991: 236.

[56] E.g., Regents proceedings, Dec. 1988: 111-113; Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993: 218-221.

[57] Fredrick Lynch (1997) reports that almost half of the university's financial aid gifts, 80% of merit scholarship dollars, and 90% of nonresident merit scholarship went to underrepresented racial minorities in 1994, although he does not cite an original source for these figures. In 1995, a university spokesperson claimed that the university had race-specific scholarships and fellowships, but these constituted only a small percentage of the university's financial aid awards (Associated Press. 1995. "Justices refuse college aid case: lower court scuttled race-based program." Detroit Free Press. May 23, p. 5A.).

resources available to these groups. Enrollment and graduation rates increased for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students of color, and the university hired more racial minority faculty.[58] For instance, in fall 1988, African-American, Latino, Native American, and Asian undergraduate and graduate students made up 15.4% of the student body on the Ann Arbor campus.[59] Ten years later, they comprised 22.2% of the campus, with increases in the representation of all racial minority groups.[60]

Students' perceptions of the campus climate are another way, however crude, to gauge the effects of the Michigan Mandate and related diversity initiatives. According to the Michigan Student Study, most undergraduates attending the university in the early 1990s believed that the university's diversity initiatives positively influenced their college experience and their cultural understanding (Matlock, Gurin and Wade-Golden nd). These perceptions varied considerably by racial group, though. For example, students of color—especially African-Americans—were more likely to support special admissions criteria for students of color, and to believe that the university did not take sufficient institutional action to support diversity.

Thus, the Mandate continued university leaders' earlier efforts to increase the representation of students of color, but it also incorporated administrators' growing awareness of the importance of the campus environment for minority retention and graduation. In these ways, it justified and expanded race-targeted programs.

At the same time, the Mandate redefined the purposes of those programs in the name of "diversity." The text of the Mandate made a couple of references to remedying disadvantage,

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[58] E.g. Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993, pp218-221.
[59] Regents proceedings, Dec. 1988.
[60] See http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/slfstudy/ir/pdfs/i_reporting.pdf, p. 36. Accessed May 3, 2007. The percentage of black undergraduates increased from 4.9 in 1982 to 6.7 in 1990 to an all-time high of 9.2 in 1996 (Peckham 1994:346; Office of the Registrar, University of Michigan, Report 837, 1999)

noting that its rationale included a "moral responsibility… to take affirmative action to overcome the inequities imposed by our society on people who historically have been prevented from participating fully in the life of our nation" (pg. 3). But the primary rationale is not couched in terms of remedies, and the Mandate even specifies social justice as a secondary reason for racial minority inclusion:

> America of the 21st century will be one of the most pluralistic, multicultural nations on earth. In this future, the full participation of under-represented groups in all realms of national life will not be just a matter of equity and social justice. It will be the key to the future strength and prosperity of America... (p. 7)

The core rationale of the Mandate was the connection between diversity and its various institutional benefits, particularly academic excellence:

> The Michigan Mandate is based on the following premise: Embracing and, even more importantly, capitalizing on our racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity will be a critical element in the University's ability to achieve excellence in teaching and research while serving our state, nation, and world in the years ahead. (p.3)

The Mandate also underscores contributions beyond teaching and research, claiming that "the human talent represented by its under-represented populations" is necessary for the successful democratic governance in the United States, the country's economic prosperity, and its standing among other nations.

The Race and Ethnicity Course Requirement

Not everyone on campus agreed that "diversity" was the most appropriate framework for understanding race. For example, in the late 1980s, a group of faculty—most of whom were white, but many African-American—advocated for a controversial new course requirement for the College of Literature, Sciences, and Arts (LS&A), the core undergraduate liberal arts college. The purpose of the course was to examine the social construction of race and racism and the causes of inequality. Faculty and deans involved in this effort described the requirement as a response to racist language and harassment by white students who had not previously interacted with black students and to student protests over "historic and persisting abuses on campus."

The faculty deliberately did not want this course to be described as a "diversity" requirement. One white male professor explained to me that originally, the faculty wanted the course to be a "racism" requirement. Then it became "race and ethnicity." When it was implemented, it became "race or ethnicity." Elizabeth Anderson, a white female philosophy professor also involved in the early effort, contrasted the faculty's proposal to similar courses at other universities at the time,

> Fundamentally, it was a proposal initiated by the faculty that comes out of a political understanding of injustice of in our society. What was happening on other campuses was really a *multicultural* thing—'Our curricula are too Eurocentric. We need to look at diversity around the world, the diversity of our own students.' Diversity was conceived in cultural terms. But not on this campus… [For Michigan faculty] the idea was very much focused on

inequality… [I]t needed to make connections to race. It was not about appreciating cultural differences.

Despite debate among the faculty, the university ultimately institutionalized the course requirement.

The course was still a requirement in the mid-2000s, although both past and current university publications used diversity rhetoric to frame and soften the language of the requirement. For example, a 1991 article in the OUA's newsletter for faculty and staff, *Points of Entry*, described the course as a "New Diversity requirement for students."[61] The article explained that each student must take

one course that addresses issues arising from racial or ethnic intolerance…Courses satisfying this requirement will provide discussion of the meaning of race, ethnicity, and racism; racial and ethnic intolerance and resulting inequality as it occurs in the United States or elsewhere; and comparisons of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, social class, or gender. The University of Michigan is committed to providing an education for all students that will contribute to the understanding of current as well as historical diversity issues from all perspectives."

In 2002, the 2002 Michigan First Year Handbook used similar language to describe the requirement.

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[61] Spring 1991. Vol. 4, No 3, p.1.

Anderson noted during our interview in 2003: "From the administrators' point of view, it's probably embarrassing to implement and explain [the requirement], suggesting society is unjust. They have to be out raising money from rich people. This place cannot exist if they're not going out… They really prefer 'diversity.' It's such a nice sweet word. It papers over inequality. It's about cultural difference. We can all be nice to each other. It is evasive. There's nothing wrong with it. [But] it evades some important truths."

★ *Changing the Constituents*

Leaders at Michigan also relied on diversity ideology and initiatives to change the constituents. They added new groups as relevant to "diversity" and created programs and other resources for them. These included both people considered disadvantaged, such as women, as well as those not defined by their disadvantage, such as white students.

New Diversity Programs for Women, GLB's, and Others

Despite the Mandate's focus on race and ethnicity, administrators also invoked diversity ideology to justify the institutional inclusion of other minorities—most notably women and gays, lesbians, and bisexuals (GLB)—and to direct resources to these groups. Duderstadt's 1995 Michigan Agenda for Women, modeled on the Mandate, promoted greater "gender equity" and female participation for female faculty and administrators. The Agenda's first goal was "To create a University climate that fosters the success of women faculty, students, and staff by drawing upn [sic] the strengths of our diversity."

Although some university administrators may have resisted efforts to include gays and lesbians in diversity initiatives (Lynch 1997), GLB advocates in the administration relied on diversity rhetoric to make claims for their inclusion. [62] In 1993, the regents added "sexual orientation" to its official bylaws on non-discrimination and affirmative action, and the following year, upon Duderstadt's recommendation, extended health benefits to domestic same-sex partners of staff and faculty (Sanlo, Rankin and Schoenberg 2002). In conversation about the bylaws change at a 1994 regents meeting, Regent Deitch reiterated that the purpose of changing the bylaws was to make "'a reality out of our commitment to diversity.'" College campus administrators at other universities along with experts in the higher education administration also began to use diversity rhetoric to talk about a broad range of groups in the early 1990s, often with a focus on race and racial minorities (e.g., Barr 1993 see also Lynch 1997, Wood 2003). Although diversity rhetoric at Michigan did not feature prominently in the regents' discussions and presentations about campus inclusion for women or gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, such inclusion sometimes fell under the broad rubric of diversity.

New Diversity Programs for All Students

In the late 1980s, Michigan administrators began to implement a growing number of diversity initiatives intended to improve the campus climate. Many of these did not target a particular minority group. Some were mandatory, such as diversity training in the dorms, while others, such as the Program on Intergroup Relations and Conflict (IGR), were voluntary and focused on

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[62] Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993: 222.

fostering ongoing conversations among students of different backgrounds. The program's initial

goal was to produce

> a core of students who will contribute as leaders in a diverse, democratic society,
>
> by having experienced interactions in substantive ways with people from different
>
> backgrounds, and who will feel comfortable in asserting their leadership in mixed
>
> gender, racial, and ethnic groups.[63]

The focus of IGR's classes and curricula have been dialogues between students of different

"social identity groups." These dialogues are intended to promote understanding of "diversity"

and "social justice education" while improving interactions and managing conflict among

students. By the early 1990s, IGR reached between 400 and 500 students each semester.[64] In

contrast to the university's prior programs concerned with racial inclusion on campus—programs

which primarily had targeted students of color—diversity initiatives like IGR expanded the

constituents to include white students. Although the benefits that ensue from participating in a

conversation are admittedly not comparable to the benefits of, say, scholarship funding, in the

early 2000s, university administrators endeavored to explain to participants how they could

capitalize on their participation in IGR to make themselves more marketable in job applications.

IGR relied on key ideas communicated through diversity ideology: race is a central, but

not the only or even the primary, axis of difference; diverse viewpoints are valuable;

interpersonal communication among people of different backgrounds is an important forum for

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[63] Regents proceedings, Jan. 1993: 223.
[64] IGR still exists today and, through a multi-university initiative on higher education and "diverse democracy" spearheaded by Michigan. The program has won awards and been replicated at other universities.

expressing such viewpoints; and such interactions have beneficial results for all students, including white students.[65]

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[65] Katherine Cramer Walsh found that more than 400 cities in the U.S. and many cities in other countries have organized such dialogues since the early 1990s.

CHAPTER FOUR. UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Gratz, Grutter, and the Legal Politics of Affirmative Admissions

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On April 1, 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments for *Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al.* and *Grutter v. Bollinger et al.,* the most important legal cases concerning affirmative action and college admissions in twenty-five years. In these high profile lawsuits, the Center for Individual Rights (CIR), a libertarian public interest law firm, represented white plaintiffs who had not been admitted to the University of Michigan. The plaintiffs in *Gratz* and *Grutter* challenged Michigan's admissions policies at the undergraduate level and the law school respectively, claiming that the university's consideration of race in admissions decisions was unconstitutional. They charged that the university gave explicit racial preferences to African-American, Latino, and Native American applicants without sufficient justification. They made the case for what commentators often refer to as "colorblind" admissions policies. This was one of many of conservative campaigns to challenge race-conscious affirmative admissions programs at public universities and the first to have national implications.

University leaders and lawyers defended the university's admissions policies on the grounds that these policies supported diversity, a compelling state interest. Citing Powell's opinion in *Bakke* as precedent, the university argued what commonly is called the "diversity rationale": diversity is good for educational and leadership outcomes because students learn best when they interact with students of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. As Maureen Mahoney, a white woman and lead attorney for Michigan in *Grutter*, told the Supreme Court justices:

[T]here is a compelling interest in having an institution that is both academically

excellent and racially diverse, because our leaders need to be trained in

institutions that are excellent, that are superior academically, but they also need

to be trained with exposure to the viewpoints, to the perspectives, to the

experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The university's central argument was about the educational value of student diversity, which

included but was not limited to racial diversity. Political activists intervened as third parties in

the cases in the lower courts. They argued that affirmative action was necessary on

compensatory grounds, as race-conscious admissions policies would counter past and current

racial discrimination at the university.

The public response to *Gratz* and *Grutter* was overwhelming and largely favored the

university. More amicus briefs were filed for a single side than in any Court case in U.S. history,

and tens of thousands of people marched in Washington, D.C. on the day of the oral arguments.

In June 2003, the Court endorsed Michigan's diversity rationale, citing institutional benefits of

diversity such as an enhanced educational environment, better national leadership, stronger

national security, and greater competitiveness in the global economy. Justice Sandra Day

O'Connor wrote for the majority opinion in *Grutter:*

…[D]iversity promotes learning outcomes and better prepares students for

an increasingly diverse workforce, for society, and for the legal

profession. … [T]he path to leadership must be visibly open to talented

and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity.

The Court found the law school's admissions procedures acceptable.[66] However, it required the university to change its contested undergraduate admissions policy of assigning points based on an applicant's race.

The experience of *Gratz* and *Grutter* permeated many areas of university life. Early on in the lawsuits, university executives—along with lawyers, administrators, and faculty—mobilized a legal team and a sophisticated public relations campaign to respond to the plaintiffs' charges (Green 2004a; Stohr 2004). Political activists organized on and off campus. The media coverage was intense, with news crews and trucks combing the campus at critical stages in the legal cases. After the Court's decisions, staff in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions made major revisions to the undergraduate admissions procedures, which they needed to communicate to applicants, their parents, and other audiences. At recruitment events, these staff members also highlighted the cases as evidence of Michigan's commitment to diversity. Meanwhile, educators and administrators running many of the university's campus diversity programs approached the lawsuits and diversity pedagogically.

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The University of Michigan-Ann Arbor is a large university, with almost 40,000 students in 2005. Diversity rhetoric and initiatives varied across the university's high decentralized schools and colleges. Deans and faculty members described the campus to me as "nineteen different

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[66] In the early 1990s, administrators at the Michigan Law School revised the law school's admissions policy, modeling it on Powell's opinion in *Bakke*. Since then, the law school admissions policy has involved an "individualized" review of applications. According to this policy, admissions officers take applicants' race into account as "one of many factors" and seek to create a "critical mass" of underrepresented racial minority students.

silos" that constitute "something like a feudal state with fiefdoms." Each school and college has its own diversity-related offices and administrators, and even within these schools, administrators were not all of the same opinion on diversity. An often-unspoken rift existed among faculty and administrators between those who were concerned with impediments to access for different groups and those—mostly notably, some senior African-American administrators and faculty members—who thought diversity efforts should focus on black students.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how university leaders and their lawyers developed a legal defense for diversity within the context of legal precedent and the national politics of affirmative action. Throughout the *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases and after the Supreme Court decision, law and national politics influenced how university leaders spoke about and managed issues of race and diversity. The legal cases and the politics surrounding them set up a debate over whether colorblindness, diversity, or remedial justice should be guiding principles for university admissions policies. Because of the national scale of the cases, university administrators themselves also shaped the legal and political context for the diversity project. They helped to squarely establish diversity—and not remedial justice—as the dominant, color-conscious alternative to colorblind ideology.

The university's diversity rationale, however legally significant, was only a legal argument, made on paper and argued before judges. As law and society scholars have shown, people's understanding and experience of law often differ from law on the books or in the courtroom (Ewick and Silbey 1998; Sarat and Simon 2003). People do not directly translate law from the written word. They must interpret it.

So, this chapter also shows how university leaders translated basic principles of this defense for campus audiences. Spokespeople from the administration incorporated key elements of the university's legal argument into their public rhetoric, representations, and initiatives of diversity outside of formal legal settings. The university's public relations campaign around the lawsuits was instrumental in enabling leaders to translate the diversity rationale as such. University spokespeople legitimized the diversity rationale and presented it as organizational common sense through pithy "messaging" and by invoking discourses of law and social science. In so doing, they further asserted their compliance with law.

These various uses of the diversity rhetoric and programs provide insights into how university leaders have transformed and displaced the political project of racial equality. The diversity project at Michigan supports some initiatives for remedying racial and economic disadvantage, and it reinforces an ethos of tolerance and inclusion. Moreover, it firmly codified into law the goal of a racially integrated student body. At the same time, diversity rhetoric and initiatives help to divorce the topic of race from problems of inequality and institutional efforts to remedy racial inequalities, and they can direct resources to privileged groups.

I base my analysis on fieldwork that I conducted between spring 2002 and spring 2005 (also see the Methodological Appendix). In the first year of fieldwork, I followed the public and political activity around the lawsuits. After the Court's decision in June 2003, I turned my attention to activities in the undergraduate admissions office, particularly their recruitment of racial minorities. I also studied some campus diversity initiatives. I collected data through participant observation on the university's Ann Arbor campus and in Detroit, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.; thirty-one interviews with university administrators and activists; and primary

documents produced by the university, particularly the viewbooks produced by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. I also draw upon media accounts, legal documents, and secondary literature.

A few years after the Court decisions, a major anti-affirmative action political campaign in the state of Michigan, the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, profoundly changed race-targeted programs at the university. Led by plaintiff Jennifer Gratz and Ward Connerly—a black political activist who had successfully led similar campaigns in California, Washington, and other states—MCRI sought to end race- and gender-based affirmative action. Leaders in higher education, major companies, and government and many political activists opposed this measure.

The campaign swung into full force near the end of my fieldwork, and it was frequently a topic in Coleman's speeches and activists' protests and meetings. In fall 2006, voters in the state of Michigan approved MCRI in the form of Proposition 2. The measure prohibited the university and other public institutions in the state from considering race or sex in public education, employment and contracting. After the ban, university leaders changed their policies to comply, including their admissions policies. While my fieldwork covered only the early stages of MCRI, the university's web site and publications indicate that university leaders have continued to couch the university's values and their revised policies in terms of diversity.

First, I turn to the legal and political context of *Gratz* and *Grutter*.

I. How Law and Politics Shaped the Diversity Project at Michigan (and How the Diversity Project at Michigan Shaped Law and Politics)

The legal and political dynamics surrounding the lawsuits—combined with the tenor of national politics around affirmative action and the gravity of the Supreme Court—shaped the diversity project at Michigan. At the same time, university leaders *shaped* law and politics through their deployment of diversity ideology—particularly their legal rationale for diversity—and through their race-based campus initiatives. The organizational construction of law is a recursive process (Halliday and Carruthers 2007), and the national significance of these cases meant that university leaders were, in fact, shaping the actual content of law.

First and foremost, university leaders and administrators defined, modified, and mobilized diversity ideology and initiatives in the context of a direct legal challenge. The Supreme Court's 2003 decisions provided an official adjudication to a number of legal controversies. However, the *Gratz* decision, combined with ongoing political threats from proponents of colorblind policies, required the university to modify its race-based criteria for undergraduate admissions and campus programs. This broader legal and political context also framed the politics of affirmative action as a debate, largely pitting diversity against colorblindness and marginalized arguments about remediating racial injustice. And because of this broader context, university spokespeople created and followed an official rhetorical script about race, diversity, and inclusion that was closely wedded to the university's legal argument.

The Legal and Political Context of the Diversity Project

Throughout the 1990s, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Michigan had continued to expand all of its recruitment efforts as well as its recruitment efforts targeting racial minorities, particularly African-Americans. Admissions at universities and colleges across the country were becoming increasingly competitive at this time, with heightened concern among applicants and university administrators alike about standardized test scores, college rankings, and race-based affirmative admissions (Sauder and Lancaster 2006; Steinberg 2002; Stevens 2007). In 1991, Michigan's undergraduate admissions office identified, as the first of four recruitment goals, the increased enrollment of students of color.[67] According to Jim van Hecke, who oversaw minority admissions in the 1980s and 1990s, the university's outreach to and support for students of color "hit a stride" by the mid-1990s. Enrollment of black, Latino, and Native American students reached a historical peak of 14% in 1995 (Monts, Matlock and Wade-Golden 2002). In the late 1990s, for example, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions increased the activities and staff in its satellite Detroit office, which focused on urban and racial minority recruitment.

At the undergraduate level, there continued to be a disjuncture between the ideology of diversity expressed in the university's public relations materials, which valorized all kinds of social differences, and the university's practices used for assessing applications. During the mid-1990s, admissions counselors had used "grid systems" to evaluate students who applied to the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA). These grids were uncovered and first publicized by Carl Cohen, an outspoken white professor of philosophy who was active with the American Civil Liberties Union. Cohen had become curious about the university's admissions

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[67] *Points of Entry,* 1990 Fall (*Vol. 3, No. 2*)

procedures, so he submitted a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain more information. He then circulated a report based on his findings, entitled "Racial Discrimination in Admissions at The University of Michigan." The report claimed that the university used different standards to judge applications from majority (white or Asian) and underrepresented minority (African-American, Latino, or Native American) students (Cohen 1996). For example, the LSA grid directed admissions clerks to reject majority students with a grade point average of 3.0 or lower and SAT scores below 1000 but to accept minority students with those same scores.[68]

In fall 1997, Michigan president Lee Bollinger—a white man who made the defense of affirmative action a cornerstone of his administration—oversaw the switch from the grid system to the 150-point Selection Index for LSA applicants. The university made this change after at least a year of rumors about a possible lawsuit against the university.[69] This new approach awarded points to applicants based on a variety of factors. The university assigned a up to 110 points for a student's GPA, their standardized test scores, the academic strength of their high school, and other academic criteria. Applicants could receive up to 20 additional points if they were an underrepresented racial minority, economically disadvantaged, a student at a predominantly minority high school, a scholarship athlete, or the beneficiary of the "Provost's discretion." Additional points were awarded for other criteria, such as residency in Michigan (up to 16 points), alumni relationships (up to 4 points) and leadership and service (up to 5 points).

Both the grid system and the point system gave explicit preferences to African-American, Latino, and Native American applicants based on their race. As many social scientists and

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[68] This admissions policy gave less explicit preferences to predominantly white students by favoring, for example, students whose parents had attended the university. However, such indirect racial preferences—unlike admissions criteria that are openly predicated on an applicant's race—are not subject to strict legal scrutiny.

[69] E.g., Regents proceedings, July 1996, p. 10.

political advocates have pointed out, white students have a number of advantages in color admissions (Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005; Brown et al. 2003). For example, universities that reward alumni relationships provide implicit preferences to predominantly white students. However, race is considered a suspect category under law, and explicitly racial policies such as Michigan's 20 points for underrepresented racial minorities are subject to strict scrutiny under law. Policies that provide implicit racial preferences are not legally suspect.

A handful of legislators from the Michigan House of Representatives were upset that the university was using what Cohen described to me as "deliberately misleading language." The legislators contacted the Center for Individual Rights (CIR), a libertarian public interest law firm based on Washington, D.C. Of any organization, CIR had filed the most legal challenges to affirmative action in schools (Harper and Reskin 2005). The firm gained notoriety for representing white plaintiffs in *Hopwood v. State of Texas* in 1996, which led to the end of race-conscious admissions practices in Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana (a decision that was overturned by the 2003 Supreme Court decision in *Grutter)*. CIR had a small staff of between 10 and 12 people, and it largely relied on the donated time of outside lawyers. According to a CIR spokesperson, the organization's budget of about $1.5 million came primarily from individual donations, with about third from grants from major conservative foundations.[70] Despite these limited resources, CIR leaders were eager to take the fight against racial preferences and affirmative action to the federal level (see also Stohr 2004).

The Michigan legislators issued a press release to invite people who felt they had been victims of "racial discrimination" to come forward and passed names on to CIR. It was through

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[70] See also http://www.mediatransparency.org/recipientgrants.php?recipientID=57 Accessed January 25, 2007.

this process that CIR identified the three plaintiffs for the cases against the university. Soon thereafter, in late 1997, CIR and the plaintiffs filed lawsuits in the U.S. District Court in eastern Michigan challenging the admissions practices in the Law School, *Barbara Grutter v. Bollinger et al,* and the College of Literature, Arts, and Sciences (LSA), *Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacher v. Bollinger et al*.

The plaintiffs' central argument, cutting across both lawsuits, was that race should not be a consideration in admissions to state-funded colleges because the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution prohibits awarding one ethnic or racial group special privileges over another. Both proponents and critics of this argument commonly refer to it as the case for "colorblindness" (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Brown et al. 2003; Carr 1997; Gallagher 2003; National Review 2006; *The Washington Times* 2007; Thernstrom and Thernstrom 1997). Political conservatives have championed colorblind rhetoric and "colorblindness" in state and private policies since the 1970s (MacLean 2006).

In response to the lawsuits, university leaders mounted a major legal defense and an elaborate public relations campaign to refute the plaintiffs' arguments. A set of key university leaders led the charge. They included executive administrators—university presidents who held office between 1997 and 2003, provosts, and deans—along with the university's internal legal counsel and outside attorneys, particularly co-lead counsels John Payton and Maureen Mahoney. Staff in the Office of the Vice President of Communications coordinated the university's public relations effort. Administrators from the LSA and Law School admissions offices and select faculty and staff, such as emerita professor of psychology, Patricia Gurin, also became involved.

The university's legal team denied that they used what the plaintiffs called "racial quotas." The team argued that race should be one of many factors considered in admissions decisions because students learn better in racially diverse settings. They cited Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke* as controlling precedent and argued that the admissions policies in question complied with *Bakke*. According to *Bakke,* the goal of diversity in higher education was a compelling state interest, and universities could consider race in admissions decisions, as long as they did not use quotas or admit unqualified applicants. The university's diversity rationale stressed that students have better learning outcomes when they are exposed to the viewpoints of people from different backgrounds. The university and its supporters who filed amicus briefs argued that racial diversity within a student body benefits all students, improves the educational experience, enhances democracy, creates a legitimate national leadership, and supports the global capitalist economy and the U.S. military (see also Post 2005).

Law is an obdurate and highly consequential institution. It establishes formal rules, norms, and meaning for people to live by, both procedurally and symbolically. Although organizations and organizational participants often eschew law in favor of other logics, such as managerialism (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Heimer 1999), law and legal rulings can still hold a powerful sway in organizations. This is especially true for organizations trying to demonstrate their legal compliance (Edelman 1992; Edelman and Suchman 1997). In addition, the Supreme Court is widely considered a credible, persuasive authority (Clawson, Kegler and Waltenburg 2001).

The university's successful defense of race-conscious admissions and its investment of time, human capital, and financial resources—upwards of $10 million—exemplify some of the

legal consequences of the diversity project. Now, any university that receives federal funding can consider race in admissions decisions, barring a ban like the one that passed in the state of Michigan in late 2006. Although affirmative admissions policies remain politically controversial, they have strong, positive impacts on African-American and Latino representation in higher education and professions such as law (Bowen and Bok 1998; Chambers et al. 2005).

How did university leaders invoke the diversity project to manage and frame political controversy over race-based affirmative admissions?

★ *Framing the Terms of Institutional Inclusion and Related Social Problems: The Affirmative Action "Debate"*

In the U.S., affirmative action has involved "different actors operating in different societal spheres using different tactics and under the auspices of different regulatory bodies, all represent[ing] positive actions to promote racial and gender inclusion" (Harper and Reskin 2005:357). The greatest efforts have been made in education and employment. By "affirmative admissions," I mean university admissions policies that give preference to African-American, Latino, and Native Americans students [See also (Skrentny 2002)]. As Ira Katznelson (2005) and Lawrence Bobo (2001) observe, affirmative action for white people has been practiced since long before the 1960s—only not in that name—through policies and practices that systematically favor whites in citizenship, employment, higher education, housing, and other institutions.

The *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases and the politics surrounding them helped to create what felt like a high-stakes, polarized debate over affirmative action. They set up and reified an adversarial tension between advocates for and against race-based affirmative admissions. The

sides typically argued against affirmative admissions on the grounds of colorblindness or for affirmative admissions on the grounds of diversity or (increasingly less often) remedial justice. Litigation, in particular, contributes to such adversarial dynamics; CIR had sued the university, and local and national organizations lined up to support one of the legal parties.

The news media, policy analysts, and academic scholars contributed to this sense of a polarized debate. The media has highlighted controversy around affirmative action, portraying a largely negative view of the topic (Entman 1997). Meanwhile, scholars and policy analysts typically have approached affirmative action as a debate, taking sides in the issues (e.g., Cahn 1995; Edley 1996; Post and Rogin 1998; Thernstrom and Thernstrom 1997). Their work typically has elaborated on abstract theoretical, philosophical, and legal arguments about justice and fairness, posing discrimination as a moral problem and affirmative action as a moral or immoral solution (Bobo 2001; Skrentny 2001). Even the published empirical social scientific research on affirmative action has weighed in on the ongoing policy debates over the benefits, drawbacks, and impacts of affirmative admissions (Chambers et al. 2005; Sander 2004).

The stakes of this debate were high. At the time of the cases, the Court's record on the legality of race-based initiatives was mixed. The legal record had not definitively established the diversity rationale as legal precedent; it was only the opinion of one justice, not a majority opinion, and the Court had not confirmed it as legal precedent. Meanwhile, other Court cases such as *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña* and *Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co*. had affirmed that the law should be colorblind in regards to race. Thus, legal observers were uncertain about the outcomes of *Gratz* and *Grutter*, which made university leaders, administrators, and advocates nervous. A legal loss for the university would have major legal and financial repercussions. Once

the Supreme Court agreed to hear the cases, their importance took on even greater gravity. The university's reputation and credibility were in question, as were legal precedent and such basic principles as universities' discretion to shape their student bodies.

The University of Michigan both participated in and actively shaped the terms of this debate. University leaders marginalized the political agenda and ideology of remedial racial equality, In so doing, they strategically established diversity as the official color-conscious ideology of race, difference, and inclusion.

Diversity, not Remedial Justice

We have seen that administrators at the university and elsewhere increasingly replaced their rhetoric about remedying racial and economic disadvantage with rhetoric about diversity. These administrators continued some of the university's programs for students of color that originally had been justified as remedies for racial and economic disadvantage. Administrators also introduced new programs to improve the racial climate on campus and justified both the old and new programs in terms of "diversity."

University leaders' success at the Supreme Court in 2003 rested, in part, on their ability to convince the justices that the university was *not* practicing race-based affirmative action to promote racial equality or remedy discriminatory practices at the university or in society. This was a deliberate decision. In formulating the legal rationale for diversity, they rejected social justice arguments for racial equity and remediation of discrimination (Green 2004b). They based their case on *Bakke* because, as a dean involved in the Law School case explained to me, this was "an easier litigation path." Legal experts beyond the university also agreed that this was a smart,

strategic, and not surprising decision (e.g., Johnson 2004). Still, in following legal precedent, university leaders further discredited and displaced the project of racial equality in the realm of law.

A vocal and visible set of interest groups came to represent the remedial argument for affirmative action. A group of political activists and UM students had successfully intervened as third parties in the *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases in the lower courts. These interveners were represented, respectively, by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and by three coalitions— the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary (BAMN), United for Equality and Affirmative Action (UEAA), and Law Students for Affirmative Action (LSAA).

The interveners argued a different rationale for race-based affirmative admissions: they argued that the university's policies helped to remedy racial discrimination in society and current discriminatory practices at the university, particularly the use of standardized tests like the SAT. Their rationale is known as the compensatory argument for affirmative action, and it is an argument that institutions avoid, in part because it involves accepting culpability for discrimination. BAMN activists became the primary public spokespeople voicing this position in speeches at marches and protests, in political training sessions, and during conferences. The interveners represented, in the contemporary context, the project of racial equality, as they argued for admissions policies that remedy racial and class disadvantage. University leaders carefully differentiated their legal position and their political stance from the interveners and BAMN activists.

Diversity vs. Colorblindness

With *Gratz* and *Grutter,* however, the central ideological and political tension was not between the projects of diversity and racial equality, but rather between the projects of diversity and colorblindness. The university leadership helped to establish these terms in law. The university's success at the Supreme Court in 2003 also rested on its ability to counter the plaintiff's arguments. Most importantly, the university convinced a majority of justices to recognize Justice Powell's opinion—that diversity is a compelling governmental interest in the context of higher education—as controlling precedent.

The broader tension between the racialized projects of diversity and colorblindness did not end after June 23, 2003. Although the Court, in *Gratz,* objected only to the points awarded to unrepresented racial minorities within the undergraduate point system*,* conservative and libertarian activists were already threatening Michigan's programs for recruiting, funding, and serving students of color by spring of 2003. Ward Connerly's American Civil Rights Institute— which had led campaigns to end race- and gender-based affirmative action in other states—and the Center for Equal Opportunity— which casts itself as "the only think tank dedicated exclusively to the promotion of colorblind equal opportunity and racial harmony"—raised objections to such programs at Michigan and almost thirty other universities.[71] ACRI and CEO sent letters threatening legal action if the universities did not end programs that made race and ethnicity a prerequisite for participation. The organizations also filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Office of Civil Rights against the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which initiated an agency investigation of the university. MIT and many other universities, including Princeton and

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[71] www.ceousa.org. Accessed September 25, 2006.

Iowa State, subsequently revised the criteria for such programs (e.g., Berkowitz 2003a). The MCRI campaign developed soon thereafter. Thus *Gratz* and *Grutter* codified, but did not end, the broader political contest between diversity and colorblindness, as ideologies and as political programs.

Affirmative action, race-targeted programs, and racism on campus had been controversial topics at Michigan before the lawsuits, particularly within the context of the conflicts in the 1990s over multiculturalism and what conservatives dubbed "political correctness" (Glazer 1997; Kimball 1998; Lynch 1997). Despite this controversy and despite the common association between affirmative admissions and diversity, activists and administrators rarely questioned the principle of "diversity." As stated earlier, administrators at Michigan had institutionalized diversity ideology outside of and apart from race-conscious admissions. And beyond the university, public rhetoric about diversity was less politically charged than the rhetoric about affirmative action, with conservative and liberal politicians alike endorsing "diversity" since at least the mid-1990s (Lynch 1997; Skrentny 1996).

★ *Shaping the Content and Implementation of Law and Policy: Codifying a Legal Argument*

Crafting the Diversity Rationale

In *Gratz* and *Grutter,* leaders at Michigan did not just adopt Powell's opinion as their legal argument. Rather, they played a pivotal role in developing the content of the diversity rationale and, ultimately, in shaping the content of law. By elaborating the legal rationale for diversity and

succeeding at the Supreme Court, university administrators helped to reify diversity ideology in law.

Denise O'Neil Green (2004a; 2004b) eloquently shows that university executives, spokespeople, and lawyers crafted and popularized the diversity rationale by mobilizing organizational resources such as academic studies and professional relationships. University leaders and their lawyers first faced the pragmatic task of developing a substantive legal defense. They based their legal arguments on Powell's diversity rationale but needed to bolster this argument. At the time the plaintiffs filed *Gratz* and *Grutter*, there was little empirical evidence documenting exactly how racial and ethnic diversity enhanced the educational environment.

University administrators substantiated their legal arguments with social scientific research and policy statements about racial diversity (Green 2004a; 2004b). In so doing, they helped to create a body of knowledge that gave scientific backing to their legal argument and became part of the legal record. They created this legal evidence by "promoting what [the university] does best—research" (Green 2004b:382). Administrators like university provost Nancy Cantor, a white woman with training in psychology, encouraged research about racial diversity by scholars at Michigan, other universities, and research institutes across the country. This research documented the ways that "students learn more and think in deeper, more complex ways" on a racially diverse campus and in racially diverse classrooms (University of Michigan 1999 in Green 2004b:384). Influential academic articles (e.g., Gurin et al. 2002) reported that both white and non-white students had positive educational outcomes when they interacted with peers of different racial backgrounds. The university's lawyers and expert witnesses integrated these empirical findings into their legal statements and reports.

University leaders at Michigan strategically garnered political and institutional support for their legal case about diversity, as well (Green 2004a; Green 2004b; Stohr 2004). They strategized with campus leaders and formed alliances with other educational institutions and organizations, corporations, military officials, and politicians. For example, the university president in the late 1990s, Lee Bollinger, contacted former U.S. President Gerald Ford, who wrote a *New York Times* op-ed that endorsed affirmative action, Michigan's policies, and the importance of college diversity (Ford 1999). University leaders relied on their networks to solicit amicus briefs, including a high-profile brief from sixty-five Fortune 500 companies and another from retired military leaders.

Communicating the Diversity Rationale

When CIR filed the lawsuits, the Office of the Vice President of Communications formed a communications working group and, eventually, an Internal Communications Committee. This group designed and implemented a communications strategy that included the Admissions Lawsuit Media Plan, which office staff shared with me. The Media Plan identified goals, key talking points for spokespeople to communicate about the cases, and important public relations developments, such as recently aired news coverage.

The talking points of the Media Plan—or, in local parlance, "messaging"—translated the university's legal arguments into more accessible language. Staff in the Office of the Vice President of Communications consulted with lawyers, university leaders, and administrators to distill these talking points. Many of the core messages in the Media Plan communicated, in more accessible terms, the legal rationale for diversity. One message was: "There is empirical

evidence that learning in a diverse environment benefits EVERY student, regardless of race," and "Our admissions process is working well. Each year we succeed in assembling an intellectually dynamic, diverse group of students..." The communications committee also modified these talking points depending on the stage of the cases. In the months around the Court arguments and decision, they coordinated their talking points with some of the pro-affirmative action student activists.

Communications and legal staff briefed the various university presidents, interim presidents, deans, provosts, attorneys, and other figures in the public spotlight on these talking points and the Media Plan more generally. In turn, administrators repeated these talking points in their public statements. As one student opponent of affirmative action griped to me, "If you listen to the comments of *every* university administrator—and they all go on [National Public Radio] and all that—their talking points, I swear they must train 'em… They all say the exact same thing."

The university's media strategy influenced how administrators would communicate their position to audiences such as alumni, donors, students, reporters, business leaders, and public relations personnel at other elite universities. The communications office used email, personal meetings, press releases, newspaper clippings, a public electronic listserv, and an extensive web site.[72] Michigan leaders spoke at events sponsored by the communications office, events sponsored by student groups, such as a debate organized by the LSA student government, and at events off campus ranging from undergraduate recruitment fairs to national meetings of different professional organizations. They published articles and books about the legal defense and

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[72] See www.vpcomm.umich.edu/admissions/

campus diversity, such as *Defending Diversity: Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan* (Gurin, Lehman and Lewis 2004). Later, a traveling gallery exhibit about the lawsuits chronicled the cases with historical documents, quotes, images, video, and comic strips.

The Diversity Rationale as Uncontested Fact

A central point of the university's Media Plan was to present the diversity rationale as uncontested fact. University leaders communicated this in many ways. They sought to change the terms of the so-called "debate" over affirmative action. According to Julie Peterson, the Associate Vice President for Media Relations and Public Affairs, the lawsuits communications team wanted to frame the university's position as a reasoned discussion, rather than a polemical stance. Peterson, a white woman with a warm demeanor and long red hair, explained to me during an interview that one of the university's objectives was to "guide a national conversation about the importance of diversity… Not so much to convince [people] that 'We're right and they're wrong,' but to say, 'We're thoughtful. This is an important social policy question. We need to have a really thoughtful and rational debate about this rather than polarizing.'"

Prior to the Court's decisions, university leaders often asserted that their legal campaign was succeeding because opponents of affirmative action agreed with the diversity rationale. A few months before the Supreme Court oral arguments, President George W. Bush announced, "I strongly support diversity of all kinds, including racial diversity in higher education. But the method used by the University of Michigan to achieve this important goal is fundamentally flawed" (Office of the Press Secretary 2003). University president Coleman, Julie Peterson, and other campus leaders expressed disappointment that Bush opposed their policies. Yet they

interpreted his comments as a sign that their campaign was working. Soon after Bush's announcement, Coleman gave a speech at the university's 2003 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium. She told an overflowing audience of more than 1,000 people:

> I was pleased to hear the President support the importance of diversity in America's colleges and universities... It also was gratifying to hear him acknowledge what our research has demonstrated — that essential values like respect, understanding, and goodwill are strengthened when students live and learn from people from many backgrounds. He admonished universities to seek out diversity, to consider a broad range of factors in admissions, which, as I have said, is precisely what we do.

Supreme Court decisions confer a great deal of legitimacy on policies, even controversial ones such as affirmative action (Clawson, Kegler and Waltenburg 2001), and the Court's endorsement of Michigan's diversity rationale provided extraordinary legitimacy for the diversity rationale. University administrators pointed to the Court's ruling as the ultimate measure of their success. In fact, they carefully crafted their response to the Court's decisions in June 2003. Although the Court had ruled against the undergraduate point system, the university communications team decided on a simple message: we won. Spokespeople called attention to the court's affirmation of diversity as a compelling interest in higher education and to the court's determination that race could be one of many factors in admissions decisions because of the benefits of a diverse student body. They incorporated these very messages into the university's

public relations materials, which helped to further reiterate diversity ideology as uncontested and reasoned fact.

The Office of the Vice Provost produced a full-color, graphics-intensive brochure, *The Educational Value of Diversity: a Landmark Decision,* to explain the university's position and victory in the cases. It featured quotes, text, and photographs representing the Court's decision, the amicus briefs, and university leaders. The brochure also spotlighted quotes from national figures and organizations that had supported the university or just endorsed the idea of diversity, ranging from General Motors Corporation to Secretary of State Colin Powell and even including President Bush.

The university and the Supreme Court majority were not the only influential institutions legitimizing the legal diversity rationale. Popular representations of the lawsuits and diversity beyond Michigan's campus changed as well after the Court's decisions. Between the 1960s and mid-1990s, U.S. newspaper editorials about affirmative action had cited the need for remedial action or, more often, the importance of not giving racial minorities preferential treatment (Clawson, Strine IV and Waltenburg 2003; Gamson and Modigliani 1987; Richardson and Lancendorfer 2004). The newspaper editorials responding to the Court's 2003 decisions were far more likely to rationalize affirmative action on the grounds of diversity—that a mix of people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds benefits society and organizations (Richardson and Lancendorfer 2004). These editorials underscored the ways that affirmative action enhanced student learning and improved the nation's leadership ranks.

The Court's decisions, if not the university's campaign, also directly shaped the ways that opponents of race-conscious admissions talked about diversity. CIR representatives, the

plaintiffs, and their lawyers had not directly questioned the merits of the diversity rationale in their legal arguments, nor had most other conservative critics of Michigan's policies. On the day of the Court's decisions, Curt Levy, a spokesperson for CIR, said on AM talk radio, "Michigan should follow public opinion and the wishes of the voter and try to come up with non-discriminatory ways to achieve diversity."

Although CEO, the National Association of Scholars, and others produced reports criticizing Patricia Gurin's research on diversity (Lerner and Nagai 1998; Wood and Sherman 2003), these opponents of race-conscious admissions based their arguments on primarily constitutional grounds. Roger Clegg, an animated white man who then served as CEO's general counsel, explained to me that such an attack would require time-intensive research, and "it's going to be very hard [for us] to prove that diversity is worthless in terms of educational outcomes."

After the 2003 Court decisions, however, a number of vocal conservative analysts chastised CIR for not attacking the diversity rationale (e.g., Miller 2003). When I asked Clegg, in summer 2004, if conservatives had developed a critique of "diversity," he replied, "Well, obviously, we did not do a very good job, or we did an inadequate job, although I think it was sort of understandable. Because I think the conservatives probably thought that, 'Oh geez, nobody's actually going to buy this are they?'"

The Diversity Script

University spokespeople's speeches, presentations, and other public comments about diversity and the lawsuits had been scripted carefully. It was no accident that university officials seemed

to share an official script on diversity: this flowed directly from the university Admissions Lawsuits Media Plan and communications strategy.

University leaders at the top of the organizational hierarchy adhered most closely to the official script about the lawsuits. My interview with one admissions officer, which I recount in Chapter Three, consisted of little more than an elaboration of his PowerPoint slides about "Diversity in Higher Education." Although this was not the norm for my interviews, his adherence to such a tight script demonstrates the degree to which admissions leaders were in the spotlight, well rehearsed, and careful about what they said.

Although university leaders put great effort into communicating and legitimizing the diversity rationale, many administrators personally found this legal rationale to be constraining. The charges filed by the plaintiffs were centrally concerned with race, so the university's legal rationale had to respond in kind. This limited how administrators could talk about and manage issues of race and diversity on campus. Only a few administrators complained openly to me about the constraints inherent to the concept of diversity, but many disliked the ways in which campus discussion had focused on the narrower and more controversial topics of race and admissions policies. A number of people expressed, in our interviews and even occasionally in their public statements, that they felt this emphasis on race and ethnicity in admissions had been externally imposed on the university, and they were eager to move beyond it. At one public panel about the cases, an audience member questioned the university's focus on racial diversity. General Counsel Marvin Krislov remarked in a slightly exasperated tone, "We're talking about racial and ethnic diversity because we're being sued about it!"

★ *Defending and Endorsing, but Redefining, Remedies for Racial Disadvantage*

Leaders and administrators at Michigan, like their counterparts in Rogers Park and at Starr, have strategically invoked diversity rhetoric and programs in a number of similar ways. One way that organizational elites across my sites mobilize diversity rhetoric and initiatives is to defend programs and policies that at least began as remedies for racial and economic disadvantage while they simultaneously redefine the purpose of these programs and downplay concerns about disadvantage. University leaders did exactly this as they articulated and legally defended the diversity rationale.

The university's legal argument acknowledged the importance of race and the existence of racial inequalities in the U.S., such as geographic segregation. However, this argument provided an unusual and quite restricted understanding of racial exclusion and inequality. According to the legal rationale, racial inequities and segregation shaped students' past opportunities for interracial interactions. Students had different experiences in racially segregated environments, and they brought different perspectives to campus based on these experiences. They also often brought misconceptions, stereotypes, and mistrust that they needed to learn to overcome. Put differently, administrators rhetorically and legally reframed the problem of geographic racial segregation, presenting it as an opportunity for learning. As university provost Paul Courant explained at the Lawsuits Admissions Update event:

> We live in a *very* segregated society still. The vast majority of our students, the
> vast majority of high school students in the United States and certainly of high
> school students in Michigan, are raised in highly segregated environments. So
> environments in which there is racial and cultural diversity are almost

automatically culturally and psychologically hot in this sense and lead to an improved learning environment in general.

This is not to say that university leaders were unaware of other dimensions, causes, or problematic consequences of racial segregation. They certainly were. Rather, the restrictions of legal precedent made this particular argument about inequality the most viable one. Nevertheless, the diversity rationale reinforced a vision of race than differed importantly from a vision in which admissions policies helped to rectify social inequalities.

Similarly, the university's legal arguments referred to the importance of "educational opportunity," but opportunity had a different meaning in the early 2000s than in the 1960s and 1970s, when administrators used it to describe an admissions and academic support program targeted at African-Americans. University leaders emphasized the opportunities that *all* students should have for interpersonal exchange with people from different backgrounds, racial or otherwise. Such exchanges would lead to improved learning outcomes. The university administration stated in its brief to the Supreme Court in *Gratz:*

> It is all too common for students to come to college campuses from high schools where they have had little opportunity to interact with students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds… Bringing together students with different life experiences creates opportunities for rich and vivid exchanges, as students reflect on those experiences in a new context and share their own interpretations of them. By assembling a diverse student body, universities also encourage students to identify and confront unspoken and, indeed, often unconscious stereotypes.

Here, university leaders were defending admissions practices that began as an effort to create "opportunities" for students disadvantaged by race and class.

But they did *not* argue that their admissions policies were supposed to remedy disadvantage. The university's legal arguments, in contrast, stressed that affirmative admissions provided opportunities for interpersonal interaction across racial and other lines. Following legal doctrine, university decision-makers eschewed the remedial rationale for their admissions practices and downplayed problems of disadvantage. They played up, instead, the benefits of racial inclusion and the compatibility of inclusion with the university's basic organizational mission. They convinced the Court that the goal of diversity is a compelling state interest, and thus squarely codified this goal into to law. But, in keeping with currents in U.S. law, they also minimized the need for institutions to redistribute resources downwards in order to remedy problems experienced by people of color or the poor, in particular.

In so doing, they sought to frame the terms of the political debate over affirmative admissions, simultaneously marginalized the political agendas and positions of activists who made the case for remedial racial justice.

★ *Marginalizing Alternative Ideologies and Political Agendas*

University leaders succeed at the Supreme Court in 2003 by reiterating the distinction drawn in *Bakke* between the diversity rationale for race-based affirmative admissions and rationales based on promoting racial equality or remedying discriminatory practices. University leaders also reinforced this distinction in the campus politics surrounding the lawsuits. University

administrators, executives, and lawyers sometimes worked with the interveners, particularly when coordinating the legal cases. They were publicly diplomatic about BAMN, a controversial organization that many students and administrators considered disruptive, militant, and run by non-Michigan students. A number of administrators told me that it was useful to have interveners make points that the university could not. At the same time, university leaders carefully distanced themselves from BAMN activists and deliberately differentiated their diversity rationale from the interveners' position.

For example, BAMN held a three-day conference on the Ann Arbor conference, in an effort to educate participants about the lawsuits and affirmative admissions and to build the March on Washington for the day of the Supreme Court oral arguments. The conference brought in hundreds of participants, many of them African-American high school students from Detroit, and included at least one panel with university administrators. It overlapped, probably intentionally, with the university's renowned Martin Luther King celebration, although the university's glossy guide to the many MLK celebratory activities made no mention of BAMN's conference.

University leaders also found other, more informal ways to distance their arguments about diversity and their position from the interveners' arguments. After the Court decisions, university administrators created a multi-media gallery exhibit about the cases, "Views and Voices: U-M's Case for Diversity," which they later modified and displayed as a traveling educational presentation at libraries, schools, and a major conference throughout the region. The exhibit at the university included large boards featuring a historical timeline about activism and racial minority representation at the university, excerpts from the oral arguments, and quotes

from prominent individuals and organizations that had supported or opposed the university. A video projector displayed quotes on a wall, and the audio recording of the oral arguments played in the background.

The exhibit featured pictures of a large march in Washington, D.C. that BAMN had organized, including African-American protesters holding signs that BAMN had made. The exhibit, however, did not name BAMN anywhere. It made only a few limited references to the interveners: a quote from an intervener and two entries in the timeline noting when a judge denied the interveners' claims in *Grutter* and when the interveners filed in *Gratz*. No reference was made to the substance of their argument for compensatory affirmative action.

II. How University Leaders Communicated Diversity Ideology to Campus Members

University leaders adapted diversity ideology on campus to the legal context of the lawsuits. Their public rhetoric, images, and initiatives emphasized the legality of the university's policies, the role of race in shaping life in the U.S. and learning on campus—particularly through interpersonal interactions—and the scientific bases of their statements. They simultaneously downplayed their use of race as a policy or program criteria. My data show that university spokespeople invoked a variety of expert discourses, such as law and social science, to legitimize the diversity rationale as organizational common sense. This was one important way that they institutionalized diversity ideology in general, and the diversity rationale in particular, outside of formal legal contexts.

★ *Framing the Terms of Institutional Inclusion: Diversity as Expert Knowledge and Individual Experience*

When Michigan leaders and administrators spoke publicly about the lawsuits, they legitimized their legal arguments by presenting the diversity rationale as commensurate with other logics and objectives of campus life and with law. They did so by drawing on organizational techniques of public relations, pedagogy, and legal oversight and discourses of law, social science, individualism, and law. They performed the diversity rationale as expert knowledge, taught students the individual experience of diversity, and asserted the university's compliance with law. I begin with expert knowledge.

Performing the Diversity Rationale as Expert Knowledge

During speeches, panels, and other public events concerning *Gratz* and *Grutter*, university spokespeople endeavored to make the diversity rationale seem less like legalese and more like common sense for educators and students. The university's public relations campaign around the cases played an enormously influential role in this process. In this campaign, university leaders presented diversity as a taken-for-granted societal ideal and the diversity rationale as established law and sound social science.

An event in the fall of 2002, titled "U-M Admissions Lawsuits: An Update," illustrates how administrators invoked media talking points and other cultural and organizational strategies to perform the diversity rationale as organizational common sense. The Admissions Lawsuits Update event was sponsored by the university's communications office, the university's Office of the Vice President and General Counsel, and the Ford Foundation, which had donated at least

$600,000 to help the university defend its policies (University of Michigan 2001). That afternoon, campus members filled most of the plush red seats in Mendelssohn Hall. The audience quietly listened to an all-star cast of administrators, lawyers, and other speakers. Like other lawsuit-related events sponsored by the administration, the structure of the panels and the ideas expressed by the speakers reflected concepts from the university's defense, particularly the argument that differing viewpoints are central to the learning enterprise.

The administration had intentionally set up this event not to be a debate. Marvin Krislov, the white man who worked as the university's general counsel and the moderator that day, explained, "Today's program is intended to be an update for our community on the defense of the lawsuits and an explanation of the policies we are defending. It is not intended to be a debate with all sides of the arguments." This was part of a broader strategy that the university had used to try to present the diversity rationale not as a matter of polemics but as a reasoned discussion.

The speakers panels at the Admissions Lawsuits Update were divided into "Educators/Leadership" and "Legal Experts." This structure also embodied and communicated the university's legal argument about diversity as academic and practical common sense. The educators explained the diversity rationale (although they did not use that term), while the lawyers explained the legal process and procedures. This division of panels reinforced the notion that the diversity rationale was not just a legal argument but rather commonplace organizational knowledge and established academic wisdom. The inclusion of an African-American student and an African-American alumna on the Educators panel helped, in the language of the university's Media Plan, to "humanize the university's position—attach human faces and first-person stories

to our messages." The presence of the alumna, Judge Geraldine Bedsoe Ford, also exemplified the university's argument that it trains people of color to be leaders in society.

President Mary Sue Coleman, who introduced the event, and the other participants on the Educators panel, reiterated key points from the diversity rationale as straightforward fact, not as legal arguments. In this and other public settings, university leaders seemed to translate effortlessly the legal defense of diversity into commonsense statements about diversity. They did not preface their statements with qualifications such as "We are arguing…." Coleman, a white woman who had a background in biochemistry and always seemed to be "on message," began by describing Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke* for the audience. She went on to say:

> [R]ace still matters in American society, as it influences our perceptions about the world and the people around us. To understand the impact on perception, there is no substitute for face-to-face interaction among students. It is the most powerful educational tool we know to break down stereotypes and overcome assumptions.

This was the diversity rationale, though not presented as a legal argument.

Coleman and the other speakers at the Lawsuit Admissions Update drew on social scientific discourse to substantiate their claims about diversity. Likewise, they invoked their expertise as professors and scholars, citing examples of their teaching and research experience to substantiate their claims. Interim Provost Paul Courant, a middle-aged white man dressed in a gray suit jacket and red tie, peered out at the audience through wire-rimmed glasses and said definitively:

There are enormous benefits associated with a diverse student body. In fact, I'd argue that there are enormous benefits in general associated with human diversity in a wide variety of contexts. I happen to be an economist, and a very important idea in neoclassical economics is the division of labor. Diversity is very much about the division of labor and the division of labor is very much about diversity. If you want to solve any problem, you want to have a team of people who have a variety of skills rather than a clump of people who are essentially all identical.

Similarly, Coleman spoke about the new research questions explored in the biological sciences after more women and people of color earned PhDs in those fields. The law school dean recounted the improvements in classroom discussion and Socratic dialogue—a common teaching technique in law schools—when students express diverse viewpoints.

To understand these leaders' effectiveness in translating and legitimizing the diversity rationale, it is helpful to consider two intertwined roles that many of them played. They simultaneously served as litigants (or representatives of litigants) with a position to defend and as administrators—and many of them, academic researchers—with an educational institution to run. As litigants, they needed to shore up and reinforce a legal argument. As educational administrators, they needed to treat the lawsuits and diversity bureaucratically, using discourses and practices appropriate to a university.

The diversity rationale emphasized that people learn from their personal interactions with people of different backgrounds, and the speakers on the Educators/Leadership panel called up

their personal experiences on Michigan's campus to make similar claims. Judge Ford, a distinguished African-American woman with a gravelly voice, said in measured, punctuated phrases,

> I was here in the mid-'40s. And the new students coming back [from World War II on the GI Bill]—men they were, really—made a deep and abiding impression on all of us who were ordinary undergrads. I think the vitality, the sense of commitment of those older students did a lot to change the university… And I think that in terms of meeting people who'd had *that* variety of experience, who were married—we didn't know anything about married people!—but here at the university, we met that variety of people.

Ford's comments reiterated the idea that students learn best from their peers and through interaction with people of different backgrounds. They also pointed to forms of diversity other than race that might be more salient for campus members, even for people of color.

The diversity rationale called for the expression of different viewpoints on campus, so, to some extent, university leaders also needed to support conditions on campus that were conducive to such expression. At the Admissions Lawsuits Update, for example, the administration included panelist Monique Luse, an outspoken African-American senior, the president of the LSA student government, and a leader in a pro-affirmative action organization on campus. Luse reiterated many points of the diversity rationale but, of any panelist, veered farthest off the official script. She first recalled how, after growing up in predominantly white and upper-middle class community, she was eager to attend college with other black students. She said:

> Yes, I've been able to interact with people on a level that I never have before. White, black, gay, lesbian, all those different types of things have been amazing for me in my development…. But also having a chance to be around more people of color, in particular more black people, has also been extremely valuable to me.

Her account of this experience echoed the university's argument in *Grutter* about the need for a "critical mass" of underrepresented racial minority students.

But then Luse criticized university leaders. She chastised them for neglecting recent hate speech incidents in the dorms and failing to attend to other problems that students of color faced once they reach campus. Coleman watched on with a serious expression while Luse spoke. The president finally broke into a smile when Luse broke the tension and said, "I think [students] sometimes downplay the benefit that we're really getting from interacting with each other!"

Luse's comments led to an exchange on the panel that illustrates two key dynamics common at campus events like this one. Provost Courant had said, during his initial comments, "Everyone who's been a student or a teacher [knows] an enormous amount of teaching is done by students." After Luse criticized the university, the moderator asked for Courant's reaction. The provost stumbled, "Well, there's definitely more to be done." Then he interrupted himself: "I have to say that my earlier comment—that students teach—was perfectly exemplified by Monique." Courant was reiterating a fundamental premise of the legal diversity rationale (and of much educational pedagogy)—students learn from other students. Moreover, administrators commonly would point out these kind of storied "diversity" moments, in which an interaction between people of different backgrounds produced something institutionally beneficial.

Courant's reference to Luse's lesson also illustrates another classic feature of orthodox ideologies: the incorporation of one's adversaries. Here, Courant pointed to the inclusion of a critic—and, presumably, a person of color who objected to some of the ways that university leaders handled racial issues on campus—as further evidence that the university supported diversity and that such diversity brought benefits.

Teaching the Individual Experience of Diversity

University leaders' public events, statements, and materials about the lawsuits were not the only forum through which they legitimized the legal rationale for diversity as organizational common sense. Some of the university's many "diversity programs" specifically served people of color, women, students with disabilities, gay and lesbian students, or other minority groups. A number of campus diversity programs sought to improve students' understanding of and interpersonal interactions among people from different backgrounds. Such programs included the Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR), Dialogues on Diversity, and the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching's Multicultural Teaching initiatives. The educational and quasi-educational events, activities, and performances of these programs helped to reiterate precepts of diversity ideology.

Many of their programmatic activities specifically addressing the lawsuits relied on pedagogical techniques such as films, plays, and role-playing activities that reinforced key tenets of the diversity rationale, particularly the notions that people experience and learn from diversity individually, through interactions, and that race is a particularly salient form of diversity at this individual level. Like the comments of panelist Judge Ford, these diversity programs represented diversity as a salient, interpersonal experience for individual campus members.

Dialogues on Diversity, for example, was a program based in the Rackham Graduate School that brought in speakers, hosted events, ran a website, did outreach in residential halls, and developed non-web media, such as films about students with mental and physical disabilities. In 2003, program administrators produced a film, *Campus Diversity, Student Voices*. Earl Lewis—the African-American dean who oversaw the program and a well-known proponent of affirmative admissions—introduced the film's premiere in downtown Ann Arbor. To an audience of about 175 people, he explained that the Dialogues on Diversity administrators "have been charged with a responsibility, and that responsibility is to actually talk about diversity in all its forms. To bring together students and staff and faculty to really address the myriad ways that we think about the world we live in."

The film featured clips from interviews that had been conducted with Michigan undergraduates before the Court's decision. According to the glossy brochure about the film, *Campus Diversity, Student Voices* "explores the role of diversity in students' lives at the university. In their own voices, students impart a close-up view of the scope and meaning of their experiences, and the significance of opportunities available in campus life to learn from difference." The film spotlighted eleven students who differed by school, year, race, ethnic heritage, class, national origin, geographic origin, gender, and political orientation, among other so-called social identities. The interview clips were interspersed with an awkward, staged conversation between two narrators, a white woman and a black man. The generic background music and basic graphics gave the film the feeling of a well-produced instructional video.

The final structure and content of the film reiterated many of the principles articulated through the diversity rationale. The basic message of the film was that diversity meant building

connections with people of different backgrounds—not necessarily seeing eye-to-eye, but co-existing and communicating within the bounds of civil discourse and cross-cultural tolerance. The students featured in the film said that they felt that diversity was a good thing, even though their views on it differed and they did not necessarily seek out diversity in their personal lives. They talked about "diversity" in terms of their experiences learning about race in and out of the classroom, interacting with people of other racial groups, and familiarizing themselves with cultural differences across racial groups such as attitudes and social practices. They invariably spoke about confronting diversity at Michigan as positive and informative for their own self-understanding and identity. For example, a white male of Polish ancestry remarked that he disliked the course he took to fulfill the university's race and ethnicity course requirement, but he also admitted to learning a great deal from the experience.

This quasi-educational film—along with other campus diversity programming such as "A Compelling Interest: Voices and Visions of Diversity," a performance by CRLT—relied on pedagogical conventions to legitimize the diversity rationale. It reiterated a vision of diversity as rooted in students' individual and group identities, articulated through students' interpersonal relationships and academic experiences, and expressed through interactions. Race was a key form of diversity, manifest through people's cultural differences that emerged in interactions. In both structure and content, this film and other similar campus initiatives pointed to diversity is a source of learning.

University administrators also communicated and reinforced the organizational legitimacy of diversity ideology on campus in less deliberate ways. Diversity discourse was already well-institutionalized throughout the university's policies, programs, and public relations

long before the lawsuits. For example, administrators sometimes opened events by citing the university speech code or distributed it in print. According to the speech code: "The University of Michigan strives to create a truly open forum, one in which diverse opinions can be expressed and heard." As an official rule of the university, it further buttressed the idea that diversity is expressed through individual viewpoints and that expression of those viewpoints is central to intellectual life on campus.

CHAPTER FIVE. UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

THE POLITICS OF RECRUITING AND SUPPORTING A DIVERSE CLASS

Student activists first raised concerns about the admission of racial minorities into the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and their inclusion on campus in the 1950s. Administrators first set up programs to pursue these goals in the mid-1960s, in the name of creating "opportunity" for racially and economically disadvantaged students, particularly black students. Since at least the 1980s, university leaders have expressed pride in these efforts. They claim Michigan is "leaders and the best" in recruiting and supporting people of color in the study body and on the faculty. As one of the university regents noted in the mid-1980s, "Other than its primary missions in teaching, research and public service, there is no single issue on the University's agenda upon which the Regents and administrative officers place a higher priority, or invest more time, than their efforts to build an integrated university community."[73]

University policies and support for women and gays and lesbians have been other major issues related to inclusion and difference on campus (e.g., Eisenmann 2001), although they have received relatively less administrative and political attention than issues of race and admissions. Although campus activists on the left have taken issue with the degree of the university's commitment, and activists on the right have questioned the motives and legality of university programs for students of color, university leaders have sought to make their support for people of color, and "diversity" more generally, part of the university's symbolic institutional identity.

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[73] *Regents proceedings*, March 1987: 1094

In this chapter, I consider how university leaders strategically used diversity rhetoric and initiatives to manage the politics of recruiting and supporting students of color in the mid-2000s, in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Gratz* and *Grutter* decisions. The Court had affirmed the legal rationale for diversity, thus permitting universities and colleges to consider race in admissions decision in the interest of building a diverse student body. However, the *Gratz* decision and the ongoing, often successful political campaign by opponents of race-based affirmative admissions were changing the political landscape of race in higher education. Administrators at Michigan and other colleges and universities had to be extremely cautious about the legality of their admissions policies and campus programs. Although they could pursue the goal of racial diversity, they had far less leeway to give preferences to African-American, Latino and Native American students.

Leaders at Michigan implemented a new undergraduate admissions policies that more closely aligned with their broadly inclusive discourse of "diversity," and they began to quietly open up more race-targeted initiatives to non-racial minorities. In this chapter, I examine how university administrators, particularly those in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, modified and mobilized the diversity project in light of these legal and political pressures and in the context of other conditions in higher education, most notably the ongoing racial and class inequalities among applicants and the growing commercialization and competitiveness of undergraduate admissions.

As I stated in Chapter Four, I have two goals here. I seek to identify the discursive and organizational mechanisms that leaders relied on to establish and ncommunicate diversity as the official local ideology of race, difference, and inclusion, and I analyze how the project of

diversity incorporates, transforms, and displaces other racial ideologies and political agendas, particularly the project of racial equality but also the project of colorblindness.

University leaders and administrators, like organizational elites in Rogers Park and at Starr, have relied on diversity ideology and initiatives to satisfice a variety of institutional imperatives. The most of extreme of these, as I discussed in the previous chapter, has been the university's need to legally defend its admissions policies and shape the legal record. They face pressures to appeal to white and middle class constituents without alienating minority groups and to gain the consent or acquiescence for their racial ideology and race-based practices from campus audiences. They also have needed to accommodate and defend against conservative and progressive advocates and to refashion race and inclusion for the broader neoconservative and neoliberal context.

Organizational decision-makers have strategically invoked the rhetoric and practices of the diversity project to satisfice these imperatives. How exactly do organizational leaders at Michigan strategically employ diversity ideology and initiatives? In the previous chapter, I pointed to a few patterns. University administrators invoked the diversity project to frame the political controversy over affirmative admissions, to codify a legal argument, to defend but redefine remedies for racial inequality, and to marginalize those advocating for racial equality. In this chapter, I illustrate a number of other ways that university leaders have strategically invoked diversity rhetoric and programs to manage the ongoing politics around affirmative admission and campus inclusion. These strategies include changing the constituents for programs for inclusion, redefining middle class culture and skills, and constructing a symbolic institutional identity of the university.

A common theme cuts across these various uses of the diversity project. In the name of diversity, university leaders have acknowledged and affirmed race as a category of difference while they simultaneously have downplayed problems of racial injustice and, increasingly, downplayed race—or, more precisely, membership in a racial minority group—as a basis for resource redistribution.

The chapter begins with a description of student enrollment and admissions at Michigan and high-stakes college admissions more generally, including the ongoing influence of racial and economic inequalities and the growing commercialization of admissions practices. After setting this scene, I recap the key features of the diversity project at Michigan. Then, I elaborate on five strategic uses of diversity ideology and initiatives that university leaders and administrators commonly relied on to manage admissions and campus programs for inclusion. I illustrate the first three uses—acknowledging but downplaying race, changing the constituents, and redefining middle class cultural and human capital—by discussing how university administrators modified diversity rhetoric and campus diversity programs in response to the Court's decision in Gratz and ongoing conservative political pressures. University decision-makers downplayed racial diversity while putting greater emphasis on geographic, socio-economic, and intellectual diversity. They also underscored a new rationale for diversity—preparedness for competition in the global job market—and the importance of students' ability to communicate about diversity.

I then draw on my evidence about how admissions officers managed undergraduate recruitment in light of legal pressures, the marketing of higher education, and the racial and economic inequalities that differentiate the potential applicant pool. This evidence illustrates two other strategic uses of the diversity project; admissions staff drew on diversity rhetoric,

especially, to assert their legal compliance and to construct a symbolic identity for the institution as inclusive. The chapter concludes with a post-script about Proposal 2 and a discussion of the general ways in which diversity ideology and initiatives transform racial politics on campus, particularly the project of racial equality on campus.

I. How Race, Class, and High Stakes Admissions Shaped the Diversity Project at Michigan

Undergraduate Enrollment and High Stakes College Admissions at Michigan and Other Elite Universities

African-Americans—along with women and foreign students—were first admitted to Michigan in the late 1800s (Duderstadt 1995; Peckham 1994). However, in the 1960s, fewer than 200 black students attended the university—under .1% of the student body (Peckham 1994). Since the mid-1970s, enrollment of black undergraduate students has wavered around 8%, although it dropped to below 5% in the early 1980s and reached over 9% in 1996 (Peckham 1994; University of Michigan nd). Enrollment of Latino undergraduates grew from 1% in 1980 to 3% in 1990 to 5% in 2005 (University of Michigan 2005b).[74] The largest spikes in racial minority enrollment occurred between 1989, when 82% of undergraduates were white, and 1997, when 69% of undergraduates were white. Between 1993 and 2006, African-American, Hispanic American, and Native Americans made up between 13% and 14% of undergraduates. During that same time period, the percentage of white undergraduates decreased from about 73% to 68% while the percentage of Asian-American students and students reporting "race unknown" increased commensurately.

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[74] See also Box 1, Office of Undergraduate Admissions (University of Michigan) publications, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

In the fall of 2005, just over half of Michigan's undergraduates were female and about 5% were international students.[75] These figures compare with 47% female enrollment and 1% foreign student enrollment fifteen years earlier.[76] The university releases very little data about the socioeconomic status of its students and no data about socioeconomic status by race or ethnicity. However, the available statistics indicate that undergraduates attending Michigan in the mid-2000s were wealthier than their counterparts a decade earlier. In 2004, 55% of first-year students reported a family income over $100,000—compared to 34% in 1993 (Matney 2003; University of Michigan 2005a). Only 14% of first-years reported an income below $50,000 in 2004—down from 27% in 1993.[77] Such income inequality is common throughout higher education, particularly at the selective colleges and universities. In 2005, the median parental income of first-year college students was $74,000, which was 60% higher than the national median income, compared to 46% above the national average in 1971 (Pryor et al. 2007).

The intellectual environment at Michigan is competitive and well-respected within higher education. The university has a reputation for its prestigious research faculty and resources—university boosters commonly refer to it as the "Harvard of the Midwest." Many of Michigan's academic departments, professional schools, and graduate programs have top slots in college rankings. U.S. News & World Report (2005) rated the Michigan undergraduate program as the third best public university and among the top 25 of best colleges in the country in 2005.

Gaining admission into Michigan became more difficult during the 1980s (Peckham 1994). Michigan's recent undergraduate admissions rates wavered between 45% in 1987 to

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[75] University of Michigan Registrar reports 102 and 188. Forty-four percent of graduate students were female and 24% were international students.

[76] http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/slfstudy/ir/pdfs/i_reporting.pdf

[77] According to Malinda Matney (2003), some but not all of the income rise was due to inflation.

almost 60% in 1998 to 47% in 2006, making the university more competitive than most large public schools but far more accessible than elite private schools such as Harvard or Yale.[78] The credentials for gaining admittance have become steeper since the 1970s. Standardized test scores provide one example. During a campus tour for visitors to Michigan's campus, an admissions counselor explained that "SAT scores are highest since 1974." In the early 1980s, the university usually admitted students who had a 1050 combined score on their SAT out of a total of 1600 points; in 2005, only 25% of admitted students received a score lower than 1240.[79]

The cost of attending Michigan as an undergraduate in 2005 was over $19,500 for students from the state of Michigan; this was well above the average cost of public universities nationwide of $12,115 (The College Board 2006; University of Michigan 2006a; University of Michigan 2006b). Students from other states, who made up about 32% of the undergraduate student body, paid over $38,000 in tuition, room and board, and other costs (University of Michigan 2006a; University of Michigan 2006b; University of Michigan 2005b). According to the Office of Financial Aid, the university ensures that it will meet the "demonstrated financial need" of all undergraduates from the state of Michigan in the form of grants, loans, and work-study jobs.[80] About 13% of undergraduate Michigan students received Pell Grants from the U.S. government for low-income students, which earned Michigan the third slot for "economic diversity" among the top U.S. universities, according to a U.S. News & World Report index (Seguine 2006).

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[78] Regents proceedings, March 1987; Michigan Common Data set, 1998-1999; *University of Michigan-Ann Arbor Freshman Class Profile*, Jan. 17, 2007. http://sitemaker.umich.edu/obpinfo

[79] University of Michigan Undergraduate Bulletin, 1984-85; http://web.archive.org/web/20051026004154/http://www.admissions.umich.edu/fastfacts.html, accessed May 15, 2007.

[80] http://www.finaid.umich.edu/Financial_Aid_Basics/note.asp. Accessed May 2, 2007.

These changes in student demographics and costs at Michigan have been influenced by changes in higher education, broader political and cultural movements, federal legislation, demographic changes in the U.S. population, and political economic shifts. A number of political and institutional developments between the 1950s and 1980s opened up universities to more minority groups. For example, access to elite U.S. universities changed dramatically in the mid-twentieth century, from a system based on family lineage to a more "meritocratic" system based more on standardized testing (Lemann 1999). Political mobilization by people of color, women, and their allies and institutional changes supported by the U.S. government opened up some space in U.S. colleges and universities for racial minorities, women, and even the working class between the 1960s and 1980s (Carnoy and Levin 1985; Slaughter 1988). Concurrent demographic changes—such as a growing black middle class—contributed to the numbers of people of color, immigrants, and women who wanted to attend college and were prepared to do so. As technology and knowledge-production became more important sectors in the U.S. and global economy, a college education became increasingly necessary for securing a middle class job (Sassen 1994).

Yet at the same time that access was opening up, the process of applying to selective colleges and universities in the U.S. ramped up (Lemann 1999; Steinberg 2002; Stevens 2007). The shear numbers of students applying to universities increased, as did the qualifications necessary for admittance. Unequal government expenditures on elementary and secondary education and uneven quality of instruction created major inequalities in the college-readiness of the wealthy and poor, whites and people of color (Kozol 1991). Many of the organizational determinants of college access—preferences for the children of alumni, contacts made through

"old boy" networks, recruitment by word of mouth, and access to good quality schools and tutors—reproduced racial, class, and gender biases. These created obstacles for poor students, racial minorities, and female students in some fields (*The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 1997).

Moreover, the rising cost of college and the growth in merit financial aid played a major role in making undergraduate admissions less accessible to disadvantaged groups. In the mid-1960s, the state of Michigan covered about 70% of the cost of higher education and student tuition paid for the remaining 30%. Forty years later, those percentages had switched.[81] As the price of a Michigan degree became more expensive, changes in financial aid favored wealthier students. Between the 1997-98 and 2004-05 school years, the university reduced financial aid to lower-income students from $36 million to $33.2 million.[82] However, the university more than doubled its "non-need based" or merit aid—which is not allocated based on a student's family income—to $33.5 million.

The university's rising investment in merit aid paralleled trends in funding from state governments and other universities (Heller and Marin 2004). In the state of Michigan and elsewhere, wealthier white students who would probably attend college anyway have benefited most from merit aid, while lower-income and African-American and Latino students have benefited least (ibid). Not surprisingly, over the 1990s, the students who attended Michigan became wealthier. In 2002, 54% of first-year students reported a family income over $100,000—

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[81] University of Michigan News Service. 2005. *Questions and Answers Regarding Financial Aid*. Feb. 5.
[82] University of Michigan Common Data Sets for 1998-99 and 2005-06. Data are reported in 2004 dollars.

up from 34% in 1993—while only 14% reported an income below $50,000—down from 27% in 1993 (Matney 2003).[83]

This shifts in the determinants of college access occurred amidst what scholars call the corporatization of higher education. Since the 1970s, universities have refashioned more of their basic functions around the model of the marketplace (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Colleges and universities, as employers and producers of goods and services, have faced neoliberal market pressures such as declining budgets, reductions of salaried jobs with benefits, and pressures to treat students like consumers (Barrow 1995; Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Leaders within and outside of higher education have placed a greater value on profit-generation and the privatization of knowledge, with greater competition for resources, students, and faculty. At Michigan and elsewhere, research activities, educational instruction, and athletics became increasingly commercialized during this period (Bok 2003).

Undergraduate admissions offices have adopted corporate discourses and practices of "enrollment management" to communicate a brand identity that will help sell education, as the university's service, and the degree, as the university's product, to student applicants and their parents (Slaughter nd). University recruiters sound more and more like public relations specialists (Urciuloi 2003). As flagship state universities like Michigan have pursued "the right mix" of students, they have tried to compete with private universities by offering reduced tuition rates to bring in students with higher test scores—students who tend to be affluent and white (see also Heller and Marin 2004). This is part of a broader shift, since the post-World War II era, in which colleges, universities, and the federal government have moved away from need-based

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[83] Some, but not all, of the income rise is due to inflation. The university does not release data about students' socioeconomic status by race or ethnicity.

financial aid for students while state and federal policy have favored tax subsidies to support middle and upper-middle income college students (McPherson and Schapiro 2002).[84]

College admissions also became increasingly competitive and commercialized, as administrators became dependent on standardized measures of achievement, particularly the SATs and ACTs. Entire industries mushroomed around test-making, test-taking, and college admissions, many of which advised students on how to score high on the SAT. The early content of these tests was racially and culturally biased. Even after the companies that wrote the tests removed the questionable material, black and lower income students continued to perform more poorly on them. Psychologist Claude Steele and colleagues (e.g., Steele and Aronson 1995) attributed this to "stereotype threat," in which black, female, and poorer students expected to not perform well, and therefore they did not do well.

Test scores closely correlate to students' parents income, with the wealthiest students scoring the highest (Cassie 2006; Crouse and Trusheim 1988). Such measures of ability and access amount to what some scholars call "wealth preferences" (Sturm and Guinier 1996:953). Students of color, who were more likely to be poor, also often could not afford the test coaching accessible to their wealthier and white peers. Recent research has shown that eliminating the weight that universities and colleges give to standardized test scores and implementing a full-file review of other "merit" measures such as class rank would improve the representation of students of color (Alon and Tienda 2007). Similarly, the strength of the applicants' school—a measure also commonly used at Michigan—worked against many poor students and students of color. The rising cost of college, along with changes in financial aid commitments by the

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[84] Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie (1997) argue that this market for competitive college admissions was created, in part, by the deregulation of financial aid money from aid to colleges and universities to aid to students.

government and universities alike, created additional barriers to access for poor and racial minority applicants (Heller and Marin 2004).[85]

Although the debates over affirmative action in higher education focused on explicitly racial aspects of admissions policies, universities' seemingly non-racial (and non-classed, non-gendered) policies and practices still gave white and wealthy students a number of advantages in selective admissions.

Within this context, Michigan and many other universities have sought to market their institutions, including their campus diversity, to attract competitive applicants, both white and of color. Some of this interschool competition has been driven by, and further contributes to, administrators' growing concern with the rankings of their colleges and universities in indexes such as those published by *U.S. News & World Report* (Espeland and Sauder 2005; Sauder and Lancaster 2006). These efforts, like many administrative practices throughout the university, are done in an increasingly corporate fashion.

University administrators across the country have used recruitment and marketing discourse about excellence, leadership, learning, skills, and diversity as a part of these efforts (Lynch 1997; Stevens 2007; Stevens and Roksa 2005; Urciuloi 2003). Diversity has become a theme in the field of higher education, as well. National organizations have reiterated the theme of diversity, as well. The Association of American Colleges and Universities has a diversity office and promotes diversity initiatives such as diversityweb.org, and in the mid-1990s, *U.S. News & World Report* began reporting a separate "Campus Diversity" index to measure the

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[85] According to Skrentny (2002 see also Harper and Reskin 2005), the termination of university policies that discriminated against women was sufficient for opening up access to higher education for women, at least at the undergraduate level.

ethnic and racial mix on college and university campuses. Major foundations and corporate philanthropies, including Starr Corporation, have funded various campus diversity initiatives. For example, the Ford Foundation, which has been a trendsetter among major foundations in terms of issues of race and diversity (Shiao 2005), gave $1 million for a multi-university Diversity Works initiative and supported related initiatives at Michigan, including the university's public relations campaign around the lawsuits (University of Michigan 2001).

In 2005, just over a third of first year college students reported that promoting racial understanding was essential or very important, although 19% felt racism is no longer a problem (Pryor et al. 2007).

The Diversity Project at Michigan (A Recap)

As the previous two chapters show, administrators and executives at Michigan institutionalized the diversity project starting in the mid-1980s, in large measure to manage admissions and retention of racial minority students. These leaders first began using discourse about "diversity" following *Regents of University of California v. Bakke*, a major 1978 U.S. Supreme Court case concerning race and affirmative admissions. An opinion by Justice Lewis Powell was especially influential, both at Michigan and at other universities.

Powell's opinion in the 1978 *Bakke* case put "diversity" on the table as a legally acceptable rationale for race-conscious admissions. After that case was decided, selective universities and colleges continued to practice race-attentive admissions while couching their

policies in the rhetoric of diversity (Schuck 2003; Skrentny 1996). A backlash developed against affirmative action, fueled by political conservatives who began mounting legal challenges to affirmative admissions; meanwhile, Americans, especially white people, began to describe their racial views as "colorblind" (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Gallagher 2003; Giroux 1996). University leaders at Michigan and elsewhere relied on "diversity" to defend against this broader project of colorblindness, as they simultaneously distanced diversity from an association with efforts to remedy racial and class disadvantage.

Since the mid-1980s, Michigan leaders have framed admissions and retention for students of color and other students as issues of "diversity." They have developed and institutionalized an official diversity ideology that presents an expansive view of difference. Their diversity ideology has included racial minorities since the beginning, but over time it has incorporated an array of other groups, both minority and majority. It poses diversity as a social ideal and as institutionally beneficial.

By the late 1980s, Michigan administrators began to describe some of its myriad programs for students of color as "diversity" initiatives. Around this time, they also began to create new diversity programs not targeted to a specific minority group. These newer programs focused more on encouraging dialogue, communication, and the expression of differing viewpoints among people of different social backgrounds. University leaders across the U.S. had turned to the diversity project as they implemented minority accommodationist policies on their campuses, amidst ongoing political conflicts over these policies, growing competition in undergraduate admissions, and ongoing inequities in access to college.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, two lawsuits challenging race-conscious admissions policies at Michigan, *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger,* brought affirmative admissions and diversity, especially racial diversity, to the forefront. Faced with these lawsuits and a contentious political climate, university administrators developed and promoted the "diversity rationale" both as a legal argument and as official diversity rhetoric couched in legal, social scientific, and pedagogical terms.

Administrators' understanding of racial minority admissions and retention also changed, from a focus on getting black students into the university to retaining black, Latino, and Native American students to the broader campus climate and community and the role of "majority" students therein. University leaders began to see more parallels between the problems faced by students of color and those faced by other groups on campus, as well. Different university presidents influenced the meaning and manifestations of diversity ideology and initiatives on campus, as these presidents took on particular themes and prerogatives to promote during their administrations.

University leaders also faced pressure for inclusion from different campus constituents, including students and faculty of color and pro-affirmative action activists. Michigan is known for its liberal and progressive student activism, and numerous groups organized to support the universities policies, including BAMN and Students Supporting Affirmative Action. As I recount in Chapter Ten, both of these groups pressured university administrators to support affirmative admissions and SSAA served as the "student voice" in support of such practices (Berrey 2004). Yet, undergraduate and graduate students were ambivalent about affirmative action and the university's policies. In a spring 2003 poll, only 41 percent of the 6,432 Michigan students who

participated expressed support for the university's admissions policies (18 percent wanted more information)(Berkowitz 2003b). Conservative activists on campus often spoke out against race-based affirmative admissions and programs that catered to students of color, such as the Black Celebratory graduation ceremony (*The Michigan Review* 2002).

II. Diversity Ideology and Programs for Racial Minorities in the wake of *Gratz*

Diversity ideology is not a static entity; it is malleable and has changed over time. University administrators modified their ideology of diversity in response to the lawsuits, the Court's decisions, and ongoing threats to race- and gender-based affirmative action. Although the Supreme Court affirmed the diversity rationale and the law school's admissions policies in *Grutter,* the justices ruled against the university's treatment of race in its undergraduate admissions policies. Furthermore anti-affirmative action organizations like the American Civil Rights Initiative continued to threaten policies and programs that exclusively or primarily served African-American, Latino, and Native American students at Michigan and on other college campuses.

These developments introduced new organizational constraints on what administrators could say and do around race. University leaders responded to these constraints by modifying their ideology and initiatives around diversity and race. The new viewbooks produced by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions between 2003 and 2005 show a number of major changes in university leaders' ideology of diversity. The viewbooks downplayed race while putting greater emphasis on geography, socio-economics, and intellect as forms of diversity. They

underscored a new rationale for diversity—preparedness for competition in the global job market—and the importance of students' skills in communicating about diversity.

These new themes were not confined to the viewbooks. University leaders, administrators, and admissions staff reiterated them in their presentations and speeches at undergraduate recruitment events.

Moreover, university leaders institutionalized this revised ideology of diversity in the structure of numerous university programs. In response to the lawsuits and, presumably, the ongoing legal threats from groups like CEO and MCRI, university leaders modified the goals and the eligibility criteria for support services, recruitment activities, and financial aid targeted to black, Latino, and Native American students. Many conservative critics have charged that leaders at Michigan and other universities adopted the rhetoric of diversity as a new language but did not fundamentally change their long-standing, race-targeted programs (e.g., Wood 2003). Leaders at Michigan were certainly engaged in this practice, but in light of the legal challenges of the early 2000s, they increasingly changed their programs for racial minorities. These changes opened up campus programs to white and, in some cases, Asian-American students. Administrators relied on diversity rhetoric, including the university's heightened emphasis on geographic and socioeconomic diversity, to create, describe, and justify these changes.

These changes to university's printed materials and its organizational practices highlight three strategic uses of the diversity project. I begin with their role in acknowledging but also displacing race as a category of diversity and as a criteria for campus programs.

★ *Acknowledging and Affirming, but also Downplaying Race*

In 1995 and 1996, the viewbooks' description of Michigan college students had included a list of different racial groups and nationalities, such as "African American," "Arab American," and "Russian." By 1998, administrators had replaced this with names of the states and cities where Michigan students had grown up. I take up this theme of geographic diversity below, but here I focus on how university administrators affirmed racial diversity while they displaced what had been a central focus on race.

Take, for example, the brochure that the university produced after the Court's decisions. *The Educational Value of Diversity: a Landmark Decision* featured many forms of diversity on Michigan's campus. Photographs showed students of different ethno-racial backgrounds immersed in conversation and classroom discussion. The text described programs to support diversity in academics, "interpersonal" experiences, and the dorms. The brochure prominently highlighted campus initiatives for gender, religious, and political diversity. It made no mention of programs specifically for "racial diversity."

The brochure made note of two of the major university programs that primarily served students of color—Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs (MESA), which was responsible for the Trotter Multicultural Center, and the Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI), which oversaw programming such as the Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium and the Black Celebratory and La Celebración Latina graduation celebrations.[86] MESA had grown out of an office created in the early 1970s to serve students of color and as late of May 2007, described its central commitment "to serve, educate and retain students of color." In the early

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[86] See http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/slfstudy/ir/criteria/resources/organization/provost.html Accessed May 23, 2007; http://web.archive.org/web/20030309144818/www.umich.edu/~oami/sami_funding/index.html Accessed May 23, 2007

2000s, the OAMI web site had explained that the office "primarily represents the concerns and interests affecting the communities of African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Latino Americans and Native Americans" but qualified that "multiculturalism can include groups that are organized on the basis of cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, age, gender, social class and sexual orientation differences." In the new *Educational Value of Diversity* brochure, university administrators described MESA and OAMI as "open to all students." The university distributed this brochure widely at such events as recruitment fairs.

The most significant changes the university made in the wake of *Gratz* and *Grutter* was to eliminate the undergraduate point system and implement the new admissions policy, which relied an "individualized" review in which administrators were supposed to consider applicants' race as one of many factors. The changes to the university admissions procedures influenced the number of applications that students of color submitted and that the university accepted. Between fall 2003 and fall 2004, the percentage of first year students at Michigan who were racial minorities dropped from 12.7% to 11.2%.[87] Enrollment of black students dropped the most dramatically, from 7.4% of the first-year class to 5.8%. However, these figures increased in fall 2005, when racial minorities comprised 13.3% of the first-year class, with the greatest gains among Hispanic students.

Administrators also changed their criteria for some supportive student services targeted to students of color. The most easily documented changes occurred to Comprehensive Studies Program, which had incorporated the Opportunity Program in the 1980s. Technically, non-minority students could participate in CSP's academic, financial aid, and counseling support

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[87] University of Michigan Office of the Registrar, Report 844. www.umich.edu/~regoff/enrollment/ethnicity.html

programs, although nearly all of the participants were racial minorities throughout the 1990s (see Figure 2). In 1993, 99% of the first-year students enrolled in CSP were racial minorities, and African-Americans made up a considerable majority of CSP participants. Administrators began enrolling more white students in 1997. Between 1993 and 2004, the number of racial minorities remained the same, at 337, while white students increased from three to 100, becoming over 22% of CSP participants. Most of these changes occurred in 2003 and 2004, after the Supreme Court decisions. University administrators made these particular changes quietly, and the Office of the Vice President for Communications did not reply to my inquiry into why the university made this change.

University administrators also relied on diversity ideology to define their new criteria for campus programs and scholarships that previously had targeted students of color. In other words, they used diversity ideology to redefine the scope of these initiatives. Blacks, Latinos, and Native American undergraduate and graduate students at the university had been eligible for a number of specialized scholarships.[88] The university changed the criteria for these scholarships starting in fall 2003, and administrators used diversity rhetoric to describe these changes (they continued this pattern following the passage of MCRI). For example, in fall 2003, the text on Michigan's Office of Financial Aid website stated, "Some scholarships reflect the University's commitment to a student body that is broadly diverse (in terms of race, geography, gender, special skills and talents, etc.)."[89] The Michigan Scholar Award for undergraduates, a merit award worth up to $25,000, previously had been available to underrepresented minorities who

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[88] http://web.archive.org/web/20030802044942/http://www.finaid.umich.edu/otherschols.htm; http://web.archive.org/web/20030409041521/http://www.rackham.umich.edu/Fellowships/srop.html Accessed May 23, 2007

[89]http://web.archive.org/web/20031204122225/www.finaid.umich.edu/Types_of_Financial_Aid/Scholarships/schola r.asp Accessed May 23, 2007

lived out of state.[90] In fall 2003, any out-of-state student was eligible for this award if they "contribute[d] to the overall excellence and diversity of the University community."[91]

Figure 2: Percentage of first year student enrollment in Comprehensive Studies Program, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, by race, 1993-2005
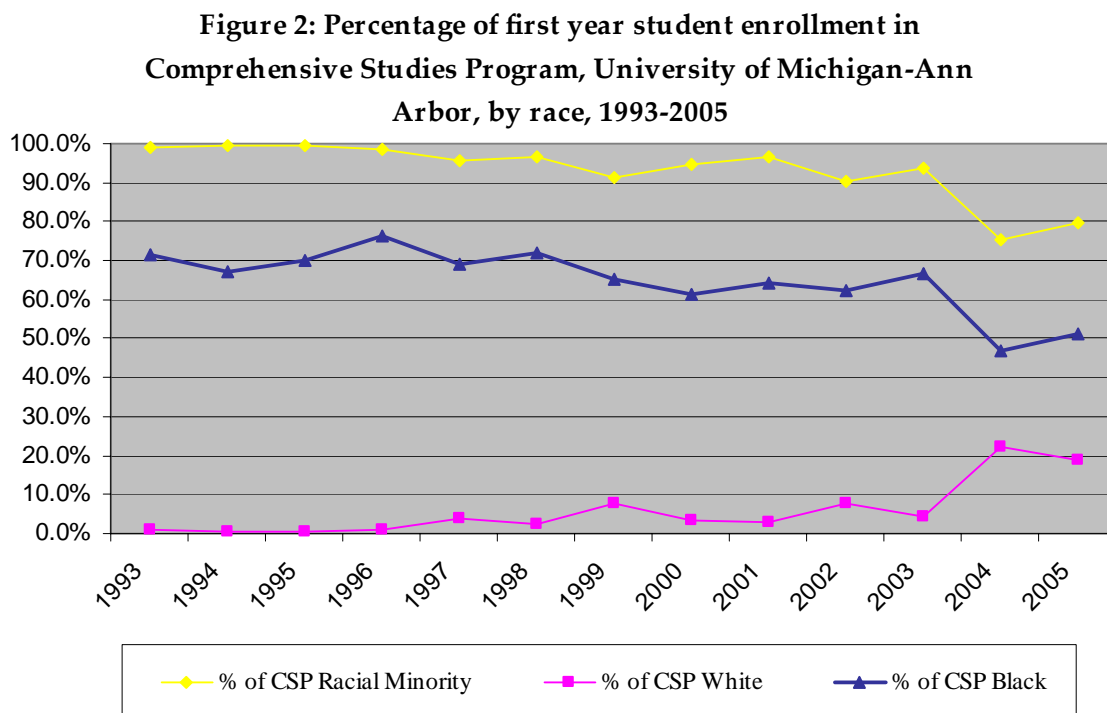
Source: University of Michigan, Office of the Registrar Reports 872a (multiple years).

These changes in the university's rhetoric of race and its organizational programs for underrepresented students of color illustrate one of the key strategic uses of the diversity project at Michigan and in my other two cases. Leaders have invoked diversity ideology and initiatives to acknowledge and affirm, but also to downplay and de-thorn race. Their rhetoric about

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[90] http://web.archive.org/web/20030802044942/www.finaid.umich.edu/otherschols.htm
Accessed May 23, 2007
[91] http://web.archive.org/web/20031204115919/www.finaid.umich.edu/Types_of_Financial_Aid/Scholarships/Entering_Undergraduates/otherschols.asp. Accessed May 23, 2007

admissions, compared to past rhetoric about the Opportunity Program, presented race as one of many personal and group characteristics that shaped people's experiences and world views, regardless of their racial status. The university's past rhetoric about the Opportunity Program, as a point of reference, framed race as a key group characteristic of African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans that had been shaped by structural disadvantages in society.

University leaders' public rhetoric of diversity in the early 2000s emphasized the interpersonal, interactive aspects of race and the subsequent benefits. The university's rhetoric about the Opportunity Program, in contrast, emphasized issues of long-term social and cultural disadvantage. In the contemporary context, the university stressed its role in creating opportunities for interaction on campus, while its role in the Opportunity Program had been creating opportunities to overcome disadvantages rooted in society at-large. The contemporary rhetoric had an anti-essentialist tone; as the university argued in *Gratz,* "There is a sound distinction between acknowledging that race may affect an individual's experience, and assuming that it determines an individual's behavior or beliefs and is caused by racial inequality." The rhetoric of Opportunity Program implied that African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans were more monolithic groups, with race determining their life experiences.

University leaders' amendments to diversity ideology and diversity programs helped to further reinvent the university's symbolic construction of race. Take, for example, administrators' selection and representation of student quotes for the guidebook. Cory of Belleville, who is presumably white, praises geographic differences while a woman with an African-sounding name acknowledges but downplays the importance of ethno-racial differences.

★ *Changing the Constituents*

Organizational elites have relied on the racialized project of diversity to change the constituents—meaning, to change who, rhetorically, matters for diversity and to change the criteria for participating in inclusionary programs. They have done so in response to political threats from conservative and progressive activists. This process began in the 1980s, with the advent of diversity rhetoric at the university and then diversity programs for groups other than people of color, and it accelerated in the early 2000s.

As administrators made racial diversity less prominent in their public relations materials and rhetoric, they made geographic, socioeconomic, and intellectual diversity more prominent themes. The viewbooks, for example, had long included stand-out quotes from Michigan students praising the university's diversity. But in the viewbooks produced after the 2003 Court decisions, between fall 2003 and fall 2005, the students' names were followed by their hometowns. The content of these quotes centered on geographic and economic diversity. Cory Patrick of Belleville, Wisconsin says, "For me, one of the most interesting things about Michigan is the geographic diversity," while Ewurabena Menyah of Moreland Hills, Ohio states, "At Michigan, I've met and become friends with many students of various backgrounds—not just racial and ethnic, but socioeconomic as well."

Administrators in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions incorporated geography and socioeconomic status when they revised the criteria for recruitment activities directed at underrepresented racial minorities. Many of these activities dated back to the mid-1980s, when the office made a major effort to expand minority recruitment. They have included an annual symposium for prospective racial minority applicants who lived in the Detroit area—an event

that the office initially called the Minority Student Symposium but later changed to "The Pursuit of Excellence" symposium for "top minority seniors."—as well as the Spring Welcome Weekend, the annual event for underrepresented minorities whom the university had admitted.

In fall 2003, admissions administrators added geography and socio-economics as criteria for these recruitment events. Admissions staff invited, to the winter 2003 Pursuit of Excellence symposium, racial minorities and lower-income students who had scored well on standardized tests but who lived in counties where few students applied to the university. Michigan leaders made similar changes to the criteria for the 2004 Spring Welcome Weekend. In these ways, they structured elements of diversity ideology into their program criteria.

Given the demographics of Michigan, the primary beneficiaries of these changes were white, low-income high school students. Not surprisingly, the composition of students at what had once been recruitment events exclusively for students of color changed. The vast majority of the 175 or so attendees at the 2003 Pursuit of Excellence symposium were African-American, but approximately 10% were white. The changing rates of participation in CSP and at these recruitment events suggests that these new participation criteria did not necessarily reduce the number of African-American or Latino participants, but they led to notable increases among white participants.

Administrators in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions justified these programmatic changes in the name of diversity. A white man who worked as an associate director for undergraduate recruitment and marketing explained to me that the university made such modifications while revamping its entire admission process. He reasoned that student

populations other than people of color faced challenges with admissions, and the university should be more "inclusive" by targeting outreach to these groups:

> Some of our other programs that were solely oriented towards underrepresented minority students, we tried to broaden those programs to be more inclusive of all students from a particular geographic area or include students from some of the lower socio-economic backgrounds, to again broaden the pool of [applicants].
>
> Those are also students that tend not to apply.

Later in our interview, he added to this list students who were the first people in their families to attend college.

The new viewbooks produced after the Court decision also highlighted intellectual differences as forms of diversity. The letter from President Coleman describes "our differences" as "the academic questions that engage us, age, economic background, gender, or race, to name a just a few."

For some university leaders, the notion of "intellectual diversity" better captured the university's values and the educational enterprise. During our interview Lester Monts, an African-American musicologist and the senior vice provost for academic affairs, , described the mission of his office as "intellectual diversity and how that fuels into, feeds into the educational enterprise." He was eager to finish our conversation about the lawsuits and instead talk about the university's plans for a new Center for Institutional Diversity, which had initial funding from the Ford Foundation. He described the Center as a possible combination of a venture fund, think tank, and research institute. "So," he explained, "we can start centering the power of this fabulous institution on a problem that is going to be ongoing in society."

The university hosted a two-day planning conference for the Center for Institutional Diversity in spring 2005 where participants weighed in on what, exactly, that problem was and how the Center should address it. In the program guide, Monts' introduction described the conference as "a landmark moment in the movement toward a more equitable, inclusive, productive society." At least 300 people attended from across the country, including university administrators, researchers, alumni, advocates, and union, government, and business representatives. Participants spent two days intensively listening, thinking, and talking through major "diversity" issues.

The conference organizers intentionally did not provide a definition of diversity. Monts explained in his opening statement that "we face a state of uncertainty in defining its meanings." The forums, panels, and discussions covered the themes of Education, Arts, Health, Global Relations, and Workforce, interspersed with musical and theatrical performances. The panels raised a broad range of issues, from Education to Arts to Health and covered multiple scales and geographical regions, from individual identity to urban communities to international relations. A few participants questioned whether the conference organizers had adequately represented diversity; two women of color complained quietly in the back of the room about the stereotypical generalizations made by a Latina corporate diversity consultant, who was the only Latino/a presenter. And participants disagreed on the relevance of race to diversity; in my small group break-out session, members debated whether the Center should focus exclusively on race or not. But no one openly doubted whether "diversity" was the appropriate focus for the Center.

The university's new diversity center, which administrators later renamed the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID), provides another example of what happens to race

when an organizational effort is framed in terms of "diversity" (but when diversity is not a codeword for race).[92] NCID legitimized a wide variety of methodologies, disciplines, approaches to research, and community service as relevant to diversity. The leaders of this initiative and participants at the 2005 conference spoke about race as an important form of diversity and a basis of inequality, but most did not make race their central or sole focus. Unlike diversity rhetoric and initiatives elsewhere in the university that focused on individuals, identity or status groups, and interpersonal communication, the Center's objectives were not so confined. NCID leaders pointed to the need to study and support structural changes in society. The Center's description—as "[i]nspired by the overarching vision of higher education's critical role in promoting knowledge, justice, and opportunity in a diverse democracy and global economy"—suggested a continuing emphasis on the productive nature of diversity for democracy and the marketplace.[93,94]

Monts invoked the rhetoric of intellectual diversity at admissions events, as well. In December 2003, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions held the Pursuit of Excellence symposium in an upscale hotel near Detroit. This symposium was one of the campus initiatives for students of color, especially black students, that administrators opened up to low-income white and Asian students. Monts told the audience, "What we do in regards to diversity was being framed by these lawsuits [as too limited]… We interpret diversity very broadly. To touch

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[92] Michigan was not alone in this effort to create a center for the study of diversity. Other universities, such as Northwestern, simultaneously were planning to create similar centers, as well.

[93] http://www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=550. Accessed May 23, 2007

[94] The university, particularly by way of Patricia Gurin's expert testimony, argued that students' intellectual and experiential involvement with diversity also improved "democracy outcomes." As Gurin's expert report explains, "Students who experienced diversity in classroom settings and in informal interactions showed the most engagement during college in various forms of citizenship, and the most engagement with people from different races and cultures. They were also the most likely to acknowledge that group differences are compatible with the interests of the broader community. These effects continued after the students left the university setting."

on one part that you may not think about is intellectual diversity." Monts then mentioned his own courses in world music. "Everyone in this room represents some branch of diversity…. Sharing backgrounds, values… is a very important part of what we do on campus."

Monts' comments reflected his own personal interest in intellectual diversity as well as the changing diversity ideology at the university, such as the growing emphasis on perspectives documented in the viewbooks. He and other university leaders sought to counter the lawsuits' concern with racial diversity and to shift the public discourse so that it focused more on perspectives and viewpoints. In these myriad ways, he adapted diversity ideology to communicate the university's compliance with law and to relay administrators' understanding of inclusion. As documented in the previous chapter, these imperatives and new understandings were driving forces that had led university administrators to adopt diversity ideology in the first place.

Diversity as Justification for Dismantling Race-targeted Programs

But administrators did not just rely on diversity ideology to characterize their program and eligibility criteria or to emphasize forms of difference other than race, such as geography. They also invoked diversity rhetoric to *justify* these changes. Regardless of their personal political preferences, these administrators were helping to dismantle the project of racial diversity in the name of diversity.

University administrators used similar organizational ideology to defend race-conscious admissions policies *and* to reason why they were moving away from programs that targeted

students of color. Although university administrators were pressured to make such changes by conservative political organizations, they justified these changes on the grounds of "diversity."

They invoked diversity ideology to suggest that the university's concerns with diversity went beyond race and that the university understood that applicants' identities were not limited to their race. University leaders relied on diversity ideology to explain these programmatic changes in public forums as well. Franklin, a high-ranking officer in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, told the 250-odd attendees at the 2004 Spring Welcome Weekend,

> Michigan has a reputation for diversity…. We're proud of the fact that all of you in this room come from very different and very diverse backgrounds… from small communities, from geographic areas that don't send students to Michigan... [You are] diverse in terms of race, ethnicity... artistic backgrounds... So we've broadened this day to be a special one for all kinds of students, all kinds of diversity.

During our interview, I asked Franklin about why he had not mentioned socio-economic status when he made similar comments at the 2003 Pursuit of Excellence Symposium. He first replied that he had not entirely understood the invitation criteria, and then qualified that he believed people do not want to hear about their socioeconomic situation. "There's a stigma to being poor… to getting a free lunch at school. How do you say, 'I'm inviting you here because of that stigma'? ... I'd rather them feel good [at this event]… not bad because mom and dad are poor." He recounted that at events just for underrepresented minorities, **"**We've never said that they

were invited because they were minorities. We said it was because they were the best and brightest."

According to Franklin and other administrators, the new program criteria better reflected student applicants' diversity and their identities and enabled the university to reach out to a broader pool of competitive applicants. Diversity rhetoric provided administrators with a non-stigmatizing language. It provided a legally sanctioned discourse through which administrators could signal to students of color and white students alike that they had a place at the university.

Diversity ideology and initiatives at Michigan and other universities long had included minority groups other than people of color, most notably women and gays and lesbians. Administrators and activists' attempts to add new groups were not always straightforward or successful. According to one administrator, Dialogues on Diversity took on the issues of disabilities and depression because students with these conditions were clearly "ostracized and invisible" on campus. They faced resistance from many other university administrators and faculty, who did not see disabilities and depression as "diversity" issues. Initially, only the College of Education enthusiastically used the film on disabilities.

But the university's added emphasis on geography and class suggest that the diversity project at Michigan was expansive enough to include disadvantaged groups not legally protected from discrimination. Most notably, diversity rhetoric made room for poor students and students who were the first generation in the families to go to college. A number of scholars, policy analysts, and activists have called on universities to incorporate socio-economic status, in particular, into university affirmative action practices (e.g., Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005). Administrators at Michigan were also aware of this concern. The university leaders who revised

the undergraduate admissions policies had drawn on a 2002 report by the Century Foundation, which documented that colleges and universities were not adequately recruiting socio-economically disadvantaged students, and during my fieldwork and interviews, a number of staff and directors mentioned this report to me.

Organizationally, the University of Michigan did not treat such students as a major social or diversity group within diversity programming. There was not, for example, an Office of Student Services for the Working Class (the closest equivalent would be the Office of Financial Aid). Moreover, analyses are not available to indicate whether low-income students are benefiting from the university's new admissions criteria, which explicitly include class as a form of diversity. We also do not know how well the point system did by these students; it assigned up to 20 points for socioeconomic status, but comparable analyses also are not available. A recent study about admissions practices at 19 highly selective colleges and universities (but not Michigan) showed that applicants from poor families or who are first generation college students have significantly lower odds of making it into the pool of viable candidates (Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005). Recruited athletes had the greatest advantages, followed by underrepresented racial minorities, legacy students, and early applicants (see also Espenshade, Chung and Walling 2004). While students of color are disproportionately economically disadvantaged, the majority of low-income students are white.

At the same time, the diversity project does not preclude organizations from incorporating white people as a group into their programs and policies. Diversity ideology provides organizational leaders with an explanation and justification for doing so. In fact, research cited in the lawsuits showed that white students' learning and democracy outcomes

benefited in particular when they studied in racially diverse classrooms. Patricia Gurin's expert report discussed how all students gained something from racial diversity in the classroom and in their informal interactions. Yet, the benefits were "especially impressive for white students" who experienced, among other things, "the greatest growth in active thinking processes."

Meanwhile, the research findings about African-American and Latino students underscored the importance of their informal interactions with "diverse peers" and their "interaction with peers of the same race." This finding about same-race peers supported the university's claim in *Grutter* that it was important to have a "critical mass" of racial minorities and not just token numbers.

Some of these differences between the students might be explained by variables beyond universities' control—such as students' pre-college experiences—and by methodological issues like sample size. They suggest that white people should not be threatened by racial diversity, while they also indicate that, along some measures, universities' efforts to promote racial diversity may help white people in more ways than they help students of color. They also suggest that, even against their wishes, administrators may mobilize the diversity project to shift attention, cultural affirmation, and material resources to white students.

Presumably, students who were opposed to race-based affirmative action are another constituent included in and served by these changes to diversity ideology and initiatives. Put differently, university leaders were underscoring socio-economic and intellectual diversity in an attempt to appeal to social movement pressures from the right. As I discuss in Chapter Ten, many conservative and libertarian proponents of "colorblindness" have argued for greater socio-economic and intellectual diversity at universities (e.g., Lindgren 2006). By intellectual diversity,

these proponents have meant greater representation of conservative viewpoints on university faculties and in university speaker series. Similarly, campus activists who opposed racial preferences claimed that diversity was an acceptable admissions goal but racial diversity was not. They believed that the university was using race as a proxy for viewpoints when university administrators instead should directly seek out intellectual and socio-economic diversity.

This was not the first time university leaders had appealed to conservative students' causes in the name of "diversity." One of the first times that the minutes of the university regents refer to political rhetoric about diversity was in July 1979. The University of Michigan Republicans Club had complained that they were denied funding from the student government for a university event while organizations "whose views differ significantly" had received such funds. According to the minutes, the president of the student government "commented that the budget priority committee's major emphasis is to support requests that would have diverse appeal to the student body and the University community." Regent Baker, who often allied with conservative causes, spoke up for these students. The minute state: "Regent Baker pointed out that the committee must consider each request fairly, no matter what the particular point of view. The University is a community where a diversity of views can and should be heard."

★ *Redefining Middle Class Cultural and Human Capital*

Other key changes to diversity ideology and initiatives in the viewbooks, application forms, and elsewhere on campus illustrate another key strategic use of the diversity project. University leaders have invoked diversity rhetoric and programs to redefine middle class cultural and human capital in terms of skills with diversity. They emphasized applicants' skills at interacting

and functioning in multicultural contexts, the development of these skills among current students, and the ways in which these skills would help students compete as workers in the global economy.

A New Rationale: Economic Competition

In fall 2003, the revised admissions viewbooks reflected another significant change: a new rationale for diversity based on economic competitiveness. Large companies had been using this rationale for diversity since the early 1990s (see Chapter Six), although university administrators arrived at it later. The amicus brief submitted by Fortune 500 countries in the legal cases made this argument, and Justice O'Conner referred to it in her majority opinion.

Throughout the late 1990s, the viewbooks—particularly the letters from the university president or interim president—had stressed that diversity enhanced learning and knowledge. The letters also pointed to other benefits, such as an enhanced sense of campus community and a stronger institutional identity for the university. Michigan's undergraduate viewbooks also had long mentioned that many Michigan graduates go on to competitive graduate schools. In the late 1990s, they began to list post-college career opportunities, especially in companies and the public sector.

But, the fall 2003 viewbook is the first to directly connect diversity and the international marketplace. The text of the viewbooks underscores how diversity prepares students for the global economy. One passage explained:

With the advance of global technology and global communications, the workplace

of the future will be global as well, spanning cultures and time zones. Those who

succeed will be those who are comfortable with 'otherness,' whatever form it may

take. Given those realities, you couldn't find a better place to prepare for the

future than Michigan. For decades, U-M has made diversity its goal… [Y]ou'll be

in a microcosm of the real world, learning the skills you need to live and work in

a global community.

Deans, recruiters, and admission staff at Michigan also invoked this rationale of

economic competition in their undergraduate recruitment activities at Michigan, as they pitched

the university to applicants. They would claim that companies want to hire people experienced

with diversity and that employers are pleased by the training in diversity that Michigan students

receive.

At a spring 2004 information session for applicants to Michigan's engineering program,

the recruiter—a personable African-American woman—read an ad from a technology company.

The ad stated, "Diversity powers our business. . . As a global leader in communications, Lucent

recognizes diversity as a business imperative." She then explained that Michigan students had

attended a university job fair earlier in the year, and afterwards, these students reported that the

most common question that companies asked them was "'How experienced are you with

diversity?'" The recruiter remarked proudly that the students could say that they had a great deal

of such experience: "Because diversity is the cutting edge in business, we provide that cutting

edge here."

Administrators of some university diversity initiatives invoked this neoliberal economic

reasoning to help current students prepare to apply for jobs, professional programs and graduate

school. The 2004 coordinator for IGR posted a letter to students on the program's website titled, "Marketing Your IGR Experience." [95] He recommended that students highlight their experiences with IGR on their applications for jobs and graduate schools. These experiences, he explained, demonstrate teamwork and other top skills valued by employers as well as "care for one's community and sensitivity to diversity, two traits that are sought after in all walks of life." His letter provided examples of how students' resumes could indicate skills such as "deepened… awareness of social and cultural diversity."

The coordinator's suggested language probably is different from the language actually used by students in their IGR courses and on-line conversations. Even the coordinator qualified in his letter that diversity awareness had not been the most meaningful skill he gained from the program. Still, he and other administrators invoked rhetoric about diversity and market competition to coach students on how to present themselves to employers. This use of diversity ideology was commensurate with Michigan and other universities' growing imperative to provide pre-professional training to undergraduates and to rationalize undergraduate education as preparation for the marketplace. It also points to the premium that the university put on students' skills at interacting with different kinds of people and communicating about social differences.

The Skills of Diversity Interactions

A third change in the viewbooks was the introduction of the new undergraduate application, particularly a new essay question about diversity. Admissions administrators had added, among

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[95] http://www.umich.edu/~igrc/marketingIGRexperience.html. Accessed May 9, 2007.

other things, more essays, including an essay about diversity. Changes were so complex and extensive that the university also published a separate document that explained the changes.

The Diversity Essay

The new 2003 undergraduate application included more essays than previous applications, and admissions reviewers were instructed to consider these essays in their evaluations of applicants. When answering the diversity question, applicants could chose one of two options:

> 33a. At the University of Michigan, we are committed to building an academically superb and widely diverse educational community. What would you as an individual bring to our campus community? [or]
>
> 33b.   Describe an experience you've had where cultural diversity—or lack thereof—has made a difference to you.

This diversity question framed diversity as a university value, a feature of campus life, and a topic about which campus members should be able to communicate. Like some of the campus diversity programs, it put a premium on students' ability to convey—in this case, to write about—their tolerant views about social differences, racial or otherwise. Presumably, university administrators would use it to assess applicants' potential ability to interact with people of different backgrounds.

University leaders emphasized that anyone, including white students, could answer the new diversity question on the application. At the 2003 Pursuit of Excellence Symposium,

Franklin described two good essays to the audience. The first essay, he said, was written by a white female who reported, "'My diversity barometer is pretty low.'" There was only one non-white person in her rural community: an exchange student from Costa Rica whom she had never met. Franklin's second example was a white male who worried "'I'm probably the last person you want.'" Franklin explained, "But he wrote about how he could contribute to tolerance on campus, …to help me and the readers to see what he could contribute to diversity… So use [the essay] to tell us about yourself." University administrators relied on diversity rhetoric to teach an audience of mostly African-Americans how to apply to the university, suggesting that these students had as much of a story to tell as anyone else. At the same time, their rhetoric suggested that white students need not feel threatened by the university's professed support for diversity.

Evaluating Diversity Skills

An important feature of the new admissions process at Michigan was the "subjective" review of applications. The committees met to review and discuss applications. In the meetings of the engineering program committee that I observed, admissions counselors and engineering faculty spent considerable time deliberating over some of the weaker "borderline" applications. These applications came from the students who had received mixed assessments in prior reviews; for example, they had high grades but very low test scores or good test scores but a critical letter of recommendation from a guidance counselor. (The committee members themselves represented a range of ethno-racial backgrounds and included white people, African-Americans, an Indian-American, and others.) In their conversations, the committee members weighed the university's mandate to enroll a majority of students from the state of Michigan, the strengths of applicants'

schools, applicants' test scores and course curricula, their contributions to "diversity," and other related topics.

The committee members discussed applicants' race, nationality, language skills, socio-economic status, family background, geographic origin, parents' marital status, and essays all as matters of "diversity." In short, these conversations followed the directions we had received at training sessions. The committee members cited these various indicators of diversity to justify their admissions decisions. For instance, the committee recommended that the university admit a student from South America whose parents were Taiwanese immigrants; one member noted, "He has very good diversity." Committee members criticized the lackluster diversity essay from another student who was unimpressive in many regards. One member complained, "On cultural diversity, he said nothing."

The committee members also sometimes joked about diversity. One member referred to a white male student from a white town, who had written his diversity essay about the lack of diversity in his community, "Let's see if he can adapt to a non-white environment!" An admissions counselor half-heartedly described an Asian-American student who had some eccentric hobbies as having a "diversity of interests." In this context, diversity rhetoric provided a flexible standard of evaluation of students.[96]

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[96] Of course, these committee meetings were just one, small component of the admissions process, and I only had access to one such committee (although I did have informal conversations with different admissions staff members about how they evaluated applications). For example, I was not privy to administrators' reviews of student athletes or students whose parents might be major donors to the university. As one counselor explained to me, administrators had already "pulled" those applications to review them separately.

Erecting New Barriers?

The new essays on the undergraduate application, particularly the diversity essay, troubled progressive student activists at Michigan and high school guidance counselors from Detroit. Both groups worried that applicants from low-income, predominantly minority schools lacked the skills to complete the essays and did not know the correct language for communicating about diversity. In spring 2004, Michigan hosted an appreciation breakfast for guidance counselors from Detroit schools, and the counselors gave the admissions staff feedback about the new application. The counselors, virtually all of whom were African-American women, talked about how their students were "overwhelmed" by the application and "have issues about writing essays." The public high school curriculum emphasized reading, they said, not writing.

At our table, the Michigan representative asked, "Are they not relating to the questions?" One counselor replied, "They don't exactly sit down and think about their lives this way." Other counselors noted that the essays likely helped to deter students who were probably not qualified for the university, anyway. These counselors did not distinguish the diversity question from the other essay questions; all of the essays represented a greater obstacle to low-income, black applicants, demanding writing skills that their counterparts in wealthier, predominantly white school districts were more likely to possess.

The university's diversity rationale, and the ideology of diversity, was particularly well suited to administrators' conversations about undergraduate applicants, current students, and their skill sets. In this sense, diversity ideology fit well with the new organizational imperatives that university administrators faced to change their admissions policies, as well as ongoing imperatives such as evaluating students.

Some scholars have argued that students of color will be able to complete application questions such as the diversity essay because they are more likely to have experience interacting with white people and other people of color (Chambers, Boger and Tobin 2008). However, the new diversity essay on the undergraduate application may favor groups that historically have been disadvantaged by their race or class. The essay and other diversity initiatives suggest a new type of cultural capital that well-educated, middle class and affluent students are expected to possess: the ability to talk about difference and to interact with people of different social backgrounds within acceptable terms. These terms include not disparaging the presence of different racial, ethnic, religious, or other types of groups on campus or questioning their place in higher education, even if one disagrees with the universities' affirmative admission policies. These terms inculcate, or at least encourage, personal awareness of how broader social forces might intersect in an individuals' life. They embodied what Annette Lareau and colleagues (Horvat, Weininger and Lareau 2003; Lareau 2002) refer to as "concerted cultivation"—but in this case, not a process between parents and children but a process within oneself.

These diversity initiatives also represent a shift in the university's concerns about race. They put a premium on students' ability to communicate about their personal identities and experiences—"or lack thereof," as qualified in the diversity essay— with crossing salient social boundaries. This focus on interpersonal interaction does not preclude the university from addressing racial issues in other ways, such as through recruitment.

Describing a student as relevant to "diversity" is quite different than a common qualifier used in the university's public materials about the Opportunity Program: "qualified."

Some policymakers and faculty, with the support of some administrative leaders in higher education, have proposed that universities support the racial integration of elementary and high school education by moving to a "demand model" like Michigan's. Racial segregation in K-12 schools has actually increased in recent years, as have the legal and political barriers to promoting such integration, particularly with the Supreme Court decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*. Scholars and practitioners, with some initial support from presidents and chancellors of major U.S. universities, have begun to promote undergraduate admissions policies that encourage applicants to develop "diversity capital," which includes attending school with students of other racial and ethnic backgrounds (Chambers, Boger and Tobin 2008).

At the same time, this inculcation of "diversity capital" among students also mirrors the pre-professionalization of higher education, with the shift towards training students in symbolic skills such as math, research skills, and communication skills rather than specialized disciplinary content, established expertise, and "self-expression" (Barrow 1995). One scholar of critical discourse describes this as the corporate out-sourcing of job training to higher education (Mahoney 2002).

III. The Diversity Project and the Racial and Class Politics of Undergraduate Recruitment

The lawsuits had introduced a great deal of anxiety and speculation into Michigan's Office of Undergraduate Admissions. As the cases wound their way through the lower courts, a district court found the undergraduate procedures acceptable, but the circuit court did not. Then, after the Court objected the university's point system, the university revamped its admissions process.

Starting in late summer of 2003, admissions staff began traveling around the country and visiting high schools, as they always do at that time of year, but this time, they also needed to explain the Court's decisions, the new admissions procedures, and the new application.

The activities in the office illustrate three strategic ways that university administrators relied on the diversity project to manage the complex and shifting racial and class politics of undergraduate recruitment. They invoked diversity rhetoric and programs to assert the university's legal compliance and to construct a symbolic institutional identity for the university that appealed to white students and students of color alike.

I showed in the previous chapter that organizational elites at Michigan established diversity as the official color-conscious ideology on campus by legitimizing it in terms of locally appropriate discourses such as social science. In this chapter, I show how administrators in the admissions office married diversity rhetoric with discourses and techniques of marketing. They invoked discourse about diversity and the university's role in the lawsuits to construct a symbolic institutional identity for the university. They intended this symbolic identity to appeal to white applicants and applicants of color alike.

★ *Asserting Legal Compliance*

As illustrated in Chapter Four, university leaders and lawyers relied on the diversity rationale to assert their compliance with the U.S. Constitution, *Bakke,* and other Court rulings. The Court objected to the university's point system, namely to the additional points assigned to underrepresented racial minorities. After the Court's decisions, they continued to rely on

diversity rhetoric and different organizational initiatives to change their objectionable policies and assert their compliance.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions had been ground-zero for the legal cases, particularly *Gratz*. University lawyers and administrators provided extensive briefings on the university's position for the undergraduate admissions staff and, eventually, the Court's rulings. Some of the top administrators in the admissions office had been deposed, were involved in the university's public relations campaign, or otherwise became engaged in the cases. The rhetoric and activities of staff from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions reinforced the message of the university's legal compliance.

Immediately after the Court's decisions, leaders in Michigan's Office of Undergraduate Admissions finalized and implemented a new application and new admissions procedures. They described this new process as a more "individualized, subjective, and holistic" review of applications, compared to their previous "objective" point system. To design the process, administrators consulted with university lawyers, regents, and other leaders. They evaluated the admissions procedures used at twenty-odd universities and drew on a variety of resources provided by think tanks and higher education organizations.

The new admissions procedures were so extensive and labor-intensive that the undergraduate admissions office had to restructure its internal operations. In a matter of a few months, the office grew from around 80 to 133 employees, with between five and seven working a second shift. Under the "subjective" review system, two or three people read each application and made an assessment, which included assigning a grade to the application. Many of the

applications were discussed in smaller committees, as well, and all were ultimately approved by an enrollment working group.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions initially conducted two weeks of training for 32 admissions counselors, staff, and outside application readers. By November 2003, the office had to hold a shorter training for a few new application readers, which I attended. The content of the training repeatedly underscored the university's legal compliance. The facilitator—a curt, young African-American woman—explained the legal cases by using handouts written by the university's lawyers. She referred repeatedly to the Court's decisions as she detailed the new admissions policy.

My experience as a field researcher also provides insights into how university administrators legitimized diversity ideology and initiatives in terms of legal compliance. When I began my research, university administrators initially had resisted my phone calls and requests for meetings, asking that I contact them after the Court decisions. Following the Court's decision, leaders of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions provided me with a surprising amount of access to the office. University administrators felt so confident of the legality of their new admissions policy that they were willing to share that information with outsiders, such as an ethnographer (and at least one newspaper reporter, who spent a day or two there). It is also likely that they felt outsiders would report on and affirm this compliance (as I may be doing here!). Around the same time that I began my fieldwork in the office, vice president and general counsel Marvin Krislov published an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* titled, "Open the 'black box' of college admissions," in which he argued that universities should share with the public their goals and policies for student admissions.

★ *Constructing a Symbolic Institutional Identity*

Another common way in which decision-makers employ the diversity project, particularly diversity ideology, is to construct a symbolic institutional identity as inclusive, responsive, and open to all. At Michigan, recruiters in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions sought to communicate such an identity that would appeal to competitive white applicants and competitive applicants of color.

Recruitment at Michigan is a pumped up affair, full of pomp and circumstance. Like their peers at other elite universities, Michigan administrators have worked to create such a university brand—communicated through the school's "M" logo, the maize and blue colors, the *Victors'* stanza "Hail, hail to the leaders and the best," and exaltations of the university as a place of "excellence" and "diversity." Outside of the university's athletics division, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions—which oversees undergraduate recruitment, admissions, and marketing—was probably the key office promoting this image of Michigan.

Undergraduate recruitment at Michigan provides a window into how admissions staff invoked diversity rhetoric to communicate the university's identity as a bold and risk-taking leader in higher education, as an institution concerned about inclusion and difference, and as an environment open to all students. University leaders were constructing this image, in part, as a response to accusations from conservative and libertarian critics, who charged that the university had used racial quotas. Leaders also felt that the public, including many African-Americans in Detroit, misunderstood the Court's decisions.

University administrators also were constructing such an institutional image as part of enrollment management practices to recruit attractive candidates. Undergraduate recruitment and

marketing constitute one of the most important public faces of selective universities and colleges like Michigan (Urciuloi 2003). This involves crafting and communicating a brand image for the university. Such marketing is part and parcel of the growing commercialization of higher education and the growing sense of competition among universities for good students (Bok 2003; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004; Steinberg 2002).[97]

But the legal, political, and economic pressures on Michigan and other universities did not change one important facet of undergraduate admissions: the fact that student applicants face tremendously different challenges when applying to college depending on their economic and racial backgrounds and their high school's resources.

Race, Class, and College Recruitment

Students from wealthy schools and wealthy families, who are predominantly white, generally have numerous advantages when applying to college. Many have attended private high schools or well-financed public schools. They enjoyed strong high school curricula, well-prepared teachers, small classes with relatively fewer interruptions, extra services such as SAT tutoring, and guidance counselors well-versed in the college admissions process and well connected to college recruiters (Kozol 1991).

Their families, social networks, and upbringing also are more likely to equip them with the subtle but equally important skills—commonly called cultural capital—that also shape their experiences applying to college. Middle class and affluent students, for example, often have

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[97] Admissions staff at Michigan least partially understood their work in these market terms. One staff person referred to his work as "customer service," making an analogy to the automobile industry: he and his staff are selling not cars, but their school, and they needed to stay abreast of industry trends. He added, "When it comes down to it, I have to be able to deliver. The [university] president wants to see numbers."

experience interacting with and asking questions of professionals (Horvat, Weininger and Lareau 2003). This was apparent at Michigan's recruitment events. Students from wealthy, predominantly white schools commonly asked questions about the academic and student services and experiences they should expect, such as getting college credit for Advanced Placement classes or the advising available. One recruiter explained to me that he stopped talking about financial aid at one of the private, elite majority-white prep schools in his region because, when he mentioned financial aid, "their faces went blank."

These students' parents, too, displayed a greater sense of entitlement towards accessing Michigan and its resources. One wealthy white parent who had a child enrolled at Michigan leaned heavily on this same Michigan recruiter (and on a state representative) when her younger child was wait-listed at an Ivy League School. The mother called the recruiter numerous times, asking for assistance with getting her child into the Ivy.

Students of color in the U.S. are disproportionately poor and more likely to attend public schools (Bowen and Bok 1998; Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005). They often are up against lower quality classes, over-stretched teachers, larger classes with many disruptions because of disciplinary problems, heavily policed high school environments, and a lack of guidance through the application process. Their experience with professionals, such as police or school administrators, often was one of avoidance or fear of retribution.

According to Michigan recruiters who worked with these students, their most pressing question was: how will I pay for college? Many of these students did not understand the college admissions process very well. For example, they often did not comprehend the difference

between attending an elite university and a community college, especially for their career prospects.

These poorer, predominantly racial minority students also frequently lacked the family resources, both financial and cultural, for managing the challenges of college. Natalie, a black female student who an admissions counselor had recruited to come to Michigan, turned to this counselor once she got to the university, looking for work. The staff person quickly realized that Natalie was hungry because she could not afford enough to eat. Her family, which was very poor, lived in a rough area of Detroit. She avoided going home during one Christmas vacation because friends and family gave her a hard time for going to college, claiming that she thought she was better than them.

Not surprisingly, the university's undergraduate recruitment strategies differed for these different populations. Recruiters' presentations at wealthier, majority white schools spent more time on the university's resources and specialized programs. These tended to be smaller, more intimate affairs. Sometimes recruiters met with parents from these schools—even the parents of juniors who were not yet applying to college—to walk them through exercises in the application process. A private school in Chicago held one such exercise, after a representative from a private company presented its specialized college search services for student applicants. The company conducted a summer tour that took students to numerous selective colleges. They would stay in upscale hotels and learn from a chaperon who had written a major book about college admissions. The cost was $1,895 per student.

Michigan's recruitment at poor and minority usually was far more involved and intensive, as recruiters tried to compensate for some of the lack of resources in the students'

lives. When university recruiters did presentations at poorer, majority black schools, they described the university and its assets but their general message was often more basic: students should be thinking about applying for college, they should do well in their classes, and they should consider Michigan. These recruiters and other university spokespeople went to other venues, as well, such as African-American churches, to raise the university's visibility and reach more students.

The Detroit satellite admissions office provided essay-writing workshops in the Detroit office. Public school staff and guidance counselors working with these students raised issues such as violence in the schools, drug-addicted families, a high school curricula focused on reading not writing, and their students' lack of experience writing essays or filling out complex forms.

The existence of the Detroit satellite admissions office, recruiters' visits to these schools, and their recruitment in other venues such as African-American churches was especially important given the distance—social and geographic—between Ann Arbor and metropolitan areas like Detroit. A pair of counselors from an urban public high school approached one Michigan recruiter to appeal for help. They wanted to bring a tour bus of students to visit Michigan, because otherwise it was unlikely their students would ever see the university. It would cost $900 to rent a bus, but the students could not afford to pay more than $10 each.

The lawsuits and the popular reaction to the Court's decisions had different consequences for students of color and white students. The plaintiffs and their allies had lobbied harsh criticisms against the university, and some sought to tarnish the university's image, or at least they made charges to that effect. Meanwhile, administrators in the Office of Undergraduate

Admissions, particularly those who recruited black applicants and other students of color in Detroit, were concerned about these messages deterring potential applicants. They also worried that applicants *misunderstood* the Court's decisions. Some blamed this misunderstanding on BAMN, which had chapters in a number of Detroit public high schools that sent students to Michigan; they accused BAMN activists of portraying the university as unsympathetic to students of color.

Appealing to Students of Color and Whites Students Alike

At recruitment events, the admissions staff recounted the university's role in the lawsuits and its stance on diversity. They displayed the university's materials explaining the lawsuits and exalting the university's diversity—such as *The Educational Value of Diversity* brochure, the undergraduate admissions viewbook, and promotional CDs—and included these materials in visitors' packets.

Undergraduate admissions staff and university spokespeople communicated a public image of the university as a leader in diversity for audiences of African-American students, other students of color, and white students alike.

They also communicated slightly different messages about the lawsuits and diversity, depending on the audiences. While these topics came up at many different kinds of events, they were more likely to be main topics at events for specialized audiences, such as guidance counselors, and events for racial minority and other disadvantaged students.

At events targeting all applicants, such as campus tours, presenters commonly talked about the details of the new admissions process. But at the more specialized events, presenters

provided more or less extensive explanations of what happened in the cases and reiterated the themes noted above—Michigan as a leader in higher education, the value that the institution put on diversity, as demonstrated by its fight to the Supreme Court, and the connection between diversity and excellence. In part, recruiters brought up the topic with racial minority applicants to dispel popular misconceptions about the lawsuits; rumors had circulated in some high schools that Michigan did not support affirmative action. In part, recruiters probably brought up the topic because they believed it would resonate with this student audience.

When university leaders spoke to African-American audiences off-campus, they emphasized the role of the university fighting for affirmative action. For example, in fall 2003, an African-American admissions staff member told students from a predominantly black public high school in Detroit, "There was a lawsuit against Michigan, and in June the Supreme Court came back and said, 'We love the way you are fighting for diversity. We just want you to change how you do it.'"

When President Coleman spoke at a black Baptist church in early 2005, in a campaign to boost applications from students of color, she made a similar appeal. She told a congregation of hundreds of people:

> Diversity in all of it forms is a crucial, central ethic of the University of Michigan.
> We firmly believe that diversity is essential to a robust and successful education.
> That is why I dedicated myself so enthusiastically to the university's legal defense
> of Affirmative Action and admissions. We fought all the way to the Supreme
> Court and we won.

Admissions staff also used the cases to underscore the connection between diversity, excellence, and the learning environment on campus when talking to white students. At a 2004 recruitment session for students from a predominantly white private high school in Chicago, an African-American associate director said:

> We went before the Supreme Court… [The Court] upheld the law school's approach and said that [Michigan] had to change the procedures for the undergraduate admissions. We believe very strongly in excellence, diversity and affirmative action. You're going to learn in the cafeteria! There are people from different backgrounds, students from 110 countries around the world.

The university has relied on some different techniques to solicit applications from students of color. Against the backdrop of rapidly implementing large-scale changes to a cumbersome bureaucracy, administrators watched with trepidation each winter for reports on the numbers of applications from underrepresented students. For example, in December 2003, applications from underrepresented racial minority students trickled in more slowly than previous years.

A recruiter in the Detroit office explained to me, they had picked up 38 applications thus far from Cass High School, one of the university's main feeder schools for underrepresented minorities. In a typical year, they would have picked up around 60 applications by December. This drop led to much speculation among university administrators for the reasons why. Some believed that potential applicants thought the university had lost the cases. Many feared that such students were turned off by the lawsuits—misunderstandings which they worried exacerbated the

university's image among some circles as inaccessible, even arrogant. The new, longer application—especially the new essay questions—might pose obstacles. Recruiters in the Detroit office were especially discouraged and worried.

In December 2004, administrators again found that black, Latino, and Native American applicants had applied in lower numbers than years past. University executives launched an eleventh-hour effort in late 2004 to solicit more applications. President Coleman spoke at three predominantly African-American churches across the state, sent letters to 21,000 "potential applicants," and contacted the university's network of African-American alumni. The admissions office followed up the president's efforts with special recruitment fairs and email and postcard reminders, while the university ran an advertisement on radio stations in four cities across the country. Student volunteers and activists made last minute "call-outs," phoning high school seniors. The admissions office followed up the president's efforts with special recruitment fairs and email and postcard reminders.

The politics of affirmative admissions have largely focused on polemical and philosophical arguments and on the mechanics of how admissions offices review applications. But, as illustrated here, affirmative action is instantiated in numerous organizational practices, in large measure as a response to unequal socio-economic and racial circumstances in the U.S.

Post-Script

Proposal 2, passed by Michigan voters in fall 2006, banned consideration of race or sex in public education, employment, and contracting. Executives at the University of Michigan had opposed this measure, but after its passage, they announced that they would "proceed cautiously by

adjusting our admissions and financial policies such that race and gender will no longer have any effect on the decision-making process."[98] They modified the criteria for campus initiatives targeted to women and people of color, often rewriting the criteria to prioritize "diversity."

One program, for instance, now seeks applicants who come "from a background that will contribute to the diversity of the community."[99] In this case, organizational leaders used diversity ideology to incorporate an expansive vision of difference into program criteria, thus restructuring organizational resources that once targeted underrepresented minorities and women and making these resources accessible to non-minorities and men. Although many leaders felt these changes were not in their interest or in the university's interest, they certainly had an interest in demonstrating their legal compliance with the new measure. Following the passage of Prop 2, the university released a strategic plan, Diversity Blueprints, with the goals of "identifying innovative strategies to sustain and improve effectiveness in recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse student body, faculty, and staff and enhancing [the university's] educational outreach and engagement" (University of Michigan 2007:3)

The full impacts of these changes on minority admissions and program participation at Michigan have yet to be seen. Preliminary admissions data suggest that admission rates for underrepresented minorities will drop considerably (Nowinski 2007), as they did for students in other states where similar bans were passed (e.g., Tienda et al. 2003). These changes in university policies are becoming increasingly commonplace across the country, as political

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[98] http://www.vpcomm.umich.edu/diversityresources/prop2faq.html Accessed July 20, 2007.
[99] https://umich-rackham.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/umich_rackham.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1581&p_created=1150996426&p_topview=1. Accessed July 10, 2007.

opponents of racial and gender preferences mobilize voter referenda, support the appointment of conservative justices, and gain political power.[100]

IV. How Diversity Transforms the Project of Racial Equality

The historical ideological shift on campus from creating opportunities for racial minorities to crafting a diverse campus was not simply a historical transition from one discourse of race, difference, and inclusion to another. Alternative ideas and rhetoric do not simply disappear, especially if people continue to promote those alternatives. Rather, ideological displacement is an ongoing process. Subsequent changes on campus, following the *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases, provide a window into this ongoing process.

In the wake of the 2003 Court decisions, organizational leaders and administrators at Michigan invoked and modified diversity ideology and intiatives in a number of different ways. In so doing, they helped to transform racial politics.

University leaders sought to present the legal rationale for diversity, and diversity ideology more generally, as organizational common sense in many different contexts at the university. As socio-legal scholars might say, they made the diversity rationale work both "on the books" and in practice. Perhaps this is not surprising. Diversity ideology had long been institutionalized on Michigan's campus in public discourse, policies, and programs. In fact, the university and some of its faculty had helped to *produce* the modern social scientific understanding of diversity, in part through research about Michigan students.

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[100] Since *Gratz* and *Grutter*, the increasingly conservative Supreme Court has ruled against most race-targeted programs for school integration, with four of the justices arguing that the goal of racial diversity is not a compelling governmental interest *(Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School Distric No. 1, et al).*

But people do not directly translate law from the written word. They must interpret it. Two key issues in the lawsuits reveal how Michigan leaders' adjusted their presentation of the diversity rationale to fit the campus environment and to fit local organizational imperatives, such as enhancing the university's image with key constituents. The first example involves the argument made in a legal brief submitted by retired military generals. They argued that a racially diverse military is good for national security. Like the argument about diversity as a competitive economic advantage, the national security argument was made in a high-profile amicus brief and was cited in the Court's majority decision in *Grutter*. However, university administrators never incorporated the national security argument into the admissions viewbooks. University spokespeople alluded only vaguely, at best, to such an argument at recruitment events. For example, when Coleman spoke at one recruitment event, she referenced the need for "leaders who are prepared to guide us through the increasingly diverse and global future."

Michigan leaders' decision to downplay the national security argument comes as no surprise. The U.S. had recently begun a war with Iraq, which did not have strong support among college students in general (Harvard University Institute of Politics 2003). As noted in Chapter Ten, many Michigan students and faculty who supported affirmative action also were involved in anti-war organizing efforts, and the war did not have strong support among African-Americans.[101]

Yet another example of the discrepancy between the legal proceedings and university leaders' rhetoric lies in university leaders' depictions of the contentious undergraduate point

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[101] In spring 2003, opinion polls showed that about 70% of Americans said that they supported the war in Iraq (Jaffe 2003). One poll found African-American support for the war at 50%, while another recorded considerable opposition to the war.

system. Michigan administrators—especially the admissions staff—described the new admission procedures as the "subjective" approach. They said it was a change, pursuant to the Court's opinion, from the older "objective scale based on points." "Objective" was a public relations term. It was never used to describe the undergraduate admissions procedures in the university's oral arguments, the university's brief to the Supreme Court, or the Court's decision in *Gratz*.[102]

University leaders at Michigan in the late 1990s and early 2000s communicated and reinforced diversity as the official ideology of race, difference, and inclusion on campus. They did so by drawing on expert discourses such as law, social science, and marketing. It was not a monolithic or necessarily narrow ideology, as administrators could adapt to a wide variety of contexts, needs, and goals, including the seemingly conflicting goals of promoting race-conscious admissions and ending programs targeted to students of color. In so doing, university leaders further institutionalized diversity as the legitimate color-conscious political project on campus.

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[102] The brief submitted by the U.S. Department of Justice in support of the plaintiffs did use the term, "objective," but in reference to standardized tests and grades, not the point system.

CHAPTER SIX. STARR CORPORATION

FROM AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR MINORITIES TO THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, following changes in federal law, Starr Corporation instituted equal employment and affirmative action policies and programs. Leaders in the company adopted much of the language used in federal legislation and executive orders (and by other companies) to characterize their programs and objectives. They stressed their commitment to "equal opportunity" and "affirmative action," which would create "opportunities" for "minorities" and women, increase their numerical representation within the company, and produce a fair workplace. In the company's annual reports, leaders almost never mentioned legal compliance as a motivation for these programs, although they used rhetoric that insinuated such compliance. As the company's annual report from 1975 states, "[E]qual opportunity is a firm corporate policy." Company leaders also heralded Starr's business relationships with minority sub-contractors as promoting "minority economic development" which would benefit racial minority owners and improve conditions in black and Latino communities.

Although some of these initiatives supported women and people with disabilities, they targeted racial minorities, especially black people. Company leaders presented affirmative action as a matter of corporate social responsibility, alongside such issues as the environment. Their language about promoting jobs and minority economic development was the company's early color-conscious public rhetoric about race, difference, and inclusion.

By the mid-1990s, Starr Corporation still participated in federal affirmative action programs and had an EEO policy. The company continued to track racial minority and female

employee representation, and it has further developed its internal programs to support employees of color. But company executives had changed the scope and structure of these programs, and they amended their rationale for supporting workplace inclusion. Instead of emphasizing equal opportunity, racial minorities, or community development, they relied on an expansive discourse of "diversity." The president of Starr explained in a 1991 brochure, *Managing Diversity at Starr Corporation*:

> Our workforce now consists of more older workers, people of various cultures, women, minorities, and individuals with different work styles and talents…. What does diversity offer Starr—The potential for a powerful competitive advantage. Diversity can offer us different perspectives on how to achieve the goals of the business. Like total quality [management], it invites innovation, calculated risk taking, and entrepreneurship. Diversity also aligns us better with our customers and consumers, whose demographics have also changed in the same way.

Company leaders' new public diversity rhetoric represents a significant ideological shift. Company executives and managers at Starr—and at other large U.S. companies (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Lynch 1997; Ryan, Hawdon and Branick 2002)— made diversity their official, race-conscious discourse of race, difference, and inclusion.

Corporate diversity ideology at Starr emphasized employees' different backgrounds and identities, including their race, as well as their cultures and styles. The new rhetoric of diversity management defined the meaning of diversity vaguely, but with positive connotations. Race was often the prototypical form of diversity, but "diversity" also referred to gender and to other

categories of difference. As Lauren Edelman, Sally Riggs Fuller and Iona Mara-Drita (2001) show, the new corporate diversity rhetoric that large U.S. companies like Starr began to use in the early 1990s presented difference as a managerial concern. It expanded the idea of diversity so that it included a range of human characteristics not protected by law.

Like diversity ideology at the University of Michigan, diversity ideology at Starr presented the concept as a moral value, providing an aspirational vision of how the world should work. The 1991 company brochure went on note, "We've added Diversity to our core values… You'll find a framed version of this mission in this package." This new rhetoric highlighted diversity's institutional benefits: diversity could enhance the company's competitiveness in the marketplace and help the company attract talented employees. And it asserted that the company's executives and managers should commit to supporting these differences.

Starr was not the only company that retooled its rhetoric and programs for inclusion, from affirmative action and equal opportunity to diversity management. Companies commonly adopt practices used by their peer companies because of the normative pressure to do so. Large companies across the country and in Starr's industry were also adopting corporate diversity management in the early 1990s (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Lynch 1997).

Starr, like other similar firms, did not abandon its equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies as it turned to diversity management. The federal government still required these policies, and Starr still faced employment discrimination lawsuits, federal penalties for violating them, and normative pressure to continue them. Corporate leaders, however, largely stopped using altruistic rationales such as creating job opportunities for

minorities or improving conditions in minority communities. Instead, they reframed their race- and gender-targeted initiatives—including their affirmative action and equal opportunity policies—as pursuant to the instrumental goal of corporate diversity. They also downplayed the importance and relevance of affirmative action while they institutionalized programmatic changes, such as new Employee Diversity Affinity Groups.

The company's new diversity programs still emphasized racial minorities but also had different organizational structures and different key participants than the company's affirmative action programs. The new programs were organized by corporate function, such as sales, rather than along geographic lines. They included specific programs for women, African-Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Americans. And they explicitly targeted employees in mid-level and top management positions in the company. With the shift to diversity management, company leaders continued to emphasize the numerical representation of women and people of color, but they added a focus on workplace culture.

Despite political opposition to race-based affirmative action, many managers, particularly human resource personnel, had become invested in employment-based affirmative action (Kelly and Dobbin 1998) and did not want it devolved to the state level (MacLean 2006). Throughout the 1980s, companies curbed their most aggressive affirmative action programs but maintained their EEO/AA staff and their safeguards against discrimination, such as nonunion grievance systems (Kelly and Dobbin 1998). Erin Kelly and Frank Dobbin (ibid) argue that EEO/AA managers, in the face of declining federal and public support for affirmative action, refashioned their skills in terms of diversity management to protect their jobs and status. Professional associations such as the Society for Human Resource Management and diversity consultants also

put pressure on companies to implement diversity management programs such as employee trainings (Lynch 1997). As organizational scholars have shown, companies such as Starr needed to adopt diversity management to remain legitimate in their organizational fields.

Broader forces of neoliberalism, internal personnel pressures, and legitimacy imperatives set the stage for the emergence of the diversity project in companies. But leaders at Starr and other companies still had to adopt diversity management rhetoric and programs in ways that made sense on the ground, within the context of the company. Company executives and managers relied on diversity rhetoric and programs to satisfice a variety of organizational demands. They needed to manage organizational issues of minority inclusion and promotion. For example, early on, the primary issue had been bringing more people of color and women into the workforce. As the workplace became more integrated, the issue shifted towards improving access to the most powerful positions in the company and changing the office workplace culture to make it more accommodating. Company leaders relied on diversity rhetoric and programs to frame minority inclusion as a human resource issue, legitimizing diversity as organizational common sense (they had framed affirmative action also as a human resource issue, but affirmative action rhetoric was less malleable and EEO/AA programs were far less flexible than diversity management). One way they did this was by drawing on expert discourses of the market diversification, human resource management, and changing consumer markets. For example, Starr executives had praised the diversity of the company's products and operations—the diversification of the company—since at least the 1960s. Diversity ideology extended this notion to the company's employees.

Organizational leaders faced other imperatives. They needed to refashion the meaning of race, difference, and inclusion in ways that appealed to both white constituents and constituents of color, within and outside the company. Starr executives strategically relied on diversity rhetoric and programs to acknowledge and affirm racial identity while at the same time they downplayed issues of racial and class disadvantage. "Diversity" provided a useful, descriptive, and positive catchall term to refer at once to racial minorities, women, other members of the workforce who were marginalized or subject to discrimination, such as older workers, and also groups that were not defined by their institutional marginality or disadvantage. Moreover, diversity management focused managers' concerns about inclusion on employees with high occupational status—to managers, professionals, and executives. These were among the jobs that were most difficult to integrate, but by focusing on these groups, company leaders were able to sidestep concerns about racial disadvantage.

Company leaders invoked diversity rhetoric to describe the company's values. They constructed a symbolic institutional identity for the company that portrayed it as amenable and open to people of color, women, and other marginalized groups. They cited the changing demographics of employees and of consumers as their motivation for institutionalizing diversity management. Such a symbolic identity, hopefully, would communicate to applicants that they were welcome. It also suggested to shareholders that the company was well positioned to pursue niche markets in the U.S. and international markets abroad and that capitalism could still work, perhaps more efficiently, with some women and people of color in positions of power.

These semantic and programmatic moves had a number of implications. As other scholars have observed, the managerial conception of difference and inclusion "de-emphasizes

the law's focus on discrimination, injustice, and historical disenfranchisement and supplants it with a conception of diversity grounded in organizational success" (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001: 1632). Corporate diversity management simultaneously reframed the meaning of race and the construct of the racial subject. Although managers at Starr and elsewhere reframed affirmative action as commensurate with other managerial concerns (see e.g. Edelman et al 1991), their affirmative action rhetoric still emphasized race as the key form of difference. It still acknowledged race as an axis of structural disadvantages and a source of barriers to opportunity. Diversity management, instead, presents race as one of a broad range of human characteristics, associating race with differing identities and strategic market advantages. Affirmative action primarily emphasizes racial minorities and remains silent on whiteness, much less white privilege, while diversity management at least provides a language for talking about the role of white people in racial dynamics, racial exclusion, and racial privilege. Diversity management supports racial inclusion, but not in order to compensate for societal problems, reflect the company's corporate citizenship, or demonstrate the company's compliance with law. Rather, such efforts served instrumental business needs.

In this chapter, I show how diversity ideology became the official ideology of race, difference, and inclusion at Starr Corporation between the 1960s and the mid-1990s.[103] The story of how diversity ideology and initiatives evolved at Starr—like the comparable story of the

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[103] As I explain throughout this chapter and in the methodological appendix, the ownership and organizational structure of Starr changed throughout the period of study. Most notably, Starr merged with another company that I call Brattle & Sons in 1980, and then de-mergered in 1987. In the late 1980s, another large corporation, Michelson Companies, bought Starr, merged it with another consumer products company in the same industry, and made it a subsidiary business until the early 2000s, when Starr went public. Throughout this period, Starr made the same types of consumer products, although it acquired and sold many smaller subsidiary businesses and brands. For purposes of clarity, I refer to the company throughout this entire period as Starr.

University of Michigan—reveals how the diversity project became orthodox in a corporate context.

As I detail in the methodological appendix, my primary source for this chapter is the annual reports produced by Starr or its parent company between 1960 and 2006. I supplement these reports with historical documents such as the company's 1973 affirmative action policy, internal newsletters, and brochures that I obtained from the company's private archives and the Chicago Historical Society. I also rely on a few retrospective interviews with company leaders, internet archives, and documents posted by the company's Employee Affinity Groups on the company's private intranet.

The chapter begins with the project of racial and gender integration of Starr's workforce. I examine company leaders' rhetoric and programs of equal opportunity, affirmative action, and minority economic development between the late 1960s and the mid-1980s. I discuss how managers developed strategic frames—essentially, other expert discourses commonly used in the company—that they later drew upon to present minority inclusion as a market strategy and a human resource issue. Then, I detail the first diversity management programs at Starr in the early 1990s. This discussion highlights how diversity management acknowledges racial identity and difference but downplays issues of racial disadvantage. It illustrates how the rhetoric of diversity management at Starr largely took the place of rhetoric about affirmative action programs.

This sets the stage for my discussion in the following chapter about how managers today define diversity management in ways that discredit affirmative action as an imposed mandate and how both their public diversity discourse and their organizational diversity initiatives shifted

the focus away from creating employment opportunities for people of color and women or ameliorating racial inequality in society.

A few qualifications: In this and the following chapter, I refer to corporate rhetoric and policies of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action (EEO/AA) as evidence of the project of racial equality and integration in companies. This is a simplification of complex legal and organizational processes. Lawmakers, administrators, and activists had different interpretations of the intent of anti-discrimination law and programs and of key values, such as equal opportunity (Pedriana and Stryker 1997). For example, EEO/AA law evolved during the 1960s and 1970s, characterized by two major stages (Graham 1992). In the first phase, as embodied in the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964, policymakers stressed colorblind, constitutional approaches to non-discrimination Federal agencies and the courts greatly influenced the second phase, which stressed group rights and proportional representation of minorities.

Also, since their inception, important EEO/AA laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 have provided unclear direction about how employers should end workplace discrimination. A major controversy has been whether employers should procedurally eliminate discriminatory barriers in employment based on race and gender or use race and gender-conscious practices to achieve equitable representation of women and people of color within the workforce (Edelman 1992; Pedriana and Stryker 1997).[104] Companies have filled this vacuum by constructing their own symbolic structures of compliance (Edelman 1992).

Employers—particularly human resource personnel—have interpreted EEO/AA compliance and implemented EEO/AA offices and policies in ways that have as much or more to

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[104] Since the late 1970s, the courts largely have interpreted EEO/AA laws to emphasize the importance of employers' non-discriminatory procedures more so than equitable employment outcomes (Edelman 1992).

do with managerial prerogatives than with legal directives. Also, just because Starr and other similarly situated employers created EEO/AA offices, positions, and rules does not necessarily mean that they changed personnel and governance practices or that these organizational structures led to changes in workforce composition (but see Kalev and Dobbin 2006; Kalev, Dobbin and Kelly 2006).

I. The Project of Racial Integration in U.S. Companies

In the post-World War II economic boom, Starr and other large U.S. companies enjoyed record sales and profits (Sobel 1993). By the early 1960s, Starr already had vastly expanded the global reach of its sales and operations into countries with stable economies and hospitable politics, selling products in the U.S., Great Britain, other Western European countries, Australia, Mexico, and Venezuela. The company's annual reports always opened with a letter solo- or jointly-authored by the Chairman of the Board, the president, and the CEO, all of whom were white, middle-aged or elderly men until the early 2000s. During the 1960s, the opening letters repeat the mantra of "record" sales and profits and exude a cheery optimism about the company's fortunes.

U.S. companies routinely confined white women and people of color to separate work assignments, if they hired them as employees at all. White men monopolized the best jobs, while people of color typically worked in low-wage, menial blue-collar jobs and women in pink-collar positions. These jobs typically paid less than those held by white men and afforded fewer opportunities for upward mobility. Company policies and discriminatory supervisors prevented

most of these workers from advancing to better paying, more powerful positions (MacLean 2006; Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007).

The post-war period also was a time when political activists and, eventually, political leaders in the U.S. began to change the terms of workplace inclusion radically. For hundreds of years, people of color and all women had been excluded from full participation in the workplace. As historian Nancy MacLean (2006) explains, workplace discrimination and job segregation were not merely an economic hardship. The ethics of work and economic success are so central to American culture that economic exclusion constitutes exclusion from full participation and citizenship in American society. MacLean (ibid:5) writes, "[G]enuine inclusion—full belonging as Americans—required participation in the economic mainstream—namely, access to the good jobs at all levels once reserved for white men." Black civil rights activists and their allies, in their struggle for jobs and racial justice, served as the central catalyst for changing these conditions, and white women, Mexican Americans, and others soon followed the path they had forged (Biondi 2003; MacLean 2006),.

No systematic data documents the representation of racial minorities and women in U.S. companies prior to the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007). Likewise, there is little available evidence documenting the demographics of Starr's employees, potentially discriminatory practices such as hiring or job classification, or labor and community organizing that targeted the company in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the company's annual reports often featured photographs of products, consumers, and employees, and a photograph from Starr's 1960 annual report provides some clues about workplace conditions (see Figure 3). Approximately 250 Starr employees stand on the pavement outside a large, nondescript plant.

Based on their clothing, race, and gender, the employees appear to be organized by their work assignments. Most of the employees are white men wearing white uniforms and caps for the factory line. Six white men in business suits stand shoulder to shoulder in the front row. About 35 white women stand in small groups or pairs. To the left of all the workers is a cluster of about 30 employees. It includes a small group of seven or eight black men and women dressed in white hats and outfits and another group of six white women dressed in similar clothes. About fifteen white women in skirts and blouses stand in two rows in front of these employees.

This 1960 photo suggests that Starr hired limited numbers of African-Americans but only in low-level positions, and that the company racially segregated employees through job assignments and, possibly, physically within the plant. It also implies that Starr managers may have allowed white women to hold supervisory positions, but—like managers at other U.S. companies (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007)—these women probably oversaw black employees and other white women, not white men.

Other photographs of employees in the annual reports confirm these observations, particularly the reports for the mid-1950s (which were not included in the full analysis for this study but which include more pictures of employees than do reports from the 1960s). A few images from the 1950s show white women and white men working together on the factory line in what appear to be comparable positions. Most of the photos from the 1950s and early 1960s, however, depict these employees in gender-segregated jobs. In laboratories, white women wearing short-sleeved uniforms—presumably secretaries—gaze up at or take notes for white men—presumably scientists—dressed in lab coats and ties. The captions identify a few white women as "home economist experts," gendered but technical positions in which they "test new

[product] ideas" and develop advertising and sales concepts. White men in uniforms work with large equipment, and white men supervise white women, but never the converse.

Moreover, in the annual reports throughout the 1960s, virtually all of the images of employees feature white men, primarily but not exclusively from the U.S. A photograph of a large sales conference in Germany depicts thousands of employees in an auditorium, a sea of white men in suits (see Figure 3). The 1967 report describes Starr employees around the world, heralding the "individuals… whose work is carried out in almost a dozen different languages. Individuals in many different countries… countries so geographically separated that at any given time the sun is shining on some of them

In 1965, racial minorities made up approximately 6% of all employees at Starr and just 2.1% of employees in clerical, office, and managerial jobs (see Figure 4).[105] Before 1976, the 1960 factory photograph is the only photograph that depicts black employees.[106]

Starr was not an anomaly. In 1966, more than 50% of the large and mid-sized U.S. firms that reported EEO-1 data employed no African-American men (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007). Black women, Latinos, and Asian-Americans worked at even fewer of these firms—between 70% and 90%. Most of these workplaces employed both white men and white women, but racial and gender segregation on the job was the norm. White men were overrepresented in the best blue-collar jobs by 44% and in managerial jobs by around 52%, while all other groups were underrepresented between 42% and 100% (ibid).

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[105] Starr annual report 1973. Although Starr was (and still is) required to submit EEO-1 reports, the EEOC and OFCCP report aggregate demographic data by industry.

[106] Between 1954 and the mid-1960s, a few photographs in Starr's annual reports depict black, female employees working for institutions that used Starr products. These women were always in service positions.
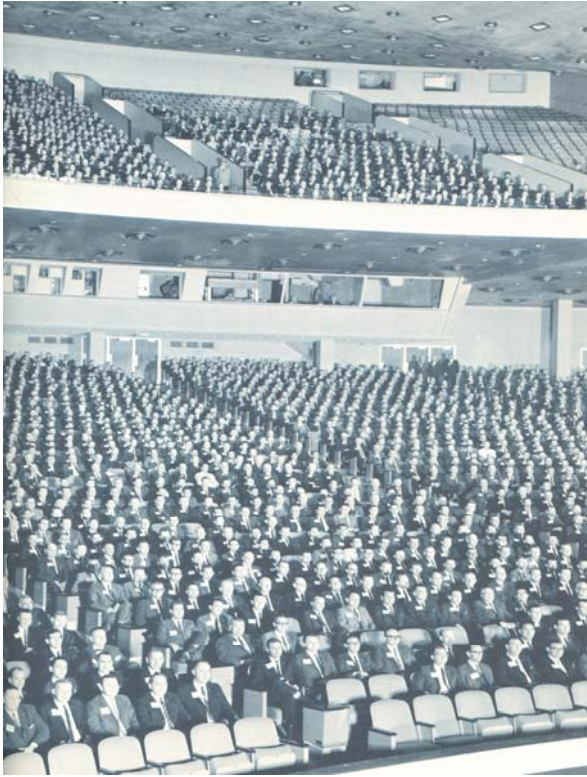
Figure 3. 1966 Starr Corporation Conference in Europe

Figure 4. Percentage of Women and People of Color in
Employee, Managerial/Officials, and Professional Positions at Starr Corporation, 1965-1987
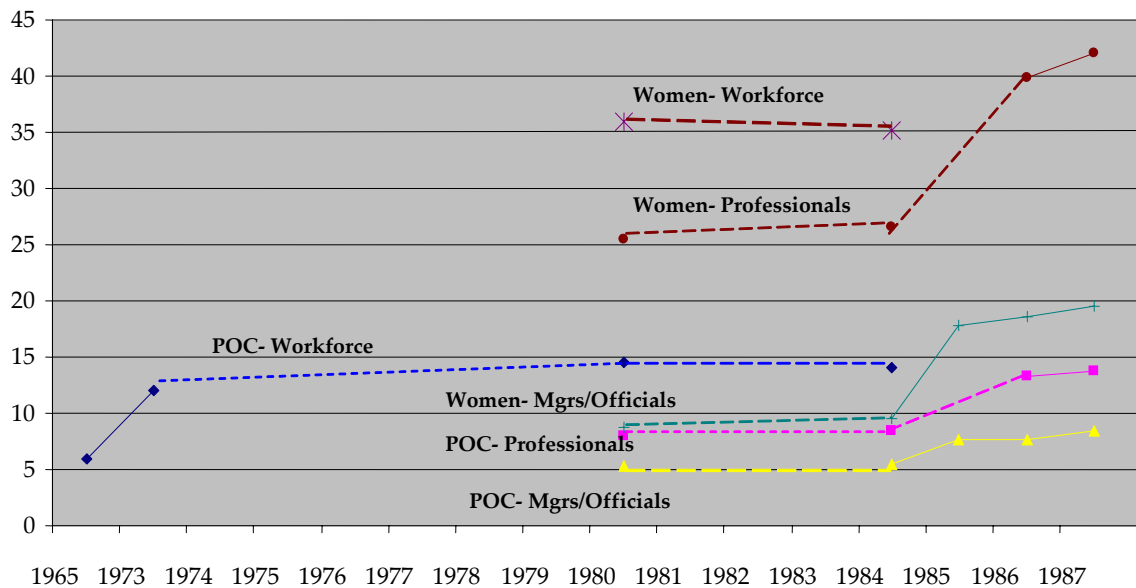
Source: Starr annual reports, multiple years.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Laws

The 1960s and early 1970s were a watershed period for employment discrimination law. The most important EEO/AA laws—which include statutes, constitutional mandates, and presidential executive orders with anti-discrimination mandates—have been Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 11246 (Edelman 1992). In 1964, the U.S. Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson approved the U.S. Civil Rights Act. Title VII of this landmark legislation prohibited employment discrimination and segregation by race, color, religion, national origin, and sex. Private employers could no longer lawfully refuse to hire someone, fire them, or classify them in ways that limited their options based on these statuses. This was an

extension of what legal scholars call the "equal opportunity principle." It depended on classical liberalism's model of a colorblind Constitution, which was also advocated by mainstream civil rights groups (Graham 1992; Skrentny 1996).

The Civil Rights Act also established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to oversee and monitor job discrimination. In 1966, the EEOC began to require employers with at least 100 employees and government contractors with 50 employees to complete reports on employees' race and sex (Graham 1990; Pedriana and Stryker 2004; Skrentny 1996).[107] Starr fit into both of these categories, so the company started to collect and submit such reports, as did many companies during this period.[108]

Starr Corporation had large contracts with the U.S. government so, like other government contractors, the company faced a specific set of obligations. In 1965, President Johnson's Executive Order 11246 prohibited employment discrimination based on race, creed, color, or national origin by government contractors and by the U.S. government. Contractors with more than 50 employees or $50,000 in contracts had to submit affirmative action plans to show their progress towards hiring and promoting racial minorities and women. Unlike previous similar executive orders, EO 11246 designated an enforcement agency, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (which became the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs under President Jimmy Carter) (Graham 1992; Skrentny 1996). The order also obliged contractors to

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[107] In 1972, Congress gave the EEOC more enforcement power by enabling the agency to file lawsuits against employers and expanded Title VII to most employers, including the U.S. government

[108] In a study of private sector employers who have reported EEO-1 data since 1971, sociologists found that just over 21% of the employers had affirmative action plans in 1971, and around 45% did in 1990 (Kalev, Dobbin and Kelly 2006). By 2002, this percentage had increased to 63%. According to civil rights historian Hugh Davis Graham (1992) (see also Blumrosen 1971; Rabkin 1989), "During the 1970s, affirmative action personnel and administrative units bcame standard in state, municipal, and county governments; in private industry and commerce; in educational systems and nonprofit organizations; and in all but the smallest enterprises and institutions." Graham 1992

act preemptively; these firms were directed to "take affirmative action" that ensured fair treatment of employees by aggressively recruiting minorities into the applicant pool (Graham 1992). Contractors like Starr also faced regulations encouraging the use of minority-owned businesses as sub-contractors.

President Richard Nixon's revised 1969 Philadelphia Plan was also highly significant for this discussion. This was the first, extremely visible affirmative action by the federal government following the passage of Title VII and it was "the first effective use of affirmative action to implement civil rights legislation directing employers to guarantee equal employment opportunity" (Quadagno 1992:629 in Pedriana and Stryker 1997). The revised Plan was a model for contract compliance. It set goals for black employment representation and defined these goals in terms of a proportion of the area workforce. It became the model for Labor Department Order No. 4 which, in 1970, required federal contractors to submit affirmative action plans with numerical goals, timetables, and proportional representation (Graham 1992). This was a major departure from the colorblind emphasis of the 1960s. It also set the stage for the development of federal programs and laws to encourage federal contracts and private sector sub-contracts with "disadvantaged" or minority-owned businesses.

Throughout the 1960s, U.S. lawmakers, federal bureaucrats and activists identified black unemployment, poverty, and violence and employer discrimination as problems, but they disagreed (and were often unclear) about whether the government and employers should address these problems through a color-blind model of classical liberalism or a pragmatic color-conscious approach (Skrentny 1996). By the early 1970s, administrators and lawmakers involved with the EEOC and OFCC as well as courts and civil rights lawyers affirmed a race-conscious,

numbers-oriented "affirmative action" approach to ending employment discrimination. They relied on a logic of administrative pragmatism to rationalize affirmative action as cost-effective and efficient.

Federal bureaucrats were not the only actors who were uncertain about how to pursue anti-discrimination laws. As sociologist Lauren Edelman (1992) has shown, EEO/AA laws gave employers ambiguous direction about the meaning and procedures of compliance. They left undefined key terms such as "affirmative action" and "equal employment opportunity." They did not require specific offices, positions or rules except for federal contractors, which had to appoint a director of affirmative action and issue a formal statement of commitment to EEO/AA. Employers, in the face of such ambiguity, constructed the meaning and practices of compliance in ways that served many of their interests. Many of these organizations created rules prohibiting discrimination as well as EEO/AA offices and formal EEO/AA policies. Endorsements of these offices and policies from employers and human resource professionals contributed to their adoption and diffusion. Scholars have argued that EEO/AA human resource specialists, in particular, became invested in these programs (Edelman et al. 1991; Kelly and Dobbin 1998).[109] Employers have relied on them to achieve such goals as demonstrating their legitimacy, making sense of the legal environment, coordinating bureaucratic tasks, and minimizing discrimination to reduce legal threats (Edelman 1992).

Federal laws alone were probably not enough to make a company like Starr adopt new inclusionary policies. But it is unlikely that Starr would have formulated affirmative action plans or adopted new employee policies absent legal change. A white male human resources executive

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[109] Kelly and Dobbin assert that EEO/AA specialists became invested in EEO/AA policies but do not provide direct qualitative or quantitative evidence about specialists to demonstrate this point.

from Starr recounted during our interview in 2005, "[Affirmative action] really started as a requirement… [N]ot that suddenly we want to do this thing—it's we *have* to do this thing." Failure to comply with affirmative action plans could have serious repercussions for the company, such as large fines and exclusion from additional federal contracts. And, in all likelihood, the company faced isomorphic pressure from other companies and professional networks to adopt EEO/AA offices and rules. To this day, Starr still submits affirmative action plans that analyze the company's female and minority employment compared to the available labor pool and that include goals and timetables to resolve any disparities (see also Harper and Reskin 2005).

The Rhetoric and Programs of Racial Integration: Corporate Responsibility, Affirmative Action, and Minority Entrepreneurship at Starr

The new EEO/AA laws established the general parameters of workplace inclusion, such as reporting requirements, and signaled appropriate language. Between the late 1960s and the mid-1980s, leaders at Starr framed their efforts at racial and gender workforce integration in terms of affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, and minority economic development. Some of these new laws and policies, such as OFCCP's compliance reviews of employers, significantly shaped organizational practices and the representation of white women, black men, and black women in management (Kalev and Dobbin 2006). Company leaders at Starr created new affirmative action programs. These programs largely focused on employment, but company leaders also viewed the company's charitable contributions, its work with community

organizations, and its financial relationships with minority businesses as directly relevant to affirmative action.

The rhetoric that leaders at Starr used mirrored the language used by federal lawmakers and by other companies seeking to show EEO/AA compliance. Lawmakers commonly referred to Title VII and other legislation that prohibited job discrimination as "equal opportunity" or "equal employment opportunity" (EEO). The text and titles of these laws often called for "equal" treatment and conditions. EO 11246 and one section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 called for "affirmative action" (Skrentny 1996).[110]

Starr officials used the terms "affirmative action" and "equal opportunity" to refer to employee hiring, training, promotions, and incentives throughout the 1970s and into the mid-1980s.[111] Between 1969 and 1993—a 25-year time span—12 of the annual reports or the supplementary CSR report refer to "affirmative action." Fourteen refer to "equal opportunity" in employment or to the company's efforts to create educational and employment "opportunities" for particular groups, such as "minority students," "minority businesses," or "economically disadvantaged young people."

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[110] The term "affirmative action" first appeared in the 1935 National Labor Relations Act but, in the civil rights context, was initially used in President John F. Kennedy's Executive Order 10925 to communicate a colorblind vision of justice (Skrentny 1996).

[111] The annual reports make no mention of CSR, minorities, or affirmative action in 1981 and 1982, following a major corporate merger with another consumer products company in 1980. Nor does the annual report discuss CSR in 1988, when Starr was bought by Michelson Companies. The reports stop mentioning these topics again starting in 2001, after Michelson Companies made Starr public and sold some shares of the company. This pattern suggests that company leaders may have paid less attention to social responsibility issues, or may have believed that shareholders would be less concerned, during times of considerable organizational change. Technological shifts also may explain the absence of these topics beginning in the early 2000s; by that time, the company's public web site reported on social responsibility and diversity.

In so doing, companies such as Starr adopted the government's emphasis on remedying the inequalities experienced by particular disadvantaged groups, primarily people of color but also women, people with disabilities, and to a far lesser extent, poor people.

Although company leaders at Starr adopted the language of federal EEO/AA policies, they did not frame minority inclusion as a matter of legal compliance. In fact, none of the annual reports from any year mentions that the government required Starr to set affirmative action goals, institute equal employment policies, or establish contracts with minority-owned business. Only the 1974 report references federal requirements, noting that the company's plans for hiring "handicapped" people were "required by new regulations." Rather, in the annual reports, company leaders presented issues of race, difference, and inclusion under the broader rubric of corporate social responsibility.[112]

Minority Inclusion as Corporate Social Responsibility

Throughout the 1970s and into the mid-1980s, Starr leaders portrayed minority inclusion as the company's responsibility as an employer and as a corporate "citizen." The organization of the annual reports, the images, and the text present minority inclusion as a matter of what is now commonly called corporate social responsibility (CSR), alongside such topics as the company's environmental record, its charitable contributions to educational causes, and employee volunteerism. Starting in the early 1970s, the reports began to include a separate corporate citizenship section. Company leaders initially described the company's general community involvement and charitable contributions in terms of "public service," but starting in the mid-

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[112] The annual reports rarely included a separate section about employees, although such as section conceivably could have included the discussion of affirmative action.

1970s, they referred more often to the company's "social responsibility" and "corporate citizenship." In the annual reports, most discussions of minorities, minority employees, and affirmative action were in this CSR section, although the opening letters from company executives and the marketing section of the report occasionally remarked on these topics, as well. [113] In many years, racial minority inclusion was the primary CSR topic.

The 1973 report is illustrative. A full-page collage includes pictures of a recycling plant, a white male college student studying, a baseball team of white boys, and—in the first such depiction in the annual reports—a black male employee in a managerial position (see Figure 5). In the photograph, the man stands at the front of a room wearing a hard hat and a white button-down dress shirt. He points to a diagram on the wall, presumably explaining it to his colleagues, who include at least one white man. This photo, along with most of the report's text about affirmative action, is in the "Social Commitment" section of the report. The report singles out "equal opportunity" as one of six areas of concern.

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[113] Starr leaders pointed to numerous activities—employee volunteerism, employees' and company leaders' roles as virtuous citizens in their communities, Starr's financial contributions, and the company's basic operations, such as the products created and jobs provided—as evidence of the company's commitment to social well being.

Figure 5. Black manager, 1973

Between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s, the CSR sections of the annual reports pointed to four ways that the company supported "minorities," women, and people with disabilities: affirmative action in employment; the company's relationships with and contributions to non-profit organizations; its relationships with minority businesses; and its charitable contributions, especially for minority education.

Company leaders articulated and justified the company's involvement in issues concerning people of color and other groups in the discourse of "affirmative action." Company leaders sometimes used the term "affirmative action" to refer to the numerical representation of women and racial minorities in the company and programs to support these employees. But sometimes they invoked "affirmative action" to characterize the company's relationships with minority non-profit organizations, its work in minority communities, and its business relationships with minority-owned firms. For example, in the discussion of U.S. community and

charitable contributions in the 1984 report, the text states: "because affirmative action issues are important to Starr, emphasis will be placed on assisting non-profit agencies responding to the needs and interests of minorities, women and the handicapped." In large measure, these decision-makers viewed the company's charitable contributions, community outreach, and collaborations with organizations like the Urban League and the NAACP as essential for the affirmative action goal of attracting applicants of color and for appealing more generally to people of color. This commitment was not just rhetorical. In 1987, 24.2% of the company's cash contributions went to such programs.

The company relied on some similar organizational mechanisms to manage employee affirmative action and the company's CSR activities involving minority communities. The company's Affirmative Action Task Forces, described below, worked on both recruitment and community affairs in various metropolitan regions. By associating minority inclusion with corporate social responsibility—rather than, say, personnel development—company leaders may have reinforced the company's construction of racial minorities as a resource-deficient group in need of greater opportunities.

Minority Inclusion as Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

Under president John F. Kennedy's administration, large companies that had government contracts could voluntarily participate in the government-administered Plans for Progress program (Skrentny 1996). In this short-lived program that critics deemed ineffective, the government exempted participating companies from any repercussions for EEO violations. Starr took part in this program, creating a Plan for Progress in 1965 to continue its non-discrimination

policy and adopt some affirmative action practices. Starr then established an Affirmative Action Program with policies and new objectives and programs "relating to the Corporation's continued efforts to provide equal employment opportunities to all individuals."[114]

Federal regulatory capacity and discrimination law were relatively more powerful during the early 1970s. Starr's actions were in step with those of other employers, who started to adopt EEO policies and organizational structures to indicate their compliance, whether symbolic or factual (Edelman 1992). In accordance with federal guidelines, company leaders revised and distributed copies of their Affirmative Action Program to the company's divisions and facilities in 1969 and began to set employment goals for minorities and women in 1972. In 1973, the company began specific employee affirmative action programs for employees to encourage "recruitment, hiring, promotion, and career development." That same year, company leaders announced the new Department of Urban Affairs, which oversaw the implementation of the company's affirmative action policy and coordinated related programs.

The stated purpose of Starr's Affirmative Action policy, dated 1974, was "the equal employment of all individuals without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex or age (except where sex or age are bona fide occupational qualifications)." Starr required each division and each facility to develop its own affirmative action program and reports, tailored to their geographical context but in line with the company's and the federal government's guidelines. Local managers were supposed to be responsible for planning and implementing these programs in their areas.

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[114] Starr Corporation, Inc. *Starr Corporation Affirmative Action Program.* 1974

Starr's Affirmative Action Program outlined a variety of "affirmative actions" the company would take ranging from policy communication to employee assignments. The company would post "equal opportunity employer" in all employment ads, inform all new employees about EEO policy, communicate affirmative action efforts through the public relations department, and include women and racial minorities in any photographs of employees used for consumer advertising, job postings, or public relations. The company was supposed to make special efforts to recruit minority and female applicants for jobs and departments for which they were "qualified" but underrepresented. This included using employment agencies and other possible sources such as civil rights organizations, women's organizations, women's colleges, colleges with large populations of racial minorities, and minority news media. The company would review tests administered to applicants and criteria for promotions to ensure that these instruments did not discriminate against women or people of color. The company's Affirmative Action Program also included pursuit of "direct and indirect assistance to businessmen and business firms of minority communities."

The Rhetoric of Affirmative Action and Opportunity

Prior to the 1970s, Starr's annual reports did not mention race, gender, affirmative action, equal opportunity, or social diversity. During the late 1960s, however, company leaders amended their rationale for their community involvement, which until then had focused on serving the "public interest." In the 1968 and 1969 reports—but in no others— company leaders cited the need for social stability, particularly for a healthy business climate. They claimed that Starr contributed to

social stability by helping the "disadvantaged" with jobs, training, and "opportunities." The 1969 report explains:

> Another challenge we must continue to meet in the coming years is the creation of more opportunities for the economically disadvantaged. We see the role of Starr in helping to meet these needs as the same as that of any enlightened, concerned, corporate citizen.

Other business elites and industry organizations like the National Alliance of Businessmen, used similar language in the late 1960s to call for race-based hiring (Skrentny 1996:89-90). Drawing on popular discourse of crisis management, they advocated for hiring black people as a way to stem violence and social unrest among black city residents.

Starr leaders referred to "minorities," "blacks," and "affirmative action" for the first time in the annual reports in 1971. This and other reports from the early 1970s describe affirmative action as part of the company's general efforts "to aid employees in their careers" through tuition refunds and training. The 1971 report explains:

> the Company has tried to help minority employees adjust to their jobs and continues to train supervisors to recognize the special needs of newly-employed members of minority groups. This is part of our continuing affirmative action program which since 1965 has resulted in a 70% increase in the number of minority group members employed by Starr in the United States.

"Minorities" were the primary focus of Starr's workplace inclusion programs. Prior to 1975, these "minorities" were African-American employees. Starr—like so many other institutions—

marked the race of people of color but not of white people (and sometimes the gender of women, but not of men). Although women, Mexican-Americans, and people with disabilities across the country were politically organizing around workplace integration (MacLean 2006), both the federal government and employers relied on people of color, particular African-Americans, as the modal "minority group" and targeted policies for inclusion to them (Skrentny 2002).

Until the late 1980s, the company's programs to promote inclusion, as described in the annual reports, focused on "minorities." By the mid-1970s, the text of the annual reports occasionally mentioned Hispanics or Mexican-Americans as "minorities." The company added "the handicapped" in 1974 and women in 1975 as groups that it supported. The reports make a passing reference to Vietnam-era veterans in 1976 but never mention veterans again. (Asian-Americans did not appear in the reports as beneficiaries of charity until 1991 and as employees until 1992. Similarly, non-U.S. employees become a regular feature in the reports' employee photographs in the late 1980s, when Starr was bought by a company that had a strong presence in international markets.)

As noted above, throughout the 1970s and into the mid-1980s, company leaders largely adopted a public discourse of equal opportunity and affirmative action that approximated the public rhetoric used by lawmakers and other companies practicing EEO/AA. Rhetoric about workplace inclusion in Starr's annual reports consistently cites the importance of promoting equal opportunity, creating opportunity for specific groups, progressing in affirmative action, encouraging minority economic development, and demonstrating responsibility to communities and society. The reports invoke language about "opportunity" specifically in the discussions of employees (and, to a lesser extent, charitable contributions); they mention "minority economic

development" in discussions of contracts with minority businesses, which I elaborate below. The 1975 report encapsulates these sentiments, describing one company outreach program as "a means to furthering equal opportunity and economic development throughout the communities in which we operate." A central purpose of the company's programs, according to a 1982 company newsletter, was to "identify and support organizations and programs in minority communities that will improve the status of residents."

Thus, company leaders' message in the annual reports and other materials was *not* that the company was recruiting and supporting employees of color to rectify the results of prior or current discriminatory practices. Nor did company leaders use rhetoric about complying with federal requirements, enhancing the quality of the workforce, or improving business results. Rather, their rationale for minority inclusion subtly suggested that their efforts to "help," "train," and address "special needs" were altruistic, pragmatic, and for the benefit of racial minority employees and racial minority communities.

Some of Starr's annual reports present additional rationales for the company's workplace inclusion initiatives. The 1973 report, for example, cites the company's objective of "continuing to increase our participation in the solutions of social problems." The 1977 reports note the company's role—pursuant to the "landmark" U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1965—in "the painstaking tasks of transforming the vision of social justice into living reality." The 1976 Starr annual report states plainly, "Starr affirmative action programs emphasize minority education, employment and business enterprise." A few of the reports describe programs for minority inclusion but do not elaborate any rationale for them.

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs

The specific programs described in almost all of the annual reports in the 1970s and through much of the 1980s targeted racial minorities, especially black people. The Plant City Program, for example, was the company's most extensive affirmative action initiative. Started in 1973, the Plant City Program brought together corporate officials, local managers, and representatives from community organizations in different metropolitan areas. An Affirmative Acton Task Force in each location oversaw local efforts and, according to a 1983 brochure, would "seek out potential minority, women and handicapped employees; act as liaisons with community agencies; and support minority economic development."

According to the company's chairman and chief operating officer at the time, the idea for these task forces came from a minority public relations firm. In 1972, the firm submitted a proposal to Starr entitled, "A Primer for Local Affirmative Action Task Forces."[115] Starr leaders subsequently adopted what the proposal called "total community involvement." Plant managers not only hired minority employees but also participated in local public relations and economic development. Initially implemented in three cities, the Plant City Program included 10 cities by 1978, and the company continued to have regionally based Affirmative Action Task Forces through the early 1990s.

The Task Forces' activities ranged from endorsing adopt-a-school programs to attending job fairs to volunteering at the YMCA or YWCA. Task Force members recruited employees and coordinated programs for minority college students who upon graduation would "become potential candidates for full-time positions with Starr." The task forces also evaluated

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[115] Starr Employee Newsletter 1982.

organizations' requests for contributions, and identified and recommended minority-owned firms for the minority purchasing program.

The Plant City Program, like most other affirmative action programs at Starr, focused on African-Americans and Latinos. According to the 1978 annual report, the task force responsible for Starr's operations and minority communities in Texas was "working within the cultural framework of the predominantly Mexican-American population living in its geographic area of responsibility."[116] The company also had other smaller programs and initiatives in particular plants or offices, such as a 1976 program, designed by Starr and a national marketing institute, to "provide a direct source of minority retail marketing candidates for recruitment."

Through the 1970s and 1980s, company leaders measured and reported the efficacy of their affirmative action programs in terms of numerical employee representation, as required by the federal government (Skrentny 2002). Starr's reports in the mid-1970s note specific or vague increases in the representation of racial minorities and women, particularly but not solely in professional and managerial positions. They cite the Pipeline Program as instrumental in increasing the representation of minority employees in clerical, technical, professional, and managerial positions to 6.2% in 1973, from 2.1% in 1965 (see Figure 2). At this time, people of color made up over 12% of all Starr employees, double their representation in 1965.[117]

Female employees, who seemed not to participate in the Pipeline program, constituted over 13.3% of technical personnel, 12.4% of professionals, 2% of officials/managers, and 1% of the sales force in 1973. A white women and a black man became members of Starr's board of directors in 1972, as well, and the company hired its first female corporate officer, the vice

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[116] Starr Annual Report 1978.
[117] Starr Annual Report 1973.

president of public relations, in 1973. By 1978, four of the company's 35 officers, including the vice president of engineering, were women.

Starr leaders did not entirely disregard issues concerning women and people with disabilities. The annual reports and newsletters make passing references to initiatives in a couple of plants for hiring "handicapped" employees, science programs for female college students, and a slide and tape presentation for employees about "the career satisfactions of Starr women working in jobs, such as transport drivers, forklift operators and line mechanics." A 6-page article in the 1981 Starr Employee Newsletter describes "the Victory of the Spirit" among Starr workers with disabilities. In this article, the company's manager of affirmative action programs proclaims the company's concern with both regulatory compliance and good management. The article tells of receptive supervisors and some workplace accommodations, but it does not mention a single program or partnership for recruiting and promoting these employees.[118]

As Starr managers implemented organizational programs and offices to promote equal opportunity and affirmative action, they simultaneously downplayed any possible discrimination within the company and gave no reasons for the low numbers of white women and people of color employed at the company. Of course, any such admission would make the company liable to employment discrimination suits, which was certainly not in managers' interests. A 1982 article about affirmative action in the company newsletter states, "For a major part of this nation's history, various prejudices have prevented equality in the job market. Today, anti-discrimination laws guarantee a fair opportunity for employment to all persons of the protected classes."

[118] The article emphasizes how individuals with disabilities make them good workers because of their "individualistic," "vigorous," and "self-sufficient" attitudes.

Such sentiments came out in a story that Jack, an African-American human resources executive at Starr, told me about a racial sensitivity training in the late 1970s. The training occurred at Hill & Frank, a company that did not became a Starr subsidiary until in the late 1980s, so the training did not occur at Starr, as I define it (Starr Corporation, in contrast, now defines the history of Hill & Frank as also Starr's history; this is common practice among large conglomerates). In addition, Hill & Frank had a reputation as being less receptive to people of color than did Starr. That said, Jack's account provides a window into both racial prejudices on the shop floor at this time and corporate leaders' cautious language about these prejudices.

In the 1970s, Hill & Frank had implemented a short-term affirmative action initiative to promote many of "the most qualified" hourly employees of color—mostly black employees—into supervisory positions. Jack, who had worked for Hill & Frank at this time, explained to me that the new African-American supervisors had few opportunities for advancement, lacked the appropriate skills and "would run into unchecked biases that the [company] leaders were perhaps unaware of." The purpose of the early trainings, Jack recalled, was to help employees examine "suppressed thoughts and biases" that they had learned in more homogenous settings and from the media. Jack understood these trainings as the corporation's attempt "to catch up with the civil rights movement." He explained,

> [What was] going on outside, in the media… is creeping into the workplace. And
> if not discussed and if we don't form an opinion and perspective and expectations
> around it, what we'll see is what I'll call it ugliest manifestations in discussion in
> the lunchroom or on the shop floor.

Jack's account suggests that white employees acted in racially discriminatory ways towards African-Americans as they advanced into more powerful jobs. This was a phenomenon in workplaces across the country that included violent attacks and even the murders of racial minority and female employees and that continues today, as documented in numerous employment discrimination lawsuits (MacLean 2006; Nielsen, Nelson and Lancaster 2008; Nielsen and Nelson 2005; Sugrue 2001). Jack also reveals company leaders' cautious language about such practices, more than twenty-five years after the events.

Minority Subcontractors and the Rhetoric of Economic Development

President Johnson's Commission on Civil Disorders found in 1968 that minority businesses were largely excluded from the U.S. economy, and it called for remedial action. These business accounted for less than 1% of all sales and, in 1969, received only .03% of the total dollars award to federal contractors (Black 1983). New legislation and executive orders between 1968 and 1971 and again under President Jimmy Carter in the late 1970s established two government offices and programs to encourage the U.S. government and, eventually, government contractors to support minority businesses. Public Law 95-507, enacted in 1978, had particularly far-reaching provisions. The law amended the Small Business Act and Small Business Investments Act of 1958 to encourage federal contracting and subcontracting with what lawmakers called "socially and economically disadvantaged" small businesses.[119] The law required that large federal contractors make a strong commitment to subcontracting with small, small minority-

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[119] These businesses initially included African-American, Hispanic and Native American owners; Asians and Pacific Americans were added in 1979. The Small Business Administration, as well as the courts and other government agencies, subsequently made decisions about who counted as "disadvantaged" based on political or bureaucratic circumstances, rather than empirical data (La Noue and Sullivan 2001).

owned, and small women-owed businesses and submit detailed subcontracting plans. Federal agencies had to set annual goals for such contracting, and the Small Business Administration monitored these efforts.

Starr leaders first drew attention to the company's relationships with minority businesses in the company's 1972 annual report. These relationships included contracts with minority-owned construction firms, minority banks, minority industrial suppliers, a black insurance agency, and a black advertising agency. Although political and academic attention has focused largely on affirmative action in employment, many of Starr's annual reports devote considerable space to these subcontractors. In the CSR section of the 1983 annual report, three of the 18 paragraphs are devoted to minority businesses and six are devoted to affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Starr created fewer specific programs to promote "disadvantaged" suppliers than programs for affirmative action in employment, and the company provided less detailed information about the programs it did have. For example, in 1976, the company inaugurated **"**a new approach to corporate-wide purchasing from minority vendors" which "increased substantially" purchases from these vendors." By the end of the 1970s, the company had relationships with around 80 banks, included those owned by black, Mexican-American, and American Indian businesspeople, and provided over $18 million in credit to banks. By 1985, its Minority Purchasing Program investments totaled $25.2 million, up from $14.4 million in 1982.

Through the mid-1980s, corporate leaders framed the company's contracts with minority businesses as "relationships" that would contribute to "minority economic development" in two respects. These contracts helped to economically revitalize racial minority communities, and

they benefited the participating minority businesses by providing sources of revenue. The 1985 report elaborates:

> In addition to purchasing as a means to further minority economic development, the company continues its close, long-standing working relationships with minority-owned banks. Corporate management is steadfast in its commitment to devote financial resources to the improvement of economic conditions in minority communities. Likewise, Starr's support provides opportunities for minority banks to expand their customer based beyond the local community, thus providing them with a greater degree of financial stability.

Like their rhetoric about employment, Starr leaders' economic development rhetoric emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for minorities, the altruistic benefits of these activities, and numerical measures of success. Furthermore, their minority business rhetoric pointed to the benefits to both the owners of disadvantaged small businesses *and* to minority communities more generally. Such language approximated more closely popular discourse about racial uplift. This was not the language used in the legislation, which stressed "improving opportunities" for small business to "compete successfully in the open marketplace."

These findings depart from existing scholarship about companies' rhetoric of workplace affirmative action and equal opportunity. Much of these findings are based on unsystematic or anecdotal evidence. Lauren Edelman (1992) asserts that there were two primary themes in the professional management literature by the early 1970s. The first was that employers should demonstrate good faith efforts at complying with EEO/AA law in order to avoid legal challenges

(and this was a safer route than hiring or promoting employees based on quotas). Second, formal EEO/AA policies are compatible with managerial concerns of efficiency and productivity. Edelman and her colleagues also developed a typology of affirmative action officers that includes "The Professional." Like the professional management literature, these officers construct EEO/AA law

> as a simple matter of fairness and good personnel policy. By equating EEO/AA requirements with those of good personnel management, Professionals reframe EEO/AA goals in terms of traditional managerial interests: efficiency and productivity." (Edelman et al. 1991:87).

This construction avoids a commitment to a substantive or procedural construction of law (or a commitment to management or protected employees). The personnel management profession has institutionalized this construction of EEO/AA as the primary compliance strategy through the professional management literature, workshops, networks, journals, and conventions which diffuse and legitimate the model.

In a more systematic study of employees who handle companies' alternative dispute resolution programs for issues of employment discrimination, Edelman, Howard Erlanger, and John Lande (1993) found confirming evidence for these claims. For employees who oversaw ADR, "Fair treatment is seen as a means both of compliance and of attaining a productive business environment…"

My findings suggest that companies did not just fashion affirmative action as a matter of efficient human resource management or good faith compliance. While these dynamics certainly were in play, company leaders also communicated some of the altruistic and redistributive

rationales that the federal government had put forth for remedying disadvantage. My data source, annual reports, may shape these findings, as I am capturing discourse that company leaders used to communicate with stockholders, rather than the language used by EEO/AA personnel within the company. But such public discourse is a key realm in which company executives constructed and conveyed the meaning and purpose of workplace affirmative action.

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The Changing Context of the 1980s

The 1980s ushered in a far more conservative, politically hostile climate for workplace affirmative action. The conservative New Right movement had gained momentum over the 1970s as activists developed stronger institutional structures and forged alliances with neo-conservatives, corporate leaders, and white working class Americans (Blumental 1986; Davis 1986). Conservative leaders attracted many of these supporters by opposing the model of government advocated by black civil rights activists (MacLean 2006). Many white, working-class workers, for example, already were suspicious of a distant, tyrannical government bureaucracy that would violate their rights (Sugrue 2001).

President Richard Nixon had made affirmative action a wedge issue between white and black workers, as part of a broader agenda to dismantle the liberal politics of the New Deal (Skrentny 1996; Sugrue 2001). Conservative activists built on this and similar rifts as they sought to eliminate political reforms intended to ameliorate racial and gender discrimination and promote social equality. They gained popular support by discrediting federal intervention and

stigmatizing the beneficiaries of state welfare and employment programs as unworthy or greedy. Long critical of affirmative action, conservative leaders reframed popular rhetoric about civil rights, justice, and inequality to argue that affirmative action was reverse discrimination (MacLean 2006). By the mid-1970s, conservative advocates began to speak of their vision in terms of "colorblind" equality (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

The New Right movement made parallel appeals to corporate leaders by disparaging federal and state regulatory intervention. The Vietnam War and Watergate, the rise of Japan in global markets, and the so-called oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 caused economic and political instability in the U.S. and slowed down corporate profits. Businesspeople were alarmed with the economic crisis of stagflation of the early 1970s—or, the combination of inflation and recession—the rising federal deficit, and the country's diminishing global power (Sobel 1993). They also disliked what they perceived as government overregulation and the in-roads made by consumer activists. In Starr's annual report of the 1970s, the letters from the chairman and president assure stockholders of the company's stability and its prospects for continued growth, but they reveal company leaders' pessimism about the business and political climate. They cite economic turbulence abroad and inflation in the U.S., accusing the U.S. government of overregulating business and berating consumer activists for launching unfounded attacks.

Corporations and corporate interest groups gradually eventually helped fund, legitimize, and institutionally build the conservative cause. The 1980 election of Ronald Reagan as U.S. president was a major political triumph for the New Right. Reagan built his presidency on promises of dismantling big government, welfare hand-outs, and quota programs, legitimizing and further popularizing conservative activists' anti-affirmative action agenda.

Starr Corporation participated in this political shift while it also continued to support workplace affirmative action and minority organizations. The company contributed to both civil rights and New Right organizations. In the mid-1980s, the company gave money to National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the League of United Latin American Citizens and causes such as the Michigan Hispanic Scholarship Fund and battered women's shelters. It also contributed to conservative think tanks, foundations, and other organizations such as the Richard Nixon Presidential Archives, the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute (which received one of the company's largest grants). Starr executives likely had ties to the Reagan administration: a commemoration of a Starr board member in the early 1980s, published in an annual report, noted that this executive "valued his long-time personal associations with Dwight Eisenhower and Ronald Reagan. He acted as confidant and advisor to these two American presidents. They shared a common belief that economic independence is essential to the preservation of individual freedom."

In the face of rising rates of employment discrimination lawsuits, Reagan dramatically slowed the growth of the budget for agencies such as the OFCCP and EEOC, reduced their staff, and appointed hostile leaders (Wood 1990). Reagan also appointed federal judges who would oppose affirmative action and government regulation in general (Kelly and Dobbin 1998). Such actions crippled the government's enforcement of EEO policies and workplace affirmative action programs (Kelly and Dobbin 1998; U.S. Government Accounting Office 1993), and thus minimized the consequences that employers faced for discriminatory practices.

The EEOC's processing of discrimination case filings nearly came to a standstill, and the agency produced questionable findings in its investigations, namely, a disproportionate number

of discrimination cases with no sufficient cause for discrimination (U.S. Government Accounting Office 1993). Compared to individual lawsuits, the OFCCP's affirmative action compliance reviews were considerably more effective for encouraging employers to promote female and racial minority managers, but deregulation and staff cuts under Reagan significantly decreased the efficacy of these compliance reviews (Kalev and Dobbin 2006). A number of high-profile Supreme Court cases furthered weakened the legal foundations of workplace affirmative action (Kelly and Dobbin 1998). Meanwhile, the movement of people of color into well-paid blue collar jobs and managerial positions during this period stalled (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007).

Yet, to the surprise of the Reagan administration, business leaders did not want to see workplace affirmative action entirely decimated or devolved to the state level. Large corporations and business interest groups worried about conflicting state policies and more lawsuits (MacLean 2006). Within companies, human resource managers who specialized in affirmative action, with an interest in protecting their jobs and maintaining their professional legitimacy, also formed a constituency for affirmative action (Kelly and Dobbin 1998).

During the 1980s, corporate leaders at Starr also continued to trumpet the company's affirmative action programs for employees, and they further developed these programs. The company began an EO/AA training program, and 3,500 managers and professional employees from the company's corporate offices and various business units completed this program in 1984. The company also formed affirmative action strategy teams of operating managers and personnel specialists in all of the company's business units. The Affirmative Action Task Forces

continued to coordinate many of the company's CSR activities for minorities, although they were reduced to seven cities.

The accounts of affirmative action in Starr's annual reports from the mid-1980s mention the numerical representation of women and racial minorities, but only in professional, managerial, and officer positions. As Figure 4 shows, people of color made up 8.4% of managers and officials and 13.8% of professionals by 1987. Women were 19.6% of officials and managers (compared to 2% in 1973) and 42.1% of professionals (compared to 12.4% in 1973).

Starr began to set goals for the percentage of "disadvantaged" businesses to be sub-contracted, following the 1978 law that required federal contractors to submit such goals. Starr's goal was to spend 10% of the total dollar volume of the company's purchases with minority-owned businesses. Over the 1980s, the company surpassed this 10% goal and increased the value of its investments with minority-owned banks. In 1986, the company made $25.9 million in purchases from minority-owned businesses—up from $14.4 million in 1982. Its financial dealings with minority banks included investments of $3.1 million with 64 banks,

Through the mid-1980s, the company continued to represent its inclusionary programs under the guise of CSR and in the language of public well-being. In 1985, company leaders describe Starr's "equitable employment practices," along with the company's "high-quality products and services" as Starr's "most important contributions to the communities it serves." The report notes that "various affirmative action efforts," charitable contributions, and employee volunteerism "add another significant dimension to the relationship between corporate and community well-being. These efforts serve to encourage the development of human potential and thus strengthen society as a whole."

Thus, throughout the 1970s and during much of the 1980s, corporate executives at Starr adopted federal policies and programs of affirmative action, equal opportunity, and minority contracting, and the company's primary initiatives to promote workplace inclusion were structured around federal requirements. Likewise, company leaders endorsed a public rhetoric about race, difference, and inclusion largely premised on the U.S. government's discourse of affirmative action and equal opportunity. They rationalized their affirmative action programs for minority and female employees—particularly black employees—as a means to create "opportunity" and progress towards numerical goals. Company leaders departed from lawmakers by justifying minority subcontracting in terms of the broader benefits to minority communities and by framing of the general issue of workplace inclusion as a matter of corporate responsibility, not legal compliance.

There were two primary themes in the professional management literature by the early 1970s (Edelman et al 1991; Edelman 1992). First, to avoid legal challenges, employers should demonstrate good faith efforts at complying with EEO/AA law (and this was a safer route than hiring or promoting employees based on quotas). Second, formal EEO/AA policies are compatible with managerial concerns of efficiency and productivity. Edelman and her colleagues also developed a typology of affirmative action officers that includes "The Professional." Like the professional management literature, these officers construct EEO/AA law

> as a simple matter of fairness and good personnel policy. By equating EEO/AA requirements with those of good personnel management, Professionals reframe EEO/AA goals in terms of traditional managerial interests: efficiency and productivity (Edelman et al. 1991:87).

This construction avoids a commitment to a substantive or procedural construction of law (or a commitment to management or protected employees). Personnel management professionals have institutionalized this construction of EEO/AA in professional management literature, workshops, networks, journals, and conventions, which in turn diffuse and legitimize the model of EEO/AA as compliance.

These findings about EEO/AA advocates and rhetoric were based on anecdotal evidence, although Edelman, Howard Erlanger, and John Lande (1993) found confirming data in a more systematic study of employees who handle alternative dispute resolution around issues of employment discrimination. For these employees, "Fair treatment is seen as a means both of compliance and of attaining a productive business environment…"

II. The Emergence of the Diversity Project at Starr

Company leaders at Starr first financially supported a "diversity" initiative in 1987 and began extensive diversity programs in 1992. In large measure, these initiatives grew out of the company's programs for affirmative action and minority businesses. However, other discourses, programs, and practices at Starr also helped to establish the foundation for diversity management practices and rhetoric at the company. These included organizational and product diversification, the growth of niche and international markets and corresponding changes in consumer and workforce demographics, and trends in human resource management. Company leaders' discourse on these topics introduced and, in all likelihood, helped to popularize what would become key elements of diversity management ideology. In these ways, company leaders

strategically relied on diversity rhetoric and initiatives to frame the terms of institutional inclusion.

★ *Framing the Terms of Human Resource Management and Minority Inclusion: The Precursors to the Diversity Project*

Product Diversity and Business Diversification

Corporate executives first used the terms "diversity," "diverse," and "diversification" in their rhetoric about the company's products and business strategy, long before they used such language to describe employees. After World War II, corporate managers developed merger-oriented companies or "conglomerates" in response to new federal laws and anti-trust regulations that limited anti-competitive, unfair, and monopolistic business practices, particularly within a single industry (Fligstein 1990; Sobel 1993). Parent companies often acquired businesses to which they had no direct relationship. Business managers called this process "diversification" and ideologically justified it by suggesting that firms could best compete economically by controlling their finances (Fligstein 1990).

Elements of the rhetoric that Starr executives used to talk about product differentiation and business diversification in the 1970s and 1980s appeared again in their rhetoric about employee diversity in the 1990s and 2000s. In the 1920s, as U.S. companies in many industries increasingly sold goods to consumers rather than to other producers, differentiation in product development and marketing became more important. Market differentiation accelerated in the postwar boom with the rise in discretionary money and consumer demand for more varied

products. Starr's annual reports from the 1960s and early 1970s use the term "diversity" almost interchangeably with "variety," another descriptive word with a positive connotation. They refer to the company's "wide diversity of products" and "the strength of diversity."

In the 1980s, Starr pursued what the CEO described as "a plan of 'diversification through acquisition.'" Starr's business strategy had been cautious throughout the 1970s; the company continued to report record sales and world wide expansion, with products sold in over 130 countries, but growth in the company's profits had slowed. Departing from standard practices among other large U.S. companies (Sobel 1993), Starr did not tried to acquire other companies.

In the late 1970s, Starr's new CEO, eager to diversify the company into other industries, oversaw Starr's merger with another U.S. company, Brattle & Sons. The new corporation had a wider range of product lines and areas of business, although Starr continued to function as an independent subsidiary business. The company experienced problems with management and was hurt by the early 1980s recession. By 1985, 90% of the company's top management had been replaced, although the middle managers, the chairman of the board, and most of the board members remained. Business historian Robert Sobel (1983:269) describes the 1980s—when one-third of Fortune 500 companies were acquired, merged, restructured or made private by investment banks—as "the era of the corporate raider and his investment bankers." These takeovers led to the rise of shareholder activism and massive lay-offs of workers.

During this period of organizational restructuring and diversification, company leaders increasingly relied on rhetoric about business diversification and elaborated a rationale of the benefits of diversification. In 1982, the president and CEO wrote in their opening letter,

The company is a well-balanced mix of comparatively recession-resistant businesses and others more directly affected by economic conditions. This diversity provides steady growth in periods of cautious consumer spending, such as 1981 and 1982, and should provide more dynamic progress when the marketplace is robust.

As depicted here, a diversity of products, markets, and areas of business operation would provide institutional benefits to the corporation, namely, economic stability and growth. By the end of the decade, company executives announced that such benefits had come to fruition, writing "Our large scale and varied product mix help us generate growing returns for investors and bring the benefits of diversity and quality to customers and consumers, as well as opportunity to our employees…." Diversity also would bring rewards to the people who purchase and consume Starr's products. Such statements from company leaders reflected their awareness of consumers' *demand* for diversity.

Like contemporary diversity ideology, some of the company's statements from the late 1970s and the 1980s associated diversity with people's differing viewpoints . The 1979 report claims, "Starr's preeminence as a … marketer stems from its broad, coordinated approach to each of the diverse marketplaces in the many nations where the company competes. These marketplaces… reflect a wide range of attitudes toward nutrition, ingredients, packaging, price, value and other important aspects of food product marketing."

The notion that different perspectives, attitudes and ideas could help the business—a central component of contemporary diversity ideology at Starr—also gained currency in the

1980s. The 1987 opening letter from the CEO and president states, "No action we took in 1987 was any more important in the longer term than the… changes of a number of our top operating and staff executives. We are convinced that a successful organization requires occasional changes in assignment that provide developmental and testing experiences for talented managers as well as an infusion of new and different perspectives and experience." The reports made similar statements about the value of "exposure to a variety of attitudes and ideas" to salespeople.

Company leaders relied on this discourse of diversification as they implemented and justified corporate restructuring and worker layoffs. This rhetoric was emblematic of another trend: company leaders described both products and people using similar concepts and rhetoric.

Niche Markets, International Markets, and Changing Workforce Demographics

During the 1960s, virtually all of the consumers portrayed in the text and images of Starr's annual reports were white women. These images began to change in the 1970s. The 1970 annual report features a few photographs—including one printed on the glossy cover—that depict black and white men and women using Starr products or socializing. The 1977 report includes photographs of black and white adults and children at family reunions together. Although the 1969 report notes that its consumers include more "working wives," it was not until 1978 that the annual report heralded the year of the (white) working woman. On cover of the 1978 report, a woman's briefcase sits open, revealing corporate memos, business reports, Starr products, flowers, and women's sunglasses. A two-page photograph features a white woman in a business suit. The accompanying text reads, "She doesn't look like a revolutionary, but the working

woman's lifestyle is creating new markets and changing others. In the United States alone, she comprises about half of all women."

Starr leaders, cognizant of changing demographics in the U.S., sought to expand their consumer base in the early 1980s. A section in the 1982 report, "Consumers in a Changing World," points to the growing number of working women and black, Hispanic, and Asian households, as well as changing household formations and an aging populace. Starr first targeted its advertising to Americans of color in the mid-1970s, when the company hired a black advertising agency. Between 1974 and 1976, the company expanded its marketing to reach African-Americans. It ran advertisements on black radio stations and in black newspapers in thirty cities. Company representatives approached retailers in three cities to participate in product promotions targeting black consumers. And, in 1976, the company began "special… ethnic programs" for marketing its products to Jewish, Spanish-speaking and African-American consumers. Company leaders rationalized these as "an essential aspect of the Company's total effort." In 1984, for the first time, the annual reports include images targeting what we now commonly call ethnic niche markets: black parents and children at a family gathering and a Latina woman socializing with white friends at a party.

Between the late 1960s and the mid-1980s, Starr leaders used some similar language to talk about products, racial minority consumers, and, to a lesser extent, female consumers. A number of reports refer to a balance between specialization and universalism in the company's products and marketing. The 1982 annual report includes a discussion of "Consumers in a Changing World." It states, "Increasingly, [U.S.] households are Black, Asian, or Hispanic. While each of these ethnic groups retains a strong sense of identification, they typify other

consumer households in most respects." The company's foothold in international markets had continued to expand, and the 1982 annual report describes products and sales outside of the U.S. in similar terms: "Product adaptations in formula or design are often needed to better serve local custom, but there is less and less differential in how people of the world live."[120]

Company leaders depicted a similar tension between its support for minority employees and its support for all employees. Following a discussion of affirmative action and minority businesses in the 1972 annual report, company leaders write, "The importance of special interests, however, does not diminish the common needs shared by all in our society."

Trends in Human Resource Management

In the mid-1980s, company leaders also began to modify their rhetoric of minority inclusion in ways that foreshadowed certain elements of diversity management ideology. Company leaders at this time framed their social responsibility activities in general and minority inclusion in particular in terms of strategic human resource management (SHRM). SHRM imported the logic of economics into personnel management (Kaufman 2000). In theory, SHRM promises to coordinate better th evarious human resource practices within an organization and connect them more directly to other strategies of organizational management, with the objective of shaping employee behaviors in ways that give the company an advantage over its competitors (Schuler and Jackson 1987). The growing popularity of SHRM and other management trends followed a period in which HRM had become more professionalized, with new university programs

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[120] Critics sometimes referred to international sales of standardized U.S. products, foreigners' adoption of American styles and patterns of middle class consumption, and state support for this capitalist expansion as "Coca-colonization" (Wagnleitner 1994).

providing specialized credentials. The field also had taken a stronger legal dimension to help companies avoid lawsuits related to civil rights, occupational safety, and other concerns. This coincided with corporate veneration of Japan and popular management techniques in Japanese firms as efficient and forward- thinking.

Leaders at Starr no longer simply described company social responsibility. Instead, they presented social responsibility as a calculated activity that involved goal-setting and demonstrable results. For the first time, the annual reports in the 1980s feature charts and graphs depicting the growth in Starr's charitable contributions over time and the breakdown of spending among the key focal areas. The reports include such observations as, "the company is committed to its citizenship goals and monitors annual progress." Similarly, they emphasize the need "to make affirmative action a part of every-day business management." According to a 1983 brochure, the Affirmative Action Task Forces were "an effective tool" that enabled senior managers and employees in different facilities to "avoid duplication of effort, improve their effectiveness and increase community awareness."

Like diversity management rhetoric in the 1990s, company leaders' rhetoric of strategic corporate responsibility in the 1980s asserted a link between the company's charitable activities and its business results. An article about affirmative action in a 1982 internal company newsletter opens: "…in the long run, a company's success will be determined by the social responsiveness of its actions, as well as the quality of the products it sells." However, company representatives did not elaborate on the specifics of how CSR would lead to such success.

Corporate Diversity Management in the 1990s

The advent of diversity rhetoric and programs at Starr coincided with major organizational changes to the company and with the rise of corporate diversity management among employers across the country. Near the end of the 1980s, Starr and Brattle & Sons demerged, in step with government deregulation and responsive trends in corporate governance that favored instead single-industry firms that maximized shareholder value (Fligstein 2001). But the business strategy premised on acquisitions, mergers, and massive job cuts had not ended. Soon after the split, Michelson Companies, Inc., another large corporation, acquired Starr and combined it with Light & Co., which made similar products. Profits increased dramatically in the first few years, although the company's large size presented some limitations. Starr soon faced lagging sales, and corporate leaders oversaw numerous restructurings, laying off thousands of workers and closing tens of plants.

In another major restructuring in the mid-1990s, company executives merged Starr and Light's management and operations and brought in new corporate leadership. In the early 2000s, Michelson made some shares of Starr available to the public. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, whether Starr was its own business or a subsidiary, its products largely remained in the same consumer products industry.

Starr first announced its support for a "diversity" initiative in the late 1980s, amidst the early stages of the Michelson buy-out. The company's 1987 Citizenship Report that year—which focused on affirmative action, numerical representation, and minority economic development— also describes Starr's collaboration with other large corporations to produce *Valuing Diversity*.

This was a 3-part film "designed to help employees understand cultural and gender differences in the workplace. The message of the film is that appreciating diversity is good business."

Organizational scholars single out 1987 as a seminal year in the rise of corporate diversity management practices and rhetoric (Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Lynch 1997). The Hudson Institute issued a report, *Workforce 2000*, which analysts point to as the immediate impetus for the wave of corporate diversity programming and consulting that swept companies across the country in the early 1990s. The authors of *Workforce 2000* cautioned that women, racial minorities, immigrants, and older workers would soon make up the majority of the workforce (Johnston and Packer 1987). Companies would need to revise workforce policies and practices designed primarily for white male employees. A multi-million dollar "diversity consulting" industry soon developed to offer trainings, books and manuals, and other advice for companies wishing to accommodate these changing workforce demographics.

In 1988, diversity was not among the 40 most popular corporate training options documented in one study (see Ryan, Hawdon and Branick 2002). A sea change happened within a few years. By the early 1990s, many large U.S. corporations had institutionalizing new diversity programs and rhetoric about diversity management (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Kelly and Dobbin 1998; Ryan, Hawdon and Branick 2002). Companies and other organizations created policies and training to address cultural awareness, sexual harassment, accommodations for people with disabilities, and other concerns (Riccucci 1997). Managers and diversity consultants justified these programs as morally right and as beneficial for profits, worker productivity, and organizational effectiveness (Lynch 1997). These proponents claimed

that by hiring employees who demographically represented their consumer base, companies would produce better products and expand to new markets (e.g., Thomas 1994).

Support for diversity also likely came through shareholder activism, if not directed at Michelson then through activism directed at peer companies. Corporate ownership shifted dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century. In the early 2000s, institutional investors like mutual funds, insurance companies, and banks held more than 57% of corporate equity in the U.S. and had become increasingly active in influencing corporate strategy, performance, and governance (Ryan and Schneider 2002). (As a point of comparison, institutional investors held just 16% of corporate equity in the 1960s, and shareholders depended on non-owning managers to grow their investments). Of the social policy resolutions proposed by shareholders between 1988 and 1998, diversity was the fourth most popular resolution after South African apartheid, the environment, and human rights (Graves, Rehbein and Waddock 2001). Although diversity was not a major concern among Michelson shareholders who proposed such resolutions, Starr undoubtedly was subject to broader normative pressures to support diversity from industry organizations and other Fortune 500 companies that had to manage considerable shareholder activism in this area.

Leaders at Starr invoked diversity rhetoric and programs in another strategic way. As they developed their diversity management programs, they relied on the language and programs of diversity management to acknowledged racial identity while at the same time downplaying issues of racial disadvantage.

★ *Acknowledging Racial Identity, but Downplaying Racial Disadvantage*

Early Diversity Programs and Rhetoric at Starr: The Business Case for Diversity

Starr adopted diversity management rhetoric, employee diversity trainings, and other programs in 1992. According to my retrospective interviews and internal company documents, senior leaders at Starr led the call for these changes. It took some time for company leaders to differentiate between affirmative action and diversity programming. A 1991 newsletter explained, "the Starr Equal Opportunity Affairs Department monitors and reports the progress of diversity." In early 1992, company leaders renamed this department as the Diversity Management Department. They created a formal position for a Diversity Director. The first director's responsibilities were to oversee affirmative action and company involvement with local minority communities, although a separate department, Corporate Affairs, eventually managed the company's community involvement.

Despite the broad scope of diversity rhetoric, company leaders' measures of diversity remained largely the same. They continued to report on the representation of women and people of color, particularly in managerial jobs; grants to minority and women's organizations; and purchases from minority vendors. Similarly, the company highlighted its charitable contributions to various minority and women's organizations—such as a literacy and jobs training program primarily for "disadvantaged Hispanic people"—as programs that promoted diversity. As Erin Kelly and Frank Dobbin have argued, company leaders simply changed their rhetoric for describing some of their existing workplace inclusion programs and the people who participated in them. In the early 1990s, the company added "diversity" to its rhetoric about workplace

inclusion. The 1993 report declares the company's "commitment to diversity, equal opportunity and fair treatment." Starting in the 1995 annual reports, the word "diversity" often replaced "minority" or was used to refer to women and people of color at once. By 1998, a goal of the company's CSR activities was to "strengthen and promote employee and cultural diversity in the workplace and among vendors."

Diversity management was not, however, merely "new wineskins for old wine," as Kelly and Dobbin suggest (see also Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001 for a critique). Senior Starr executives initiated the creation of diversity affinity groups in 1991, and they discontinued affirmative action task forces soon thereafter. The first affinity groups represented women in manufacturing, women in sales, Hispanics in Sales, and Blacks in Sales. These and other employee affinity groups continue to this day, serving as what Starr managers describe as the major "drivers" of diversity programming. The affinity groups focused much of their work, especially in those early years, on organizing celebratory commemorations, and the first Black History Month occurred at corporate headquarters in 1991.

In the early 1990s, the company developed "Diversity Works," a multi-day training session intended to help employees "confront their own prejudices and misconceptions and learn to understand and value differences."[121] By 1993, more than 6,000 employees had participated in this training. Corporate leaders continued the company's minority-purchasing program, although by the end of the 1990s they called it a diversity suppliers program and made more references to women-owned companies. Other initiatives included a Career & Family Program for employees. In the mid-1990s, one interviewee described Starr's restructurings and merger with Light & Co.

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[121] Starr HR Newsletter, 1993; see also Starr Diversity Timeline, internal memo, 2005.

as "the largest diversity initiative that was going on—bringing together the [corporate] cultures" of the companies involved.

Starr leaders gradually adopted a new diversity rhetoric, one that by the late 1990s was distinct from their affirmative action rhetoric. Early on in the decade, the key distinguishing feature of diversity rhetoric in the Michelson annual reports was a concern with cultural tolerance. Likewise, cultural tolerance and cross-cultural understanding were key themes of Starr's new *Valuing Diversity* film and the "Diversity Works" training. Starr held its first Diversity Family Day Celebration at the company headquarters in 1993. A company newsletter that year shows a picture of employees gathered around a stage, next to a large teepee. According to the caption, "The event, planned by employees, showcased a variety of cultures and nationalities through entertainment, arts and crafts, and food and workshops." Such themes were also central to multiculturalism, a closely related ideological movement that was gaining popularity in the early 1990s. Multiculturalism, like diversity, tended to designate cultural differences, rather than racism, stressing identity politics without economic rights (di Leonardo 2008; Gordon and Newfield 1996).

Other key features of early diversity rhetoric—in addition to its ambiguous relationship to affirmative action and equal opportunity and its emphasis on culture and tolerance—included the construction of diversity as an organizational value, an instrumental argument for the economic benefits of diversity, and calls for institutional action, especially to support managers and executives. In 1995, the annual reports made "diversity" a new topical area of CSR, one that encompassed programs for education, community affairs, sub-contracting, tolerance initiatives, and human resources policies "keeping with our need to attract, retain and develop a workforce

as diverse as the products we sell." Similarly, the reports presented "diversity," along with innovation, ambition, and integrity, as "a crucial part of our core values."

The company's business case for diversity, which argued that "a culturally sensitive, diverse work force is critical to our success," became increasingly elaborate over the decade. Company leaders' rhetoric about "diversity" largely referred to employees and vendors and did not include beneficiaries of charitable programs, as had their affirmative action rhetoric. In fact, the company downplayed its charitable contributions to minority organizations and causes after 1994, making only an occasional reference to an arts organization or to educational scholarships for blacks, Latinos, and American Indians.

The Theme of High Occupational Status Employees

Employees, especially senior managers and executives, became prominent themes in the reports in the 1990s compared to previous decades. The photographs provide one illustration of this. In the 1960s and 1970s, 26% of the pictures included a Starr employee. In the 1980s, 19% of pictures did. In the 1990s, 30% of the pictures did. Photographs of employees adorn the cover of the reports for three different years in the 1990s, and in each of those years, employees— particularly those in powerful positions— were a major theme in the text,. The reports in the 1990s also show more images men and women of different racial and national backgrounds interacting at work and collaborating on teams.

Likewise, in the mid-1990s, the reports began to describe the workforce as not just "talented" and "dedicated" but also as "diverse." Moreover, the reports made the company's support for employees in high occupational status jobs—senior managers, executives, and

professional positions—a more prominent theme. The text suggested that one way the company promoted diversity among them. A number of the annual reports cite different company initiatives—such as training "to leverage diversity into opportunities"—that would improve employee performance and develop employees' leadership skills.

Diversity ideology helped to legitimize the presence of people of color and women in the workplace, especially their achievement of leadership roles. At Starr, company leaders' rhetoric of affirmative action in the 1970s and 1980s had sometimes included statements about how employees hired through these programs were still "qualified." The director of urban affairs and equal employment opportunity—an African-American man—explained in a 1982 company newsletter article, "'A 41-year old black, crippled woman who also happens to be a veteran may be good for equal employment statistics, but that cannot be the reason Starr hires her. She must also be able to perform the job itself.'"

The new rhetoric and programs of diversity management marked a step away from the project of racial equality. Diversity rhetoric does not frame the company's support for people of color as a remedy for racial and economic disadvantage. Diversity management decisively changed the rationale for inclusion to efficient human resource management and corporate profits.

CHAPTER SEVEN. STARR CORPORATION

THE POLITICS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The Vice President of Global Human Resources at Starr Corporation, Rashan, was a passionate, outspoken African-American man who had been with Starr for almost 20 years. He was well-liked and respected among many diversity managers in the company. During our interview, he read aloud to me his vision of diversity, from a presentation he had recently given at the company:

> I believe it's a welcoming place. Where people can be themselves, bringing with
>
> them unique and priceless gifts of insight, artistry, and culture. A place where
>
> people are respected for what they bring, not for what they are. Where extraneous
>
> attributes of race, religion, ethnicity, and gender do not influence how the person
>
> is perceived. It's a workforce that demographically looks like America.

Then, Rashan repeated to me a statement he often used—a boilerplate phrase among many professionals in human resource talent management—"My point is that it's the right people in the right jobs at the right time with the right skills. That's the key." He outlined for the me reasons that the company supports diversity: the moral imperative, because "it's the right thing to do;" the legal imperative; and—the reason that animated him the most during our interview—"the business imperative." Women and African-Americans are major consumers of Starr products. "How do you get to them if you don't have anybody on staff that has some affinity to their

culture? Has some awareness of what prompts them to do things? Can help you do ethnic marketing?"

As I demonstrate in the previous chapter, executives and managers at Starr began treating race, gender, and other social differences as matters of "diversity" in the early 1990s. They were in step with many other large U.S. companies, such as Panasonic and Dell, who have made such proclamations as "Diverse ideas drive our business success" and "A culture as diverse as our technology" in their advertisements and web sites (see also Baker 1996; Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Litvin 2002; Litvin 2006).

Many employers also have adopted diversity programs, particularly diversity training. In their study of private sector employers, sociologists Alexandra Kalev, Frank Dobbin, and Erin Kelly (2006) found that 39% of employers used diversity trainings by 2002.[122] Such programs are even more common among Fortune 500 companies. According to a 1998 survey by the Society for Human Resource Management, almost 75% of Fortune 500 employers had a diversity program and an additional 9% planned to implement one (Ryan, Hawdon and Branick 2002).[123] These programs vary considerably in their initiatives, assignment of responsibility, and scope. Industry organizations such as *Fortune* have created rankings of corporate diversity to measure and advertise "best practices" in diversity management.

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[122] Their sample included 708 employers that have been in existence and have filed EEO-1 reports since 1971.

[123] The survey questions were answered by human resource representatives from 179 Fortune 500 companies that employed SHRM members, with a response rate of 36%.

Starr Corporation is a major international consumer products company with over $35 billion in annual net revenues, making it one of the largest firms in its industry in the world. This Fortune 500 company is headquartered in a Midwestern suburb, with most of its research and development centers in the U.S. It employs around 100,000 people in over 80 countries, has close to 200 manufacturing and processing facilities, and sells products in 140 countries. Starr's products and brands are commonplace in stores and homes around the world.

In this chapter, I show how corporate executives and managers constructed and mobilized the ideology and initiatives of the diversity project in the contemporary corporate context. I examine managers and executives who were active in Starr's diversity programming. I focus primarily on the company's Global Diversity Management Department (or "Diversity Department"), the leaders of the nine Employee Affinity Groups, and what company leaders called "Diversity Business Advisors," or human resource managers who oversaw diversity management within their organization or function. I also discuss a few senior executives who oversaw diversity management and senior managers of other departments considered relevant to diversity, such as multicultural marketing.

Generally, managers and executives at Starr invoked "diversity" and spoke about diversity management in reference to two different but related agendas. Sometimes they were referring to the numerical representation of women and people of color in high-level jobs and the company's support for those employees' professional development. Other times, they were referring to the importance of creating a workplace environment where everyone felt that they could be themselves, regardless of their various idiosyncrasies.

Starr managers and executives did not use identical rhetoric about diversity, but these employees expressed far more agreement on the meaning and purpose of diversity and the challenges of diversity management than I found in my other sites. I understand this agreement not as a consensus of individuals' personal viewpoints. Rather, it indicates company leaders' ability to define and legitimize diversity management and the pressures that employees face to adopt leaders' definitions. I base this interpretation on my findings about company leaders' efforts to formulate and communicate the company's official statement on diversity, called the "business case for diversity," and on my observations of employees who ventured outside those parameters.

All of my research participants at Starr were "on board" with diversity management and all were office employees. Most had managerial responsibilities, at a minimum. As in my other chapters, my analysis here is not representative of the views and perspectives of "regular" employees not involved in diversity management. I have only anecdotal and secondhand evidence about these employees. For example, a diversity manager once mentioned to me a 2003 employee satisfaction survey that showed employees were polarized: some felt that diversity, in this manager's words, "goes too far" and others felt "it does not go far enough."

Trends in corporate human resource management, changing workforce demographics, the pressures of market competition and organizational legitimacy, and the retreat of the federal government from workforce affirmative action all have shaped how executives and managers talk about and manage issues of race and diversity at Starr Corporation. Organizational leaders at Starr have strategically used diversity rhetoric and diversity programs to respond to different institutional and organizational pressures in the early 2000s. These pressures include imperatives

to manage a heterogeneous workforce, avoid discrimination lawsuits, attract and retain employees of color and women, and expand into niche "ethnic" markets in the U.S. and into international markets abroad.[124]

Towards these ends, company leaders strategically invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives in a number of ways. They constructed a symbolic identity for the company to appeal to multiple audiences, including applicants and white and racial minority employees alike. They framed the terms of employee inclusion in terms of strategic human resource management. They endorsed affirmative action but redefined the meaning of this program and downplayed the benefits of a mandatory, regulated workplace integration program. They changed the constituents of programs for inclusion—especially by focusing initiatives on employees with high occupational status but also by extending resources to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees and to senior managers from outside the U.S. Also in the name of diversity, they

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[124] Many organizational scholars have argued that organizations face tremendous pressures to demonstrate their legitimacy to regulators, to peer companies, and to key other constituents (Edelman 1992; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Powell and DiMaggio 1991). Organizations manage these pressures by adopting normative organizational symbols and structures used by other organizations within their organization field. I have no reason to think that Starr was not under similar pressures. However, like other broad structural forces, these pressures were not particularly salient in the daily politics and pragmatics of diversity management.

Starr certainly shared many of the same symbols and structures of diversity management common among other Fortune 500 companies. I occasionally heard side comments about two other companies that diversity managers at Starr wished to emulate (or work at) because they were known as being particularly "good on diversity." The Diversity Management Department and some of the company's affinity groups sometimes distributed popular human resource literature and organized reading groups around popular books, such as *Breaking the Bamboo Ceiling*. The diversity director had a background in diversity consulting and brought that knowledge and those networks to the organization. The Diversity Department staff seemed somewhat concerned with the company's standing in various corporate diversity rankings and spent considerable time on the applications. Although such rankings are probably not as powerful as rankings of colleges and universities, they create institutional pressures and likely affect how both employees and external groups think about corporations and their efforts to support women and people of color (see e.g., Espeland and Sauder 2005).

But individuals in my study did not seem to experience these primarily as "external pressures" nor were their everyday activities primarily motivated by a concern with legitimacy. (The same could be said of other broad structural pressures that set the context of diversity management, such as the rise of global neoliberalism.)

defined middle class cultural and human capital, and they marginalized hourly and unionized workers' needs, viewpoints, and agendas on race, difference, and inclusion.

First, I turn to the broader legal, political, and economic context shaping the diversity project at Starr in the early 2000s, and I outline the key features of the diversity project at Starr. I then show the different ways that company leaders and managers have strategically invoked diversity ideology and initiatives to manage employee inclusion by, for example, endorsing affirmative action but downplaying its efficacy. I conclude by discussing how the diversity project has transformed the politics of racial inclusion in the workplace.

I. How Law, Organizational Politics, and Economics Shaped the Diversity Project at Starr Corporation

The most salient institutional factors shaping the diversity project at Starr Corporation have been changing employee demographics, changes in civil rights law, deregulation of affirmative action, the rise of diversity management as a human resource practice and related isomorphic pressures, and the neoliberal globalization of markets.

Human Resource Management and Employee Inclusion at Starr Corporation and Other U.S. Companies

Starr is a large, bureaucratic firm divided into ten key functions such as human resources, manufacturing, and sales. These functions are represented across numerous internal "organizations," such as global supply chain, and across businesses that Starr has acquired. Between the late 1970s and the early 21st century, Starr acquired, merged with, or was bought by

more than five major companies, and it acquired and sold numerous product lines and smaller companies, some of which operate as semi-independent companies. During the 2000s, the company went public and expanded its operations internationally. At the time of my study, approximately half of the 100,000 employees worked outside of the U.S. About 33% of the U.S. employees were exempt, meaning that received annual salaries over $23,600, were neither unionized nor paid hourly, and typically had administrative, professional or executive responsibilities management. Another 30% of U.S. employees were unionized.

In the early 1990s, executive leaders at Starr first institutionalized an extensive diversity management program using many of the same organizational structures that the company had used for affirmative action. Soon, company leaders differentiated the focus, design, and terminology of their diversity programs from their affirmative action programs. Senior leaders designated a new Diversity Management Department and director and oversaw the creation of four diversity affinity groups for women in manufacturing and women, Hispanics, and Blacks in sales. They began a minority-purchasing program and a two-day training session to make employees —in the words of one brochure— "more aware of the impact differences have on the way they react to one another and value those differences." By the early 2000s, Starr's diversity management initiatives were centralized, well-developed, and bureaucratic.

The standard story told by diversity consultants and human resource professionals was that affirmative action had outlived its usefulness, or at least it was of limited utility (e.g., Cox 1994; Thomas 1994). Corporate leaders, they argued, needed better tools to manage differences among employees, especially on teams. This involved improving the workplace environment, addressing the frustrations of women and racial minority employees, promoting these groups into

the least accessible but most powerful positions, mirroring changing consumer markets, and leveraging employee differences to improve the bottom line. My interviewees who had been involved in affirmative action and diversity management at Starr in the early 1990s provided similar accounts, remembering, for example, how the company managers' and their own understanding of inclusion changed with the shifting workforce demographics.

The implementation of Starr's new diversity management program was correlated with some demographic shifts in the overall workforce and the company's management. By 2004, the percentage of employees of color in Starr's overall was 26% (up from 6% in 1965 and 14% in 1982), while women still made up over one third of Starr's employees (36%). Notably, the implementation of diversity management at Starr coincided with an initial increase in the percentages of female employees and employees of color who were exempt. As Figure 6 illustrates, between 1989 and 1996, the exempt workforce changed from 24.7% to 31.6% female and from 10.1% to 15.5% African-American, Latino, or Asian. By 2005, both of these figures had increased more modestly to 35% female and 18% minority. Around this same time, about 22% of Starr's executive officers were women, which was about the same as the national average of women in top executive positions (Caiazza, Shaw and Werschkul 2004) and higher than the average of Fortune 500 companies (Catalyst 2006).

The 1990s and early 2000s were a period of continuing change in the U.S. workforce more generally. Blacks, Latinos, and Asians and—above all else—white women made some in-roads into the managerial and professionals ranks of U.S. companies, in large measure because of anti-discrimination employment policies, affirmative action in higher education, and the growing importance of educational credentials (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007).

Figure 6. Women and people of color at Starr Corporation, as a percentage of the U.S. exempt workforce, 1989-2005
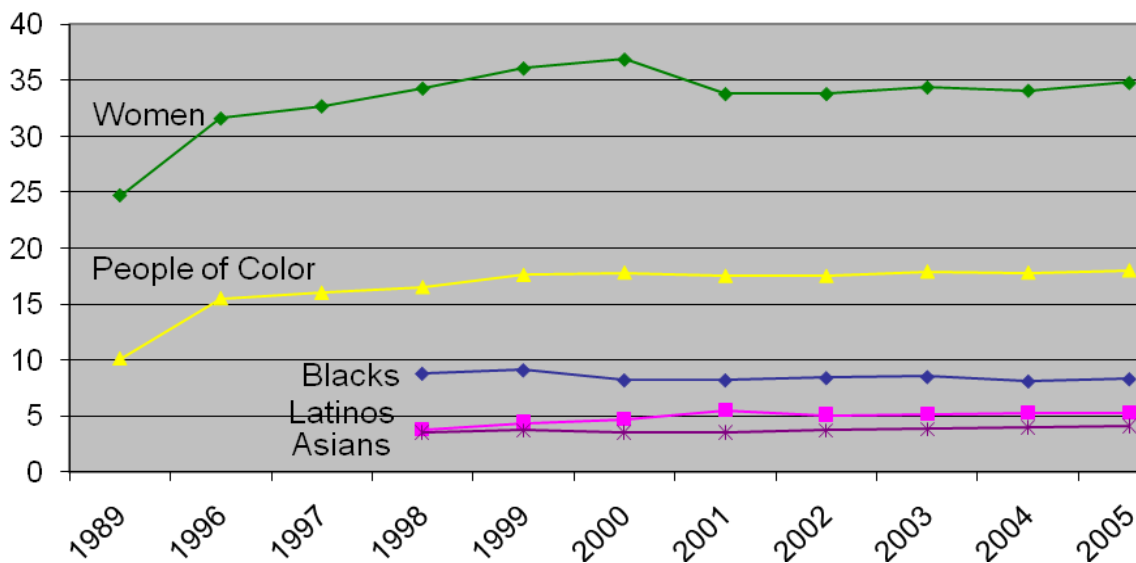
Sources: 1989-1996 data: Starr Corporation corporate archives. 1997-2004 data: Starr annual Key Human Resource Statistics reports. 2005 data: 2nd Quarter Diversity Results, Starr Diversity Management Dept.Note: 1996-2001 data are for August. 2002-2004 data are year end. 2005 data are for Q2.

Immigration reforms had led to an explosion of immigrant employees from Asia, Latin America, and Africa (Graham 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2006). Companies headquartered in the U.S. continued to move their operations out of U.S. cities, the Rust Belt, and often the country. In addition, large companies in developed countries around the world were expanding internationally, outsourcing their manufacturing, service, and white-collar jobs, which also changed workforce demographics (Collins 2003; Couto et al. 2006; Sassen 1998; Wilson 1996). As the baby boomers aged but remained employed, companies had more older workers and employees of multiple generations working alongside each other (Hankin 2005). Many of these

trends—and others, such as the growth of non-nuclear family arrangements—also affected companies' consumer base.

More employees also enjoyed legal protection from discrimination by the early 1990s, as changes in civil rights law had extended minority rights to more groups. The U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 had been motivated, in large measure, by politicians and activists' concerns about black men. Later amendments and new laws extended protections from discrimination for more groups such as older workers and people with disabilities. By the 1990s, more than 75% of U.S. workers had some kind of protected minority status (Wakefield and Uggen 2004). Compared to the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights law and civil rights politics at the turn of the 21st century were relatively less focused on African-Americans. As economist James P. Smith observes (1993a:79 in Wakefield and Uggen 2004), black Americans became a "minority within the protected minority class, which itself represents the majority." Civil rights laws help to explain at least some of the increase in people of color and women in the workforce (although the greatest benefits came before 1980 (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007)).

The broader political climate around race and inclusion shifted in the 1990s with the Democratic Congress and then the administration of President Bill Clinton. Despite resistance from President George H. W. Bush, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which reinstated a number of employee civil rights that the U.S. courts had chipped away at in the previous decade (Stainback, Robinson and Tomaskovic-Devey 2005). As sociologist Kevin Stainback and his colleagues (ibid) show, workplace integration improved only slightly under Clinton, who "entered office with a more supportive racial equality rhetoric, although his support

for [affirmative action] was ambiguous, and EEO/AA enforcement agencies' budgets were not substantially increased during his term."

Deregulation under Reagan had crippled enforcement of workforce affirmative action, and conservative opposition to workplace affirmative action continued in the 1990s and early 2000s with congressional bills that sought to outlaw affirmative action in employment and federal contracting. Successful campaigns against affirmative action in states such as California and Michigan helped to end affirmative action in public employment. Activists advocating "colorblindness" have been less successful at completely eliminating affirmative action in the private sector, although some advocates such as Roger Clegg, the President and General Counsel of the Center for Equality Opportunity, began to question the legality of corporate diversity programs (Clegg 2007).

Women, people of color, visible gays and lesbians, and non-U.S. employees were joining the workforce at Starr and other so-called "global companies" and enjoying some legal protections in what many scholars refer to as the "new economy." Since the mid-1970s, corporate and political leaders have eschewed unions and other forms of institutional support that provided job security and stable, livable wages for many U.S. workers through much of the twentieth century. Since then, government deregulation, more intense global competition, and the growing influence of pension fund managers have changed wages and workplace conditions profoundly (Fligstein 2001; Harvey 2005; Uchitelle 2007). Strategies of corporate control changed in this context, as well. Company executives eschewed the model of large conglomerates focused on growth and size in the 1980s in favor of single industry firms that

maximized shareholder value (Fligstein 2001). This occurred at Starr with the de-merger from Brattle & Sons in the late 1980s.

In the neoliberal economy, wage inequality has grown and employers increasingly have used temporary and contract workers while job security has deteriorated (Krugman 2002; Smith 2001). The work week stretched much longer than forty hours, especially for middle and upper level employees. Companies rely heavily on management strategies that communicate such prerogatives to workers through subtle mechanisms of social control. They have created, for example, informal and flexible workplaces with incentives for individual initiative and personal growth (Kunda 1992) as well as "unofficial expectations" that employees would work extra hours under tight deadlines set by customers, not bosses, and stay in contact through cell phones and beepers (Fligstein and Sharone 2004).

Although data about the income of Starr employees are very limited, available evidence indicates that employees within the company had very unequal earnings. In 2002, the CEO of Starr earned around $2 million, which was the median income of CEOs in the 100 largest U.S. companies. This amount was 63 times what Starr's hourly workers in North America earned, on average, in 2001 ($31,735). [125] Sixty percent of Starr employees in 2001 were paid hourly, mirroring the national average for the U.S. (U.S. Department of Labor 2003), but this salary figure is likely increased by the representation of unionized workers at Starr, considerably higher than the 13.5% unionization rate for the total U.S. workforce (Hirsch and Macpherson 2003). Moreover, such earnings do not account for non-salary compensation such as stock options. In the 2006, the Starr CEO had a total compensation package in the order of $18 million.

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[125] The average salaried worker at Starr earned $66,950 in 2001.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Starr executives and managers relied on diversity ideology, programs, and policies to manage employees in the new neoliberal order. At the very least, "diversity" provided company leaders with a convenient, pithy term to describe employees and workplace inclusion policies, given changes in civil rights law, employee demographics, and consumer markets. Leaders' understanding of workplace inclusion had also changed, from a focus on numerical representation to a concern with how to run an organization that relied heavily on teamwork and that employed some managers, professionals, and executives who were not white men.

Human resource personnel long have pointed to diversity management and sexual harassment programs as legal inoculation against discrimination lawsuits (Dobbin and Kelly 2007). The U.S. courts have begun to encourage employers to address harassment and bias in the workplace in order to avoid liability, and some courts have mandated that employers adopt diversity training and other anti-discrimination programs (Krawiec 2003; Sturm 2001 in Dobbin and Kelly 2007). Power of Difference, the introductory diversity training at Starr during most of my study, included a review of major discrimination lawsuits against corporations, implying that this training would help prevent such problems.[126] Starr had separate trainings and policies for diversity and for anti-discrimination or "zero tolerance."

Company leaders also have relied on the diversity project to refashion race, difference, and inclusion for neoliberal economic competition on an international scale. Rhetoric and symbols of diversity are among the many cultural resources that corporate executives and managers have relied upon to symbolically reconstruct companies as cutting edge, global,

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[126] At the end of my study, I was told that the Diversity Department was going to remove or downplay the discussion of lawsuits.

cosmopolitan, and attractive workplaces for white collar employees. The business case for diversity, now found in the U.S., the United Kingdom and other developed Anglophone countries such as Australia, "links investments in organizational diversity initiatives to improvements in productivity and profitability" (Litvin 2002). Meanwhile, corporate leaders have relied on tools of human resource management, including diversity trainings, to prepare white-collar employees for the skills they will need to manage employees in other countries and from around the world.

The Diversity Project at Starr

Key organizational features of Starr Corporation shaped the content and contours of diversity ideology and diversity initiatives. Like other corporations, the company is formally structured and goal-oriented. Executives represent the rest of the workforce. They determine policy and influence such matters as resource allocation, membership, and structural relationships among members. And Starr, like other companies, faced normative pressures to adopt practices used by peer companies (DiMaggio and Powell 1983), particularly the large companies in its industry and the companies with which it competes for "talent."

Large in scale, Starr's workforce was dispersed around the globe and split between manufacturing centers, field offices, and regional and global headquarters. Starr had a Global Diversity Management Department, but managerial responsibility for diversity was decentralized across the company's businesses and functions, so executive support for diversity and diversity programming differed considerably in these various units. At the same time, the CEO set much

of the tone on diversity, and during this study, many diversity mangers believed that he did not prioritize diversity.

Diversity Ideology at Starr

Like the political and organizational elites I studied at Michigan and in Rogers Park, Starr executives had made "diversity" their orthodox, race-conscious ideology of race, difference, and inclusion. Their diversity ideology shared a number of features with diversity ideology in my university and neighborhoods cases. Like Michigan, diversity ideology at Starr was quite clearly defined, codified in its most official form as Starr's business case for diversity. Company executives and managers described "diversity" as including, but encompassing more than, people of color and women. As illustrated in the speech by the Starr CEO that opens Chapter Two, the company's formal definition of diversity also included viewpoint, style, education, and geography (see also Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001). The Power of Difference training for employees at the corporate headquarters entailed a discussion of a "Dimensions of Diversity" diagram from a corporate diversity book. The employee who led the exercise at one training session—a woman who described herself as "100% Greek"—explained that "primary" forms of diversity like age, ethnic heritage, race, and physical ability could not be changed or played a major role in your socialization, while "secondary" forms like geography, economic resources, and political views were mutable. The types of "difference" were malleable and often vague and, compared to the discussions of diversity and cultural sensitivity in company materials in the early 1990s, they had become increasingly broad over time.

Diversity at Starr was also a positive moral value and an aspirational vision of how the workforce should look and act. This ideological vision contrasted with metaphors of a workplace dominated by the "old boys club," limited by "glass" and "bamboo" ceilings, and not accepting of a little quirkiness and creativity. Sometimes company leaders implicitly contrasted diversity with these other models of workplace inclusion. At other times, they made this contrast explicitly and relied on it to criticize problems at the company.

When Denise, Starr's executive vice president and chief information officer, spoke at the 2005 StarrWomen's Summit, she drew a contrast that highlighted this aspirational vision of diversity. A white woman with a Midwestern accent, with her hair pulled back in a ponytail and dressed in a dark blazer, Denise talked about women's successful achievement of leadership roles in the company and asked the audience of a few hundred women, "It may have served us well, but have we gone too far?... Our essence of women being women has been compromised. But it should not be the price of success." A slide of a chameleon appeared on the large screen behind her, and she put a toy chameleon on the podium beside her for effect. Denise described chameleons as "very good at survival" because they can defend themselves by blending in with their surroundings.

Then next slide showed a small, bright green parrot. "Unlike chameleons, their brilliant color complements not blends with their environment," Denise explained. They survive "by living in treetops." Then a picture of Bette Midler appeared: "another singing parrot" wearing "fabulous green shoes." Denise asked the audience,

> Think about you—is the true you evident in our workplace at Starr? Are you
>
> blended, invisible… or are you expressing the true essence of yourself?... Quite

frankly, I think we could see more of that. We've blended into the background and lost some of our essence.

A few women sitting next to me in the back row were not impressed. One woman (who asked not to be identified) rolled her eyes and said, "Yes, the answer is to accessorize!" But the thematic contrast between chameleons and parrots resonated with many of the women at the Summit. They repeatedly brought it up throughout the conference and raised it in conversations at later events.

Denise's speech points to yet another attribute of diversity ideology at Starr. Company leaders—like their counterparts at Michigan and in Rogers Park—often called for institutional action and action by people in positions of power in order to promote diversity. Now, at this particular presentation, Denise and the women who asked questions during the Q&A session did not focus on changing organizational policy (although the crowd got very excited when someone announced that Starr had ended its policy of prohibiting open-toed shoes). But Denise described a support group she had formed with other female senior managers and her efforts; she wanted to turn her tears—she apparently cries frequently—into "something good for the team." Another woman in the audience recounted a team meeting she had organized at a spa instead of at the typical golf course. These were consequential, organizational actions, not merely lip service. They somehow changed, or at least challenged, some of the dominant norms of workplace behavior at Starr.

Finally, company leaders and managers underscored the institutional benefits of diversity with their formal rhetoric about the business case for diversity and their more casual interpretations of the business case. Their rhetoric echoed the human resource personnel

literature and advice about workplace diversity. Sociologist Fredrick Lynch (1997) shows that, in the early 1990s, diversity consultants typically made one of two arguments for "embracing diversity": a moral argument grounded in notions of social justice and a business argument that relied on the language of profits and productivity. As he predicted, at companies across the country, including Starr, the business argument became the most popular (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001; Litvin 2006).

Diversity Initiatives at Starr

Executives and managers at Starr identified a range of organizational offices, practices, and employee populations as relevant to diversity. Although these included multicultural marketing, supplier diversity, and charitable contributions, diversity management at Starr has focused primarily on human resources. And, while the CEO and other leaders often mentioned such forms of diversity as thought and style, these categories were not the central focus of diversity programming at Starr. Most of its programs emphasized African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans, and women, particularly networking within these groups, their representation and advancement into managerial and executive positions, and their experiences of the workplace "culture." To a lesser extent, the programs addressed sexual orientation—in such forms as an affinity group that represented gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender (GLBT) employees—and national origin—through, for example, cultural awareness training for non-U.S. executives and senior managers who worked in the U.S.

Most of the company's diversity programming occurred in the U.S. and focused on exempt employees. Starr had limited programs for non-exempt employees and for employees outside the U.S., in countries ranging from Canada to Egypt to Russia.

Starr's Diversity Department coordinated, oversaw, or was somehow involved in many of the company's diversity initiatives. The Director of Global Diversity, an African-American woman, reported to a vice president who, in turn, reported to the Senior Vice President of Human Resources. She oversaw four staff: two African-American and two white employees, one of whom was male. The company claimed to have a corporate Diversity Council led by the CEO, but my interviewees often insinuated that this council was inactive. The Diversity Department was entirely separate from the Legal Department.

The Diversity Department oversaw the collection and reporting of diversity metrics. They coordinated the activities of the company's diversity affinity groups, which by then had grown to ten. They determined the platform of options for diversity training, identified consultants to conduct the more advanced trainings, and shaped the content of some of this training. They also played a key role in creating and disseminating the organization's official statement on diversity, known as the business case for diversity.

The Diversity Department also worked with corporate executives and managers throughout the company. One mechanism for doing so was a committee of Diversity Business Advisors, or senior managers that—in the words of the Diversity Department staff—"champion diversity in their organizations" through their oversight of employee hiring, advancement, or initiatives and their personal expertise with issues of diversity. Two of the five staff in the Diversity Department had oversight of affirmative action compliance as one of their many

responsibilities. They also compiled information for various corporate diversity rankings produced by *Diversity, Inc.*, *Working Woman Magazine*, and other industry publications.

Diversity programming included employee recruitment, "feel good" activities such as heritage month celebrations, networking opportunities, workshops, conferences, guest speakers, and employee training, among other activities. Many of these activities were coordinated by the company's Employee Affinity Groups, which senior managers often described as the "drivers of diversity" because they were company leaders' conduits to many female, racial minority, and GLBT employees. The councils had large budgets—some larger than the Diversity Department's annual budget of $500,000—held huge conferences, and sponsored the advanced diversity trainings. The Diversity Department did not work as closely with most other departments that company leaders considered relevant to diversity, with the exception of recruitment.

Starr's diversity management program was, in many ways, anomalous among private sector employers in the U.S. Kalev and her colleagues (2006) found that 11% of the employers in their study had staff positions—either officers or committees—responsible for overseeing affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, and/or diversity management. However, key features of Starr's program, such as the Employee Affinity Groups, were characteristic of what diversity consultants and industry organizations like the Association of Diversity Councils have identified as "best practices" around diversity. Starr has placed high in many of these rankings and has received numerous awards from various industry organizations for its employee and supplier diversity programs and for the achievements of individual female and minority executives.

Diversity management at Starr was not characterized by overt and dramatic political conflicts. Organizational leaders at Starr set the parameters on what organizational members could say publicly about diversity management (or at least what they could say comfortably). This does not mean that diversity management was free of tensions or disagreement.

During this study, three issues were of particular concern to Starr "diversity managers," by whom I mean middle and upper level managers—but the executives—who oversaw diversity programs, who voluntarily led an affinity group, or whose job responsibilities focused on hiring, retaining, and promoting women and people of color. One issue involved the affinity groups. Many diversity managers believed they needed to redefine the purpose of these groups and restructure them. The other key issues were employee retention, especially retention of employees of color, and the perceived lack of senior executive support for diversity programming. Diversity consultants and management scholars often underscore the importance of senior leader commitment for successful diversity management (Cox Jr. 2001). At the time of my study, many diversity managers suggested to me and implied during meetings that the CEO and many other senior executives were unsympathetic to the issue of diversity.

These areas of focus were tied closely to the larger fortunes of the company. While Starr was known among employees as being large, bureaucratic, and slow to change, the company had undergone considerable organizational restructuring in the early 2000s when it went public and integrated its North American and overseas units. This involved a major reorganization of the company's businesses and functions and raised the pressures around the company's stock value. It also brought in new executives and managers from outside the U.S., some of whom did not seem to understand or care about diversity issues. Many diversity managers perceived the latest

CEO as overly focused on the bottom line, to the detriment of the organizational culture and to diversity, in particular. The director of Global Diversity also was new, which added to the sense of transition and uncertainty.

Furthermore, the company was making profits, but the price of Starr's stock was dropping. A consulting firm was auditing Starr. The company was about to undergo yet another wave of organizational restructuring—called the "Business Process Simplification" Initiative. Groups of mostly male consultants wearing suits occasionally marched through the hallways of Starr headquarters, making office employees nervous. In the early 2000s, the company had eliminated 16,000 positions. The year before my study began, the company had announced a global restructuring plan that would lay off an additional 6,000 workers, most based in the U.S.. At the end of my study, company leaders announced that they would extend this restructuring and eliminate 8,000 additional positions. Such changes were not new. As we have seen, the company has gone through numerous restructurings, acquisitions, mergers, and de-mergers since the 1970s. In the 1990s alone, these involved over 12,000 layoffs and nearly $100 million charges.

These developments posed threats both to so-called diverse employees and to diversity programs, putting many diversity managers on the defensive.. During my study, they created a context of uncertainty, stress, and distrust among Starr employees working on issues of diversity, as they have for white collar workers at companies undergoing similar downsizing (Brockner 1988; Freeman and Cameron 1993).

II.   How Company Leaders Invoked Diversity Ideology and Initiatives to Manage Employee Inclusion

Company managers and executives who worked on diversity issues invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives in a variety of strategic ways to manage these and other issues within the company. One common theme that cuts across these various strategic uses is their reliance on the diversity project to affirm racial difference while at the same time they downplayed problems of racial inequality and disadvantage.

★ *Constructing a Symbolic Institutional Identity*

Company leaders relied on rhetoric and symbols of diversity to construct a symbolic institutional identity for Starr as an inviting, inclusive place for professionals to work. According to Corrine, an energetic white woman who had been at the company for almost 30 years and served as director of corporate staffing, Starr recruited "diverse" employees through professional and campus associations such as the National Society for Hispanic MBAs, a college internship program, and employee referrals. By and large, this recruitment targeted African-Americans and Latinos; the company, for example, did not recruit gay and lesbian applicants. The company's website was a particularly important source of such "talent," as were corporate recruiting websites like Monster.com. She explained that the company expected that employment agencies they used for retained or contingent searches would provide "diverse candidates." Sometimes, representatives from the Diversity Department or the company's affinity groups would assist with diversity recruitment, but more often the corporate function that had a job opening would identify representatives from their function.

The notion of "diversity" was usually not the main message in the company's job advertisements—the primary messages were about career opportunity and individuality—but the images and text of the ads incorporated some of the core themes of diversity ideology. The pages on Starr's web site devoted to job opportunities at the company had separate sections that described the company's support for "diversity of all types," women, and people of color, alongside descriptions of rewarding careers, work/life balance, and safety at the company. Photographs in the company's job postings and in magazine advertisements depicted cheerful, professionally dressed women and men of different ethnic and racial backgrounds, while the text described the company as providing challenging and high quality career opportunities and as an environment that values individuality, where each person's distinctive viewpoints would contribute to the business's success.

Company leaders depicted this image of Starr as inclusive and progressive for other audiences. Business magazines and research centers frequently profiled the company and its diversity programs, particularly the employee affinity groups, in their publications. The company also sought to communicate this image to consumers, other organizations, and local communities at-large by sponsoring community events such as a Hispanic and gay and lesbian festivals and by donating over $13 million each year through its global charitable giving program to causes such as humanitarian aid. Sherilyn, the senior director of global community involvement for Starr—an African-American woman who wore large, funky jewelry—recounted for me speeches that she had given at national and state non-profit organizations that worked in a field that Starr had long targeted for charitable contributions. She had "raised the issues of diversity… We use the bully pulpit to say, "This is an issue that is important to Starr… We take diversity very seriously, and

we are concerned that we come here year after year and do not see diversity in this room among the leadership of [these] organizations. So what are you going to do about it?"

Likewise, the company's consumer advertising portrayed Starr's products as relevant to white, African-American, and Latino consumers alike, particularly women and families, and it ran such advertising in both mainstream media outlets and in outlets targeting women, African-Americans, and Latinos.

Company leaders also invoked diversity rhetoric and initiatives to communicate the company's symbolic identity to current employees. Such invocations emphasized the workplace as an environment where everyone could (or should be able to) express their individuality, regardless of race, gender, preference for late nights or early mornings, or any other idiosyncratic difference. Figure 7 is a graphic used on the company's intranet, portraying hands of different colors holding up the world. Managers and executives characterize the workplace environment in terms of diversity (and, in some instances, they criticized failures of that environment to support diversity). Diversity managers often observed that the workplace culture at Starr had become more "open," thanks in large measure to the company's commitment to "values related to diversity." But they also complained that the corporate culture at Starr as conformist, adverse to risk-taking, impersonal, and antiquated. Such themes were evident in Denise's presentation about chameleons and parrots.

Figure 7. Starr Diversity Logo

Company leaders also communicated the company's symbolic institutional identity to employees when they relied on diversity rhetoric and initiatives to construct what it meant to be a Starr employee. I return to this topic later in the chapter in my discussion of how company leaders relied on the diversity project to define human and cultural capital among its managers, professionals, and executives.

★ *Framing the Terms of Institutional Inclusion: Diversity as Strategic Human Resource Management*

Corporate leaders at Starr and elsewhere, along with human resource professionals and experts, have tied the issue of employee inclusion to strategic human resource management and, increasingly, to corporate profits and productivity. Executives and managers at Starr framed the

issue of diversity in these terms, and in so doing, legitimized diversity ideology as organizational common sense.

As the previous chapter details, company leaders at Starr in the 1980s began to frame the issue of minority inclusion in terms of the strategic human resource management (SHRM), which applied economic theory to personnel management (Kaufman 2000). Leaders' rhetoric of diversity management in the 1990s and early 2000s underscored even more directly the connection that SHRM made between employee behavior and firm performance. Corporate diversity rhetoric and management also reflected other popular human resource management strategies, such as teamwork and quantified measurements to evaluate progress.

For example, the Diversity Management staff and Diversity Business Advisors often spoke about strategic action and leadership in diversity programs that would produce "results" for the organization. Melissa, the Diversity Director and an African-American woman known for her hard-nosed, hands-off approach to leadership, described her vision of what the DBAs should be doing at one of their meetings. Standing in front of the room, without any notes, she spoke confidently:

> I'd like you to think of yourself not as DBAs and sincerely as the Diversity Leadership Team…. Each of you was selected for your leadership skills and influence in your organization. I like to see you as thought leaders in the organization… not just receiving information, but also pushing and introducing ideas. [You are] people with passion. We need drivers.

On a flip board at the front of the room, she began to draw a diagram. She went on to say, "Wall Street evaluates us together… Anything not done well reflects on all of us." A white woman who was director of human resources in the Operations division noted that the company had "a lot of great initiatives" but "the hump is how do we use them to get actual results?" Ricki, a white woman and associate director of human resources in sales, nodded in agreement. Melissa replied, "There is no single answer. … But don't just look at a single initiative, look at the entire strategy." She drew on the board all the elements that this strategy should include: recruiting, development, retention, and leadership actualization. "We have to think about each level. We get stuck on 1 and 2. … With Leadership actualization, you're at a point where people are so sharp we don't even think of their gender and ethnicity." Ricki and another white woman agreed: "Uh-huh!"

Later in the meeting, the DBAs reported on their activities around diversity. Ricki explained, "I've started to take more ownership and responsibility for diversity… Good things are going on, but there's no strategy driving anything. I've realized I've really got to work on the strategy over the next few weeks." One of the most oft-used terms in diversity management (and presumably, elsewhere in the company) was "opportunity." Managers rarely spoke of problems or challenges, just "opportunities."

Despite the pithy language, setting and executing such strategy was fraught with challenges. Ricki explained to me in our interview that her function needed a more cohesive strategy on diversity, but she was one person who, with the help of another data analyst, oversaw diversity and staffing for 10,000 people. It was difficult, she said, to develop programs from

headquarters and then push them onto people in the decentralized field offices. "There are not enough resources we can deploy for diversity."

The issues of strategic human resource management, leadership, and resources became even more critical to diversity management in the middle of my study, in the shadow of additional corporate restructuring.

Diversity Management and the Business Simplification Initiative

In fall 2005, Starr executives announced a new Business Process Improvement and Simplification Initiative to cut costs and "streamline" practices. The company had created a new department to oversee the Simplification Initiative and assigned a senior vice president and the consulting firm responsibility for the outcomes. The vice president announced this in a letter sent to employees. He wrote that Starr's competitors were growing faster, so the company needed to refocus and move nimbly to gain competitive advantage. The key principles were speed, flexibility, focus, simplicity, and success, achieved through strategies such as "decomplexity" and "systems harmonization." Before meetings and during breaks, diversity managers swapped rumors of what would happen. One told me, "Yes, that's the biggest story around here right now." Another talked about already feeling the effects in Sales: "The east coast region lost four Customer Category Managers in a week. The CCMs are up to here. Work/life balance is out the window."

The Simplification Initiative did not bode well for diversity programming, particularly for the affinity groups. Many senior managers believed that the affinity groups spent too much money on networking among the groups' members and "goodwill" events, such as Heritage

Months. Company leaders were cutting funding for some conferences, and the threat of more cuts loomed.

Melissa, the director of diversity, was supposed to make recommendations to her supervisors and the company's senior executives about how to reposition diversity management. She created a new PowerPoint presentation that she showed to DBAs and affinity group leaders. Invoking the language of strategic management, she counseled that "leadership" meant embracing and adopting the Simplification Initiative. She cautioned the DBAs, "You all saw [the] letter… What I really want to do is shift people's thinking to align with the process of Business Process Simplification." She warned the council leaders from Sales: "This train is rolling forward with you or without you… This is an opportunity for every affinity group to make its strategic change now."

Her PowerPoint presentation applied the language and concepts of the Simplification Initiative to diversity programs, with a focus on the affinity groups. One "opportunity" at the company was to "Reduce activities that drive a lot of work." The parallel opportunity for the affinity groups was "Reduce 'Nice To Do' activities that drive work." If the company was to "Close manufacturing facilities," then the affinity groups should "Eliminate low value initiatives."

Most of the DBAs and affinity group leaders seemed to agree with her, although a few made comments such as "These are hard!" A leader from Sales said, "We're guilty of doing a lot of low value initiatives." Leaders from Operations talked about how they had formed a single council for Operations to coordinate the councils for women and African-Americans and "subcontracted" various initiatives to that combined council. Victor, an outspoken leader from

the Hispanic Employee Group who was known for straying from the Diversity Department's agenda, qualified that he was Hispanic, said he was worried that these changes would hit hardest women, African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians, who were already sorely underrepresented among plant managers in his division. He apologized, "Sorry—I'm Hispanic—I get emotional about these things… [But] I'd rather be talking about what skills do our people need to be ready for next year. Major changes are coming." Melissa replied curtly, "I can't help you with that… I can say it emotion-less because if we're going to be viable, we have to think like the business…. This is strategic mode." Many in the room nodded in agreement. "It's an opportunity to be leaders or victims," she said.

The Business Case for Diversity

The business case for diversity was a key component of strategic plans around diversity. The business case for diversity was the official, rational justification for workforce diversity, claiming that diversity would produce positive outcomes that benefit the individuals involved and the organization at-large. An outside diversity consultant who was friends with Melissa underscored the importance of the business case at a meeting of leaders from a variety of councils. These leaders were trying to create a strategic plan to combine their councils. The consultant told them that a strategic plan starts with an assessment of the company's environment and values. Then, the plan clarifies the business case for diversity by explaining the impact of diversity on the company environment: "That's when you start changing the fabric of the culture… When you can start talking about diversity in terms of a return on business, then you're going places."

If diversity managers and executives readily lit on the language of strategic management, the business case for diversity presented more obstacles. Starr, like many large companies, had an official business case for diversity, which managers frequently would slightly modify when the CEO or director of diversity changed. One version stated:

> We care about diversity because we care about the success of our business. Understanding and leveraging diversity is critical to Starr's growth. We believe that diversity is essential for our leadership in this industry. It is fundamental to our relationships with our consumers, our customers, our employees and our shareholders.

The Diversity Department was responsible for crafting the specific language of the business case, and the Starr senior executive team ultimately approved it. Company executives and diversity managers communicated the business case (or specific elements of it) in the company's diversity mission statement, in presentations by the Diversity Department, at the introductory diversity training, and in meetings and casual conversations. Company leaders carefully guarded this message. For instance, the Diversity Department had to review each affinity groups' "diversity message" before these groups could post the statements on their web sites or include them in print materials.

Melissa characterized companies' business cases as both essential but also meaningless without substantive behaviors. As Melissa said at one meeting, that "tens of millions are spent to create statements" by "companies on the make… but they're nothing more than an exercise on paper unless people act on the ground."

Just because the company had an official statement on diversity did not mean that managers and executives readily regurgitated it. In fact, diversity managers often asked the Diversity Department staff to clarify the business case or to point to its location on Starr's web site. This came out clearly in my interviews. The business case came up in 22 of my 31 interviews. Respondents had a variety of explanations for why Starr should care about diversity, although these topics fell within a fairly narrow bandwidth. They cited, for example, reflecting the population and/or consumers (16 interviewees), getting the best talent (10), and helping employees feel accepted at work (5). One employee in the Diversity Department even confessed quietly to me after a company event, "I couldn't say the business case off hand, at least not something specific to Starr. It would be something abstract about reflecting society and the consumer base."

The current CEO's lack of attention to diversity management likely contributed to people's confusion, as did the popular practice of reifying what the CEO said and did. At one meeting, Melissa recounted what the CEO recently had said about the business case: "'Everything that we do should reflect the diversity of the society that we are…. Consumer markets, customers, even psychodynamics.'… I thought that was the best articulation of the business case."

In order to conduct my study of Starr, I had agreed to present a report about diversity management at Starr at the end of the study. I included these findings about the business case in my Powerpoint presentation for the director and staff of the Diversity Department, who were very concerned that diversity managers were able to communicate Starr's business case for diversity. My report stated, "Diversity leaders [at Starr] did not have a consistent understanding

of the Starr case for diversity… Few diversity leaders knew specific examples of ways that having diverse employees had changed … the company." Melissa and her staff immediately jumped in to say that they agreed: they needed to get the DBAs and affinity group leaders all on board with the same message.

The Diversity Department was working in a number of ways to do exactly this. At one meeting, Melissa explained that the Diversity Department was developing a new web site with the business case and would distribute appropriate messages on a CD. She said, we want everyone to be "singing from the same page." Similarly, at a major employee meeting at Gruber, a large Starr subsidiary business, the business case for diversity was a central theme. During lunch at the meeting, I asked a senior manager who organized the meeting why he had focused the agenda on diversity. He told me that the company had done an employee survey about a year and a half ago and one of the questions asked about the business case for diversity. "The employees wrote a lot of verbiage. This was a sign to me that people weren't really clear about what the business case was, and we needed to get people on board."

Company executives and managers also framed employee inclusion as a matter of "the numbers" and workplace "culture," presenting these as complementary, disparate, or even contradictory goals.

"The Numbers" and "The Culture"

The Numbers

At Starr, diversity metrics were the key organizational mechanism for measuring and tracking "diversity" in the form of demographic numerical representation. These metrics were based on

company data about women and people of color in exempt positions in the U.S. (and also exempt women worldwide). The Diversity Business Advisors had responsibility for tracking and analyzing diversity metrics for their functions and organization, while the Diversity Department reported overall numbers to the company's senior executives. The reports showed the quarterly and annual trends in the representation, hiring, promotions, and "annualized turnover" of women and people of color in the U.S., broken down by function, band, and salary grade. They provided the most detailed information on employees in the highest salary grades of 10-13 (associates and managers) and the bands of I – G (vice presidents and directors) and F – A (senior executives). The reports also ranked the various functions that had done the best and poorest jobs at achieving their goals. The reports did not include the non-unionized hourly employees or union workers who made up the other approximately 67% of the workforce.

Diversity Business Advisors and affinity group leaders relied on the numbers to understand better the dynamics among the people they oversaw or represented. Moreover, the company used diversity metrics to set priorities for programs. The diversity reports provided a standardized assessment of "diversity" at Starr, and senior executives favored them as a barometer of the company's progress on diversity. The Diversity Department was supposed to meet with senior executives twice a year and use the diversity reports to set goals for representation and hiring. At a Diversity Business Advisors meeting, some DBAs wanted to know what Melissa had talked about at her last meeting with the senior team and what she would talk about at her next meeting. Daryl, an African-American man employed as the associate director of the Diversity Department, said, that the meeting "was chaotic this year. The numbers were frustrating. It was a numbers issue. It's always a numbers issue." (It was not clear how the

company set these goals, although a few diversity managers implied that the goals for the top positions were set in reference to the overall population of the company.)

Leaders in each of the company's functions then set their own goals in alignment with these corporate goals, although the ongoing corporate restructuring, downsizing, and changes in the company's senior vice presidents often confused these efforts. For example, in the recent past, women made up about 27% of the U.S. exempt workforce in Operations, and the unit had a goal of 35.5% representation of women. But with the recent restructuring, the company changed its categories for counting employees and removed from Operations' diversity reports any divisional employees who did human resources or finance. So, women suddenly represented 20.8% of exempt U.S. employees in Operations. Likewise, operations had had 189 openings until the new senior vice president implemented "the abatement," and this number dropped to 48.

Some of the DBAs also used the numbers to set recruitment and programming priorities, or they made intimations that they should be doing so. An African-American, female DBA who worked in Finance explained at one meeting: "In terms of our diversity numbers, at the top there are very few women and virtually no POC…. We broke down the Diversity Report to bands and salary grades to see where our feeder pools were, and there wasn't much there, either. So, we've focused on recruiting experienced women and people of color" from outside the company. (This strategy was unusual, as the company usually prioritized internal candidates for the top banded positions.)

The diversity metrics sometimes motivated the DBA's work, as well. At one DBA meeting, an African-American woman who represented Information Technology explained, "From a female standpoint, we're good. The percentage of banded [female employees] is

equivalent to [the percentage of women] throughout the function. We're good on promotions… Our opportunity is with people of color. The Diversity Department cited us as one of the three lowest [ranked] functions for people of color!" Daryl joked, "You were cited!" and the other DBAs laughed. She went on to say, "We don't want to take our eye off women, and we want to get off the list… The bottom 3!"

At another meeting, a leader of the Diversity Sales Group explained that programs like large Diversity Summits for upper salary grade and banded employees were not appropriate for their employees. "The one-size-fits-all programs, with Asians and Hispanics, don't really fit. We don't have too many I's or 12's. So you're missing the pipeline." Another leader added: "Most of the people at the I-band aren't going anywhere. For people between [salary grades] 4 and 7/8, they don't know what they'll do. We lose them at [salary grades] 9-11."

While on the one hand, the company prioritized and reified the numbers, it was unclear how consequential these numbers were. The lack of accountability for diversity, particularly for the numbers, was a major theme in my interviews, and an outspoken DBA or affinity group leader occasionally would say so at a meeting. During a discussion of the company's employee performance review system, one affinity group member said that there was "a huge lack of accountability…. Managers are not held accountable for [employee] development." Victor, the candid leader of the Hispanic Employee Group remarked, "We have these goals of numbers. I'm not saying put in people who aren't ready. But forget about numbers because there's no accountability."

The Culture

Some diversity managers felt that the company was too focused on the diversity metrics and that the metrics skewed the company's programming priorities. The company legally could not collect comparable metrics for global diversity or for some groups, such as GLBT employees. The metrics also missed other forms of diversity that were more difficult to quantify, such as "style." Terry, a white leader in the GLBT Employee Group explained that the company did not actively recruit gays and lesbians, and "Part of that is the numbers game because you don't need the numbers for gay and lesbian." This leader and others also felt that the metrics did not capture important aspects of organizational culture.

Diversity managers often brought up the workplace culture during these same discussions. A number suggested that the company's popular slogan—be yourself on the job— did not apply to female employees and employees of color. One woman who worked as a senior director in Marketing and served as leader of the African-American Employee Council told me during our interview, "We still talk about numbers, which is a first step in it, but it's really more about feeling respected, feeling like you do have equal intelligence of the next person." In our interviews and at some meetings, many of the affinity group leaders explained that women and people of color at the company were treated and evaluated differently. However, diversity managers were very wary about using language such as "double standards," which might legally implicate the company. They also often tied these concerns back to their criticisms of the broader corporate culture, which they felt wrongfully emphasized conformity and resisted change or innovation.

There were few, if any, company programs targeted at changing the "corporate culture" for diversity. As I discuss below in the section about middle class cultural capital, the Power of Difference training session for new employees perhaps served that function by reinforcing the appropriate language that employees should use to talk about race, difference, and inclusion.

Starr's diversity metrics could not account for such elements of workplace culture. When senior leaders and senior managers spoke of the workplace culture around diversity, they relied heavily on metaphors as a communication device, as in Denise's chameleons and parrots. These metaphors even poked at the limitations of the diversity numbers. Melissa did just this when she outlined the Starr business case at the Gruber employee meeting. She stood on a small stage, her short hair slick back, dressed in a peach business suit, and told the audience of over 600 exempt employees about the theme of "Building a House of Diversity" She recounted a story of another company, where a black employee told his mentor at the company that he was leaving. He said to the executive, "You did wonderful things, but other than that I never felt I was 'In the House.' I was a guest." She said that she wanted everyone in the room to feel and make sure others are "in the house. This doesn't mean there are no rules," but people should get feedback and have opportunities to overcome their mistakes.

A major theme in such metaphorical statements about workplace culture was the need for people to take on leadership roles. Melissa led the audience in an exercise. She asked everyone to close their eyes and then she walked quickly throughout the crowd, repeating over and over, "If someone touches your arm, stand with your eyes closed. If someone touches your shoulder, stand and open your eyes. If someone touches your head, stand and do whatever you want." Finally,

she asked everyone to open their eyes (some white men at my table rolled their eyes and pointed to their watches).

Melissa then asked, "The people who were sitting—how did you feel?" People yelled out answers like, "Left out!" "Relaxed!" She then asked the people who had been tapped on the arm. "Disappointed!" said a black woman. And the people who had been tapped on the head? People called out, "Chosen!" "Empowered!" "Opportunity!" Melissa remarked, "Those of you sitting, many of you may resent me for not selecting you. Same for those who were tapped on the arm. But, I never said that *I* had to tap you!" The audience members laughed loudly. "Each of you is empowered to pursue and create an atmosphere of diversity." A pregnant white woman at my table said, "She's good!" while the red-haired bearded man next to her kept a blanked, bored expression on his face and said nothing in response.

The tension between the diversity numbers and the diversity culture points to another contrast that diversity managers at Starr relied upon: the contrast between diversity management, as an approach to workplace inclusion, and affirmative action. In setting up this opposition, they endorsed affirmative action but also redefined and downplayed its significance.

★ *Endorsing but Redefining and Downplaying Integrationist Workplace Programs*

Managers and executives at Starr endorsed workplace affirmative action as a worthwhile program while they simultaneously downplayed its utility and its appropriateness for the company.

Diversity Management versus Affirmative Action

Affirmative action and diversity management both focused on improving representation, hiring, promotions, and terminations of women and people of color in the workplace. However, Starr managers and executives sharply differentiated between affirmative action and diversity management as approaches to minority inclusion (also see Figure 8). I asked Daryl, an African-American diversity manager, about the difference between the two types of programs. He taped a large piece of paper to his office wall, drew a line down the middle, and said emphatically that although the Diversity Department was responsible for both, "Starr treats affirmative action plans and diversity as two totally separate things."

The U.S. government requires Starr, as a federal contractor, to do affirmative action. Affirmative action is organized and driven by government protocols, and there are material consequences for not passing affirmative action audits, such as fines, loss of government contracts, and bad publicity. In contrast, diversity programming—in local parlance—is "driven by the business." The consequences depended on the prerogative of the CEO and vice presidents, and managers rarely suffered if they did not meet diversity goals. "Diversity," Daryl told me, "is your own business."

Figure 8. Comparison of workforce affirmative action and corporate diversity management programs at Starr Corporation

	Workforce Affirmative Action	Corporate Diversity Management
Program Requirements & Incentives	Mandatory by law, threat of legal and monetary penalties for violations	Voluntary, no penalties (stated policy of employee rewards/ compensation for success)
Program Emphasis	Improved representation of Blacks, Hispanics, and women in the workforce	Improved representation of people of color and women in the workforce; improved workplace environment
Stated Rationale	Legal compliance	Business results
Primary Organizational Activities	Administration of compliance reports	Administration of metrics reports, programs, and business case rhetoric
Minority Groups Targeted	Early on: racial minorities	People of color, women, GLBT (also white people, men)
Organizational Structure	Organized by company location, overseen by central Diversity Dept.	Organized by company function, overseen by central Diversity Dept.
Employees Covered	Employees at all levels	Focus on exempt employees

The two programs also use different measurement systems and different computer systems to track the measurements. Affirmative action metrics included all U.S. employees, and they measured employees based on their location, such as a factory. As Daryl told me, affirmative action is organized around documented plans—"just people and numbers: hires, promotions, terminations, and applications." Managers based some affirmative action goals for

lower level positions by using demographics about the population near that geographic location, while they based their goals for higher-level positions on national demographics.

As I have noted, Starr's diversity metrics only report on exempt employees in the U.S. and women globally. The diversity reports broke down these numbers by salary grade and function in the company, not by physical location, which managers considered less relevant for exempt employees, particularly in higher salary grades, because they did national searches for these employees. The company used a separate computer system, SHARP, that accommodated data on employees worldwide to generate the diversity metrics.

Affirmative action programming at Starr in the 1970s and 1980s included Task Forces and community outreach, but my understanding was that the company no longer did such activities in the name of "affirmative action" (although it is possible that managers at some of the company's factories and field offices perceived their recruitment efforts in such terms). Diversity management, on the other hand, included extensive programming and recruitment efforts. These diversity initiatives, as I have described, are structured around the company's organizational units and functions; for example, there was an affinity group for African-Americans in Manufacturing.

Diversity managers draw sharp distinctions between the two approaches to employee inclusion while noting that they had some connection to each other. When asked, diversity managers often said that they thought affirmative action was still necessary, agreeing that affirmative action was "the right thing to do." They sometimes referred to affirmative action as part of a historical evolution within the company, framing affirmative action as an early diversity initiative. During my interview with a senior executive in human resources, a white man who

had been with the company for decades, I asked where the initial push for diversity had come from within Starr. He replied:

> Initially, it was government required, as we began to have to report statistical [EEO-1 data], and I think what happened is that along the way people realized a couple of things. Not only is it a government requirement, it's the right thing to do. But what they realized is that it became a business imperative. If you were going to get the best people, then you really needed to make sure it was a diverse slate.

Diversity managers at the company simultaneously described affirmative action as outdated, imposed by the government, and not tailored the company's business needs. When Daryl explained the difference between affirmative action and diversity management for me, he waved a thick white binder with the Affirmative Action Plan for one plant and said, "This is like doing your taxes." Diversity managers and executives emphasized that diversity had a broader reach and enhanced the business. The topic of affirmative action almost never came up during meetings of diversity managers at the company headquarters, and interviewees rarely raised it without my prodding. The company's web site did not list affirmative action as a primary feature of diversity management. Diversity managers also reinforced the distinction between affirmative action and diversity management in more subtle ways. Their rhetoric implied that affirmative action was irrelevant to corporate profits, helping to discredit it as an approach to minority inclusion.

The DBAs and other diversity managers also felt that they sometimes needed to reiterate these distinctions for white male employees who "blur the two." A few DBAs noted that some senior leaders stationed outside of the headquarters in the U.S. and in other countries "don't understand affirmative action and how it is different from diversity" and think that diversity is "numbers and statistics and just quotas."

Diversity management was supposed to be strategic, not just "quota" setting. When I interviewed Ricki, she explained the problems she was encountering because her function did not have a strategic plan around diversity, "Now, it's more like, for lack of a better word, here's your quota, your goal. When really, there's no strategy in place." Likewise, diversity managers and executives claimed that success in diversity management was driven by behavioral change, not government regulations. When Melissa spoke at the Gruber event about Building the House of Diversity, she said, "Behaviors, not mandates, determine 'On the Premises' and 'In the House' results."

Such distinctions are commonplace in the diversity management literature, particularly of the early 1990s. R. Roosevelt Thomas, a prominent diversity consultant and the president and founder of the American Institute for Managing Diversity, published a popular article in the *Harvard Business Review* in 1994 entitled, "From affirmative action to affirming diversity." The article began with a list of premises that Roosevelt described as appropriate 30 years ago, such as "Adult, white males make up something called the U.S. business mainstream" and "Legal and social coercion are necessary to bring about … change." He wrote,

> affirmative action is an artificial, transitional intervention intended to give
>
> managers a chance to correct an imbalance, an injustice, a mistake. Once the

> numbers mistake has been corrected, I don't think affirmative action alone can cope with the remaining long-term task of creating a work setting geared to the upward mobility of all kinds of people, including white males.

Other consultants and management publications made similar distinctions, helping to divorce diversity management from the ideals underpinning civil rights law and to wed it instead to managerial prerogatives (Edelman, Fuller and Mara-Drita 2001).

That personnel at Starr and elsewhere make such sharp distinctions between diversity management and affirmative action sheds some light on why Diversity, Inc., a major corporate diversity industry organization, so quickly "debunked" a recent sociological study by Alexandra Kalev and her colleagues. In November 2006 (p. 74), the magazine cited their *American Sociological Review* article as one of "5 Studies We Reject," because the research:

> lumps affirmative action and diversity in the same category—an approach that positions diversity as reactionary and compliance-driven. The word 'strategy' is not mentioned once in the 29-page document, which suggests that the researchers may need to reevaluate their view of the business case.

In drawing such sharp distinctions between diversity management and affirmative action, managers and executives at Starr have endorsed affirmative action, albeit with many reservations.

★ *Changing the Constituents*

The previous chapter shows that African-Americans and, to a lesser extent, Latinos were the primary constituents for the Affirmative Action Task Forces and other past affirmative action programs at Starr. In the 1990s and early 2000s, Starr executives and managers relied on diversity rhetoric and programs to change the constituents for the company's programs for inclusion. In this section, I focus on two of these "new" constituents. In the name of diversity, company leaders designed company initiatives to target high-status exempt employees and they extended resources to GLBT employees.

This was a change from the principles underlying affirmative action. Affirmative action plans reported on employees at all levels. Based on Starr's historical materials, it is difficult to discern what types of employees the company targeted with affirmative action outreach. The company's focus probably changed as the demographics of the workforce changed. Early on, Starr likely targeted lower- and mid-level supervisory jobs and then the focus seems to have shifted to mid-level, professional, and executive jobs. Starr's early annual reports give some indication of this. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the annual reports provided data about the representation of women and people of color in the total workforce and in higher status occupations; the reports last mention the overall composition of the workforce in 1984.

Certainly, many of the potential employees targeted by affirmative action outreach were college-educated, given the company's scholarships and internships for racial minorities. However, the annual reports and company newsletter also featured activities organized by the Affirmative Action Task Forces at company plants. Affirmative action was not solely for employees in middle and senior management positions.

Employees of High Occupational Status

As I note above, diversity programs and rhetoric at Starr focused on those exempt women and racial minorities who who made up about 33% of Starr's U.S. employees, received annual salaries over $23,600, were neither unionized nor paid hourly, and typically had administrative, professional or executive responsibilities management. The U.S. federal government defines the official meaning of exempt. An employee who is "FLSA exempt" is not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act's minimum wage and overtime provisions. A non-exempt employee is eligible for overtime pay. The company also uses these categories as a cut off for determining eligibility for basic benefits such as health care coverage.

In the mid-2000s, many of Starr's major diversity programs were only for high-ranking exempt employees—those in salary grades 10 -13 (associates and managers) and the banded positions (directors, vice presidents, and senior executives)—and only banded employees attended the large conferences like the Women's Summit.

Some diversity programming did reach exempt employees at lower salary grades. The activities of the affinity groups, in particular, spanned offices, field sites, and plants across the country. Some of these groups had had little representation in the top salaried positions. The Black Sales Council, for example, spent most of their money not on large conferences but on networking for employees in salary grades 4 and lower. Some diversity programming organized through the company's functions did reach non-exempt, non-unionized employees. For example, the Diversity Business Advisor for Information Systems explained to me that their events included administrative assistants because some of them aspire to professional exempt positions.

Because the company's diversity metrics only counted exempt workers, managers' conversations about the numerical representation of women and people of color at Starr only referred to exempt workers. The company's employee networking and mentoring programs primarily supported employees in middle management and above. For instance, in the Up Close & Personal Sessions, a popular new diversity initiative, a senior level employee would lead a conversation with about a dozen employees of the same ethnicity but at a slightly lower salary grade. According to Melissa, "the idea is to share perspectives, realities, even disappointments. How often does a Grade 11 get to sit down with an F or E?"

Diversity initiatives, particularly the affinity groups, depended on the voluntary but "donated" labor of exempt employees. The leaders and active participants donated their time to these affinity groups—the group activities were not part of the leaders' official work responsibilities, nor were leaders supposed to be paid for time they spent working on affinity group activity. This was in the context of employees already feeling overburdened with work responsibilities and long work hours. When diversity managers proposed new or additional projects, sometimes affinity group leaders and DBAs would make such comments as "think of how full our plates are already!"

Many diversity managers explained that they focused on senior exempt employees for pragmatic purposes, to best allocate organizational resources. Without that pragmatic approach (and given the company's expansive rhetoric about all the forms of diversity that mattered), their efforts could lose focus. They also stated that diversity management at Starr focused on exempt employees because one of the primary goals was to advance more women and people of color into the most senior positions in the company. Faith, a white woman who served as the DBA for

Global Supply Chain and the manager for diversity and staffing in that function, explained to me, "When we are strengthening and building the pipeline of our senior leaders, it's really the white collar population [that] is the feeder pool that we are looking at."

When I asked why the company focuses on senior level positions, Starr managers and executives rationalized that these high-level positions were more inaccessible to women and people of color but provided greater returns on employee representation. Jack, an African-American man who at one time was the company's director of diversity, explained to me,

> [Exempt positions are] positions of power and influence in the organization and also decision making about hiring, promotion… [Exempt women and people of color] bring a different perspective, which allows what? More woman and color, you would assume, to be hired. It certainly increases retention because woman and people of color at a lower level see there is a possibility….So you create this upward spiral of success.

Jack and his colleagues are correct, in that the senior level jobs are the most powerful positions, the best paid, and among the most difficult to integrate. Some studies have shown that women's wages are higher and workplace segregation is lower in workplaces with more women hold managerial roles (e.g., Hultin and Szulkin 1999 in Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007). EEO enforcement is stronger when top management supports EEO goals. Scholars and diversity consultants often claim that women and people of color in positions of power help to improve female and racial minority representation in lower levels of an organization.

Likewise, the demographic composition of lower level jobs are more likely to be dependent on the regional location of the facility, as these lower level employees are probably less likely to be mobile (and the company is less likely to conduct national-level searches for their jobs). However, some working class jobs, particularly craft production jobs, are highly desirable because they provide good wages and other rewards and have relatively high autonomy. Such jobs have declined as a portion of all jobs since 1966, however they are still marked by gender and racial segregation (Tomaskovic-Devey and Stainback 2007). In 2002, white men were overrepresented in these jobs (compared to their representation in the overall population) by 62%, Hispanic men were overrepresented by 12% and black were about equally represented. Asian men were underrepresented by 40% while all women were underrepresented between 60 to 80%.

Diversity management's emphasis on exempt employees in general, and diversity metrics in particular, leave out this picture of craft jobs entirely. Moreover, it neglects the multiple ways in which corporate workplaces—whether they are factories, field offices, or headquarters—are stratified by race, class, and gender and perpetuate inequalities along these lines (e.g., Salzinger 2003).

Thus, the diversity project at Starr altered the socio-economic criteria for race and gender-targeted programs. It channeled organizational resources to affluent racial minorities and women, devoting resources to employees higher up the class hierarchy. Although scholars have examined corporations' shift from affirmative action to diversity (Edelman et al. 2001, Kelly & Dobbin 1998), the class implications of this shift have gone unnoted. In fact, scholars may help to reinforce this by focusing research on middle management and higher.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Employees:

Organizational leaders at Starr used diversity rhetoric and initiatives to change the constituents for its employee inclusion programs in another way: to extend support to gays, lesbians, bisexual, and transgender employees. Starr employees formed the GLBT Affinity Group in the early 2000s with support from the diversity director and senior executives. Using rhetoric about being your true self in the workplace, affinity group members lobbied to change Starr's human resource policies. Soon thereafter, the company began offering benefits, such as health coverage, to same-sex partners and amended the non-discrimination policy to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In this instance, another group that had been marginalized within the company relied on the structures of diversity programs—namely, the affinity group model—and on diversity rhetoric as mechanisms for securing organizational resources (see Skrentny 2002). Such adaptation was an ongoing process; during my study, the GLBT Affinity Group was working to create a business case for advertising in GLBT markets.

Global Diversity

Diversity management also expanded the constituents for programs for inclusion to include, at least in principle, employees outside the U.S. The company had operated outside the U.S. for most of its history. However, internationalism became more important in the 1990s, given heightened global competition and Michelson's purchase of Starr, as Michelson's had strong and growing markets outside the U.S. Such internationalism meant that U.S. employees might work overseas, employees from overseas might come to work in the U.S., and above all else, company leaders needed to understand the differing social, cultural, political, and economic dynamics of

different countries. Demographic data about Starr and Michelson employees who worked outside of the U.S. in the 1990s are not available, but the annual reports and other company documents from this period show that the *idea* of a global, internationally-sophisticated workforce was becoming more important. [127]

The company did not categorize international employees in terms of exempt and non-exempt. In a third of my interviews, diversity managers raised the topic of global diversity as an important area of focus, the next frontier of diversity management, so to speak. However, they were uncertain about company executives' and the Diversity Department's vision, plan, and strategies for global diversity. This lack of clarity comes as no surprise, given the challenge of accommodating the various forms of "difference" that were salient in different countries, much less in different regions.

Diversity managers were clear that the company's focus on people of color did not translate to the international context nor should they try to do so. The official standardized racial categories established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget are specific to the U.S. They are crude and often inaccurate descriptions of social differences in the U.S. and make even less sense when applied to other countries (Epstein 2007). Additionally, many foreign governments prohibit the collection of racial or ethnic data. This poor fit was a source for some jokes among diversity managers. During a training session for DBAs, an employee from Information Systems explained the new computer program that the company would use in all

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[127] Prior to the Michelson buy-out of Starr in 1988, few of the annual reports included any photographs of employees outside the U.S. or U.S. with international experience, as noted in the photograph captions. In most years through the 1990s, at least 3% of the employees photographed, and as many as 20%, were depicted working outside the U.S. or described as having international responsibilities. In a 1991 Starr company newsletter, a section devoted to global management explained, "Managing at Starr means being open to the ideas of co-workers halfway around the world, who could already have found the solution to a knotty problem. The way to obtain this kind of important information is through global management—cross-organizational cooperation and communication."

countries to manage diversity metrics. As she walked the DBAs through the various entries to describe an employee, she noted that "ethnic origin" applied only in the U.S. "Some things come through from our friends in Indonesia and other places, like 'manpeople.'"

Company leaders did agree that gender was a salient form of diversity worldwide, and they were able to collect metrics about female employees outside the U.S. By 2005, women made up about 31% of Starr employees in middle management positions or higher worldwide. They also had begun some programs to support women outside the U.S., such as a "Leadership Café," the Efficacy training, and a support and reading group for female employees in Canada. Diversity managers also perceived employees' cultural, religious, and national differences as particularly salient.

Global diversity training also clearly applied to another new population at Starr: executives and senior managers who came to the U.S. from overseas when the company became "global" in the early 2000s. Many diversity managers believed that these non-U.S. leaders "don't understand the dynamics here" and needed to be educated on "why we do diversity the way we do." Training such leaders was particularly an issue in Global Supply Chain, which had a new male senior executive from Europe whom many employees considered insensitive or at least uneducated about diversity management. Faith, the DBA from that function, explained at one DBA meeting, "Our leadership is cross-cultural… People are both here and abroad. So, people were thinking about diversity as Irish, Italian and German." The DBAs in the room laughed. She went on to explain that her team had set short and long-term goals for diversity. "We reiterate these goals. [Our senior leader] knows: 15% over 5 years. That's a win for us."

Starr leaders added Diversity Immersion, a new training program in cross-cultural communication in the early 2000s to improve the communication skills of executives in the U.S. and Europe. The purpose of Diversity Immersion, according to Faith, was to educate non-U.S. leaders about "diversity culture and the business perspective on diversity." One major goal was to verse these leaders in the appropriate corporate cultural norms for communicating and interacting with women and people of color. A European facilitator was intentionally hired to lead this training, because diversity managers worried the participants would not take an American facilitator seriously. One DBA told me, "This is Diversity 101 for people who are used to and more comfortable with people that look like themselves, act like themselves."

Thus, diversity rhetoric and initiatives included among its new and important constituents, predominantly Anglo, male executives for outside the U.S. and their teams. This fit with a broader trend in diversity management, in which consultants and human resource professionals claimed that successful diversity management programs needed white men who championed the cause of diversity (e.g., White 2007).

★ *Defining Middle Class Human and Cultural Capital*

Early on in this chapter, I observed that company leaders and managers relied on diversity rhetoric and initiatives to symbolically construct what it meant to be a Starr employee. I elaborate this process here, to show how they invoked the diversity project to define human and cultural capital among managers, professionals, and executives.

Corporate rhetoric and human resource programs at Starr depicted the ideal Starr employees as adaptable and proactive, eager to recognize and compensate for their weaknesses,

willing to commit both passion and time to their jobs, and learn how to climb the corporate ladder or at least hone their skills in their positions. Many companies and professional associations promoted similar depictions of middle and upper level employees, able to cope with the shifting tides of downsizing, outsourcing, and intense demands on their time that are characteristic of the new economy and its oversupply of skilled workers (Uchitelle 2007).

Diversity rhetoric and initiatives at Starr reinforced such messages. MoveUp was an especially popular advanced diversity training options for managers, coordinated by the African-American Employee Group. A document describing MoveUp, posted on the Group's intranet site, explained that participants would learn the "unwritten rules" of the company and strategies for "building, maintaining and sustaining relationships" and "gaining influence and power." Similarly, leaders of the affinity groups described the purpose of their groups as coaching and mentoring members on—in the words of one leader—"how do you play the game that's called Starr."

"Power of Difference," the company's introductory diversity training for new employees, played an even more elementary role. This training—like much of the diversity programming at the University of Michigan—demonstrated for employees the appropriate ways to interact with different kinds of people and talk about difference in the workplace. Power of Difference included a small group exercise on "Collusion," which the facilitator described as passively going along with inappropriate comments, acting out behavior that reinforced them, or denying that something had happened. We broke into small groups, and she gave a handout with Collusion Case Study One: "Isn't it supposed to be *fun?"* The case study described a meeting of employee peers who were planning a "fun afternoon activity for an upcoming, off-site division

meeting." It included such workplace blunders as Susan telling Yi to "lighten up" and mocking his accent.

After reading the case study description, our small groups were supposed to answer questions such as "Identify the comments which are generally inappropriate in the work environment (or questionable at best)." After talking these over, everyone at the training reconvened as a large group and went over them. When the facilitator, a young white woman who worked at Starr, asked about the inappropriate comments, one participant said that Susan had made fun of a "racial" Asian accent. The facilitator agreed that the teasing was inappropriate but then corrected the participant, saying that the accent was not racial, it was "cultural." A major theme of the exercise was that "colluding" was inappropriate behavior.

This training, along with other diversity programs, suggest specific types of cultural capital that well-educated, office employees are supposed to demonstrate: leadership skills and the ability to talk about and interact with people of different social backgrounds within acceptable terms. These terms included exhibiting an acceptance of the many differences that characterize people in the workplace (and approbation of people who are not accepting), carefully using language to talk about these differences, and guiding change in the company around diversity programs. Such terms inculcate, or at least encourage, employees' awareness of the many social forces—including racial background—that might shape an individual's life and identity. They embodied what Annette Lareau and colleagues (Horvat, Weininger and Lareau 2003; Lareau 2002) refer to as "concerted cultivation"—but in this case, not the concerted cultivation of a child by a parent, the concerted cultivation of culturally-sensitive employees by their employer (see also Kunda 1992; Sharone 2004; Smith 2001).

Such diversity initiatives also represent a shift in the company's concerns about race. They put a premium on employees' ability to communicate about their personal identities and experiences. Power of Difference began with exercises where we described ourselves as "daytime" or "nighttime" people and selected animals with which we identified. Such programming also stresses employees' ability to work across salient social boundaries. Starr leaders made interpersonal communication about diversity a high priority, as Power of Difference was the only diversity initiative that reached all exempt employees.

The emphasis in diversity management on leadership and interpersonal communication skills are part of a broader set of expectations that corporations have of their managerial and professional employees, and such expectations could work *against* people of color who might want jobs at Starr. One week, Daryl traveled out of town to do recruitment at a predominantly Latino university that the company had added to its targeted recruitment schools, in hopes of attracting Latino employees. He returned disappointed. He told me that he had spent a day at a job fair, where students could walk around and talk to employers at different booths. Many of the students had no idea how to talk to a potential employer or how to dress for such an event. They wore baggy clothes. One had blue hair. Daryl described for me one student who had asked him dismissively, "So, what do you do?" Another student talked to Daryl while his girlfriend snuggled into his shoulder. Daryl was so distracted he could barely carry on the conversation. Daryl noted that some of these students were "really bright"— he could tell once he looked at their resumes and their GPAs and once they started talking about their interests. "They just had no clue how to present themselves."

This finding points to yet another way in which diversity managers at Starr used diversity rhetoric and initiatives. Whether consciously or not, they invoked diversity management in ways that marginalized alternative viewpoints and agendas.

★ *Marginalizing Alternative Viewpoints and Agendas*

Non-Exempt Employees

Diversity programming excluded unionized workers (who could be hourly or salaried) and non-unionized hourly employees through a variety of mechanisms. According to Diversity Department staff, local managers determined the focus of human resource programming at their plants, so they decided if non-exempt employees would participate in diversity training.[128] Affinity group events typically occurred during work hours, which are times when most hourly and unionized workers would not be able to attend. One mechanism was the cost. A Diversity Business Advisor explained to me that Operations did the introductory diversity training for all new employees when the training first came out, over a decade earlier. That would be the last time a current employee had participated in any other diversity training "unless you're white collar or you're a higher level within your organization and you're promotable and you're high potential. You just wouldn't be somebody that they would send [to diversity training], because it's the cost associated with it."

Another mechanism the diversity managers relied upon was to define lower-level employees as not relevant to diversity. Some of the company's intranet pages listed the

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[128] Company representatives publicly claimed that all employees got diversity training.

Professional Support Group as one of the company's Employee Diversity Groups, but this group did not appear on any public publications nor did its members participate in any of the meetings I attended. The Professional Support Group had been formed in 1992, two years after the company formed its first employee affinity groups and around the time that the company was forming additional groups. The group's five chapters had such mission statements as

encourage the Starr support professional in today's rapidly changing business environment, with emphasis on career and personal development, adding value to the business, and helping the organization achieve superior results by providing leadership opportunities, education and development forums, and networking and communications.

This sounded very similar to the mission statements of other Starr Employee Diversity Groups. But when I asked about the group, a Diversity Department staff member waved it off as not relevant to diversity.

Diversity managers frequently pointed to union rules as an obstacle to including unionized workers in diversity management programs. A leader of the Hispanic Employee Group told me that her group tried to include hourly workers, but many were unionized and "the company" did not want to deal with or upset the unions: "They don't want to have issues with the union" because of the affinity groups. She did qualify that some hourly workers who did cleaning belonged to the Hispanic Group. She personally had worked with hourly workers at one company site in her capacity as a human resource manger, and she told me that she viewed the initial purpose of the Hispanic Employee Group was to provide "a voice" for Hispanic

employees who worked in the company's offices. Over time, that purpose had evolved to helping Hispanic employees develop and get promotions within the company. I asked her if the hourly employees were looking for something different from the group. She speculated about the hourly workers at one plant: there might be some differences, but fundamentally these employees and exempt employees wanted the same thing:

> [The hourly workers] would like just to be part of a group because they are not part of a group… The needs could be the same because we are Starr. It is the same company. Of course, probably what they will look for, it will be different than what we were looking for back then [when we started the Hispanic Group] because we were already in an office environment, which is a little bit different, okay. But as far as what they would like to see done, it's the same thing: to be seen, to be recognized.

Some diversity managers made a bigger issue of the different needs and skills of hourly employees. When I asked the DBA for Global Supply Chain why diversity management focused on white collar employees and not all employees, she told me, "The qualifications are different and separate. If you are looking at the blue collar employees—and this is a total general statement—but, for the most part, those are folks who do not have advanced degrees, are not looking to move up to be a very senior level person within the organization."

I better understood that diversity management was for exempt employees near the end of my study, when I asked Daryl, my primary contact in the Diversity Department, to help me set up interviews with a few unionized and hourly non-unionized employees. My request confused

him. With a slightly bewildered expression on his face, he agreed to try to find some people I could talk to, and he found a non-unionized hourly employee. Then we faced bureaucratic hurdles.

First, I should explain that setting up interviews with exempt employees had been remarkably easy once the company gave me permission to conduct this study. The company had given me an ID, password, and email address, so I could access parts of the company's intranet (they also provided me with a cubicle and a computer for my own use). I could log on to the intranet and find an exempt employee's calendar, select a time when they had nothing scheduled, and send an email request for an interview. If they agreed, the appointment was automatically set up in their calendar and in mine. The hourly employee with whom Daryl put me in contact did not have an on-line calendar. I played phone tag with this man a number of times, mostly with me calling him, and then I gave up.

Daryl never found a unionized employee for me to interview. He explained to me that such an interview would be difficult to set up anyway because of the union rules—who would cover for that person on the line? Who would pay for the lost time? I eventually abandoned my effort to interview non-exempt employees. I realized that, in order to understand their experiences and views of diversity management, I would need to conduct an altogether different study.

Even lower level salaried employees who were present at diversity management events often remained silent and were unacknowledged. At the beginning of the first DBA meeting that I attended, everyone went around the table and introduced themselves. Danielle, a soft-spoken African-American woman who worked as the Department's administrative assistant, was sitting

at the table but said nothing, and the three staff members did not encourage her to introduce herself. Later in the meeting, the director of diversity came in and formally introduced herself; she and her were all new to the department within the last year. A slide on the screen showed an organizational chart with everyone's name, including Danielle's, but when Melissa spoke about each staff member, she said nothing about Danielle. Presumably, this hierarchical relationship between upper and lower level employees and this pattern of silencing are not unique to diversity management but rather are customary in other corporate activities at Starr.

GLBT Employees

Although the company formally recognized GLBT employees, diversity managers and diversity programs marginalized GLBT employees in number of ways. Some of the exclusions suggested that the company and many diversity managers were quite uncomfortable with the topic of sexual orientation. During a discussion of the "Dimensions of Diversity" diagram at the Power of Differences training, the facilitator told everyone that Starr used the term "affectional orientation" not "sexual orientation" and claimed that it was a commonly used term.

Other exclusions indicated that diversity managers were uncomfortable with GLBT employees and did not perceive them as central to diversity management. During meetings and our interviews, Diversity Department staff and diversity managers who were not involved with the GLBT Affinity Group often failed to mention GLBT employees or the issues they faced. When they did mention these employees, they usually spoke of them uniformly as "the GLBT Group," rather than naming them as GLBT employees. One employee in the Diversity

Department indicated to me their discomfort around gays and lesbians but changed the topic when I did not reciprocate.

At meetings, the GLBT Affinity Group leaders often took on the role of reminding other diversity managers about GLBT employees. During a meeting about the Simplification Initiative, when Victor had spoken about the women and people of color who would be hit hardest, Terry jumped in: "While women and people of color are important, I want to remind folks to include GLBT employees when they talk about diversity." Victor said: "You're right" (although he continued to not mention them). Terry went on, "I just want to do a reminder. We lost 3 key players, because it's hitting us too." Melissa said to Terry, "Thank you. That's why you're here."

CHAPTER EIGHT. ROGERS PARK

FROM FAIR AND SUBSIDIZED HOUSING TO COMMUNITY DIVERSITY

The politics and rhetoric of race, inclusion, and diversity have changed significantly in Rogers Park over the past forty years. In the 1960s, civic and political leaders affirmed fair housing policies in the name of diversity. In the 1980s, they opposed public housing subsidized by the government on the grounds of protecting diversity, and, in the 1990s, they encouraged redevelopment and gentrification in similar terms.[129] These changes constitute a critical discursive and political shift, from a project of promoting racial equality to a project of promoting diversity. Why did this shift occur, and what are the implications?

Unlike universities or companies, no single historical event marks the emergence of diversity rhetoric and initiatives in urban communities in the U.S. A few important major court cases, such as *Gautreaux* and *Yonkers,* sought to remedy racial and class discrimination by promoting residential mixing along racial and economic lines (Schuck 2003).[130] But these decisions did not use the language of "diversity." In 1961, activist and journalist Jane Jacobs criticized top-down city planning and presented "diversity" as an alternative in her seminal *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (also see Schuck 2003).[131] Jacobs used the term "diversity" 143 times in this book. She trumpeted "the need of cities for a most intricate and

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[129] As described in the methodological appendix, my primary source for this chapter is the *Chicago Tribune* coverage of housing issues in Rogers Park between 1960 and the early 1990s. I supplement this source with coverage from *The Chicago Defender, Chicago Sun-Times,* and other primary and secondary sources.

[130] *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority*, 265 F. Supp. 582 (N.D. Ill. 1967)*, United States v. Yonkers Board of Education,* 518 F. Supp. 191 (D.C.N.Y. 1981)

[131] Prior to Jacobs' book, urban scholars of the early Chicago school such as Louis Wirth (1938), used the term "diverse" to describe people who live in urban places and interethnic conflict, often with pejorative tones. Wirth identified heterogeneity as a central, defining feature of urban places.

close-grained diversity of uses," particularly a mix of businesses, homes, sidewalk activities, and public spaces. Since then, this book has had a major impact on urban planning. Diversity is now a central principle of the New Urbanism design movement.

Other organizations raised diversity as a theme and value for urban communities. The national planning committee for the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial celebrations also made diversity a central theme, following the lead of U.S. President Nixon, although diversity was not a popular theme in local bicentennial events (Spillman 1997). Large private foundations also communicated the ideal of diversity to grantees in urban communities in the 1980s (Shiao 2005).

But the single, most explicit and high profile statement advocating "diversity" over the language of civil rights was made by a prominent civil rights lawyer at a 1985 hearing and consultation on housing discrimination for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The lawyer was Alexander Polikoff, who served for decades as the outspoken lead counsel for the plaintiffs in the *Gautreaux* litigation, which successfully demonstrated that the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) unconstitutionally segregated African American public housing residents and provided an expansive remedy. Polikoff reviewed the range of federal, state, and municipal programs that actively encouraged racial residential desegregation and long-term community integration, popularly known as "integration maintenance." In his statement, titled "What's in a Name? The Diversity of Racial Diversity Programs," Polikoff explains that he prefers "racial diversity" over "integration maintenance" because the term "emphasizes the positive value of diversity." He also briefly observes that the real estate industry and a professor of law have posed integration maintenance as racial quotas, racial steering, and violations of fair housing law.

The diversity project emerged amidst ongoing and profound racial and economic segregation across the city of Chicago and many other U.S. cities. Cities in the late twentieth century were being reshaped by deindustrialization, neoliberal urban development strategies, growing income inequality, and the rise of service, information, real estate, and technology industries. As Polikoff indicates, it also came about amidst conservative challenges and community resistance to federal and municipal programs for residential racial integration.

This chapter illustrates how, against this backdrop, diversity ideology became the preferred way of representing race, difference, and inclusion in Rogers Park—in short, how diversity has become urban neighborhood orthodoxy. I cover the period between the 1960s and the early 1990s. I begin by describing the project of racial desegregation and integration in cities. I recount civic leaders' earliest political use of diversity rhetoric to support open housing in the 1960s and the implications of this initial transition from the project of racial integration to the project of diversity. I then track subsequent changes in the diversity rhetoric that civic and political leaders employed in the 1980s and early 1990s as well as local leaders' strategic political and organizational objectives and their implications. I then discuss how these findings contribute to our understanding of diversity rhetoric in cities and in housing politics.

I. The Project of Racial Desegregation and Integration in Cities

In the late 1960s, throughout Chicago and in U.S. cities from Detroit to Los Angeles, black residents faced a racially discriminatory dual housing market, substandard and highly segregated housing options, and violent white resistance (Hirsch 1983; Massey and Denton 1993; Sugrue 1996). The problems of racial residential segregation were compounded by the confluence of

race and class. Racial discrimination and segregation in employment meant that most black people were poor or working class. The black middle class was just over 10 percent in 1960, although it did grow in size during the 1960s (Landry 1987 in Pattillo-McCoy 1999). The vast majority of black Chicagoans, regardless of their class status, lived in black-majority neighborhoods in the Black Belt on the city's south side, and these neighborhoods were rapidly growing (Downs 1973a; Massey and Denton 1993). The lack of capital investment in black neighborhoods and police brutality and misconduct exacerbated the problems of segregation. The frustration and hostility towards white people felt by some black city residents culminated in urban riots in cities such as Buffalo, Detroit, and Omaha (e.g., Besag and Cook 1973).

At this time, the U.S. was a largely urban nation, but the dramatic growth was happening in suburbs. Starting in the 1940s, government policies had encouraged suburban development and its attendant white flight through loans for new housing construction and funding for highway construction. Businesses increasingly shifted their headquarters and offices to suburban locations. As deindustrialization of rust belt cities like Chicago accelerated in the 1960s, the number of manufacturing establishments and blue collar jobs in cities dropped precipitously (Wacquant 1989). More white middle class residents moved out of cities (and fewer moved in) as black Americans migrated to city centers, especially in the north, in massive numbers (Ellen 2000; Lemann 1991). While cities had once been home to a mix of economic classes, the concentration of residents who were poor, minority, unskilled, and underemployed increased (Shank 1973). As jobs, commerce, industrial centers, and middle class residents moved out of cities, the tax structure remained fragmented across local taxing authorities.

The project of racial equality in cities—or, more specifically, the project of residential racial desegregation and integration—was a response to these conditions. The fair housing movement emerged in the 1940s, and its first major legal success was the 1948 Supreme Court decision, *Shelley v. Kraemer,* which banned racially restrictive covenants (von Hoffman 1998). Fair housing advocates in cities such as Chicago and New York challenged segregation and discrimination not just in employment and public services, but also in housing (Biondi 2003; Ralph 1993). Many white elected officials (and some black leaders) resisted this move, as did white residents who reacted with anti-black protest and racially-motivated violence (Sugrue 1996).

However, there were business and political leaders—particularly at the state and federal level, most notably President Lyndon B. Johnson—who supported the general principle of racial integration and policies to support such integration, like open housing and busing. While politicians such as Johnson and civil rights activists had considerable differences, these various actors by and large considered racial segregation a problem and called for desegregation and other remedies to address the disadvantages experienced by black, mostly poor residents.

Title VIII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1968 and subsequent amendments, judicial opinions, and national policy sought to end *de jure* discrimination in housing. As with civil rights law in employment, there have been some debates over the extent to which these provisions are supposed to end legal discrimination or actively change residential patterns. Scholars, policy analysts, and housing advocates have shown that most residential communities will remain racially segregated without institutional intervention (e.g., DeMarco and Galster 1993).

Court-ordered remedies and decrees for desegregation required that public housing authorities disperse their new public and assisted housing. The *Gautreaux* case concerning public housing in Chicago was particularly important. The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) had located 99% of all new housing units that it constructed after 1955 in low-income black ghetto neighborhoods (Hirsch 1983). The *Gauteaux* litigation began in 1966, when lawyers and activists in Chicago filed a series of class action lawsuits against the CHA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.[132] They charged that the CHA had intentionally segregated black people through its policies for selecting tenants and sites and that HUD had funded these violations of their civil rights. A federal court subsequently ordered the desegregation of public housing in Chicago. The CHA could not concentrate new public housing in predominantly minority communities, and created a voucher mobility program, so Mayor Daley refused to build any more housing.

Housing authorities in Chicago and many other cities began to move to vouchers and scattered-site subsidized housing in the early 1970s as alternative to the large housing developments, although white political leaders and residents often opposed such subsidized housing as well. The result was a variety of programs, albeit few in number, to promote and stabilize racially and economically mixed communities (Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000; Schuck 2003; Smith 1993b). Many of those programs have been orchestrated through government intervention (Ford 1994; Schuck 2003), although their successful implementation often depended on support from community organizations, such as activist organizations that emerged out of the neighborhood stabilization movement (Saltman 1990).

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[132] *Gautreaux v. Chicago Hous. Auth.*, 265 F. Supp. 582 (N.D. Ill. 1967), *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Auth.*, 304 F. Supp. 736 (N.D. Ill. 1969).

Most of these housing integration programs have sought to disperse poor, predominantly black public housing residents and voucher holders into non-poor, non-majority black communities (Briggs, Darden and Aidala 1999; Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000). A smaller set of programs have focused specifically on promoting the integration of black residents into historically white neighborhoods (see, e.g., Goodwin 1979; Saltman 1990). These integration maintenance plans (or, according to advocates like Polikoff and Saltman, "racial diversity" plans) seek to disperse residents of color through a residential community. They also encourage white families to stay or move in and employ affirmative marketing programs to ensure that realtors do not limit clients' options when purchasing or renting because of their race (Huttman and Jones 1991).

Many such programs have been contested in communities and the courts. The most controversial of the integration maintenance programs relied on occupancy quotas to restrict the portion of African-Americans in a building or community (Smith 1993b). Such occupancy limits have assumed that white people need assurance that the racial demographics of their community will remain stable or else they will exit a community when it reaches a "tipping point" of black residents (Downs 1973b; Schelling 1972). There was never an integration maintenance program in Rogers Park, but as I describe below and in the following chapter, housing authorities built scattered-site public housing in the neighborhood and renters with subsidized vouchers moved into the neighborhood.

Many political and civic leaders justified their efforts to end housing discrimination and promote residential racial integration by invoking a rhetoric of equality, opportunity, and equal rights. Take, for example, the 1968 report on civil disorders by the National Advisory

Commission on Civil Disorders, which President Johnson had filled with political moderates. The report—commonly called the Kerner Report—focused on the causes of the urban violence and riots. It pointed to the intense frustration felt by black city residents and the problems of racism in American society (see also Bonastia 2006). Its best known passage cautioned:

> Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white–separate and unequal… What White Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget[–]is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto…. [F]ederal housing programs must be given a new thrust aimed at overcoming the prevailing patterns of racial segregation. Residential segregation prevents equal access to employment opportunities and obstructs efforts to achieve integrated education.

The Kerner Report emphasized the problems experienced by black people and problems of poverty. It framed race in terms of equal access and opportunity, and it called on the federal government to remedy disadvantage.

II. The Emergence of the Diversity Project in Rogers Park: The Construction of Early Diversity Rhetoric and Its Strategic Uses

In 1965, some civil rights activists, led most notably by Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, turned their attention to racial injustice in the northern city of Chicago (Ralph 1993). They were particularly troubled by racial discrimination in housing. In 1966, they organized Chicago Freedom Summer, a fair housing campaign to challenge racial discrimination and poverty in housing, employment, and education. For over a year, Mayer

Richard Daley, the Chicago Board of Realtors, and many other city leaders resisted meeting with activists to discuss their demands, until they finally agreed to a Housing Summit in mid-August. White residents in many neighborhoods reacted to new black residents with hostility and riots, and some actively protested King's campaign. Nazis in the Englewood community organized a "Back to Africa" march.[133]

On the city's far North Side in Rogers Park, the reaction to King's campaign was very different, and it made newspaper headlines. It also illustrates one of the key strategic uses of the diversity project: to defend remedies for racial inequality but redefine their purpose and downplay issues of disadvantage.
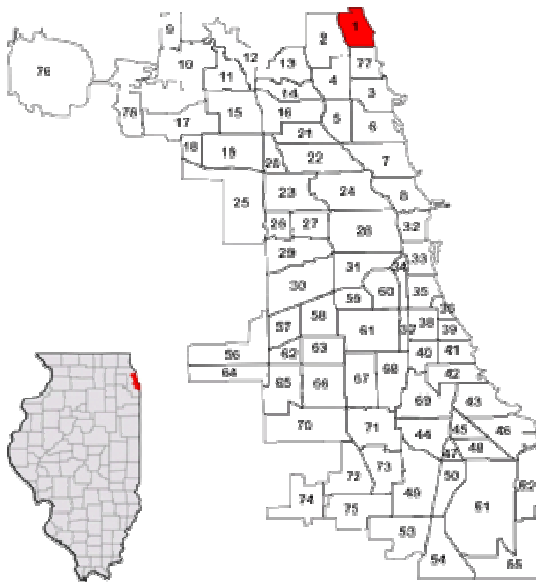

Figure 9. Maps of Rogers Park and the city of Chicago

Source: Wikipedia.com. Accessed February 17, 2008.

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[133] *Chicago Daily Defender.* 1966. "Nazi plan 'Back to Africa' Englewood March Saturday." Sept. 6. P. 3.

★ *Endorsing but Redefining Integrationist Programs and Policies*

In the late 1960s, 99% of the residents in Rogers Park were white, although they came from different religious groups and economic backgrounds (Welter 1982). Rogers Park was a residential renter community served by small businesses like banks, butcher shops, and ice cream parlors. It experienced its largest population and real estate boom in the 1910s and 1920s, when developers constructed new houses, apartment buildings, churches, synagogues, and theaters. Two major companies located in the neighborhood in the 1930s and 1940s, the marketing firm A.C. Nielsen and S & C Electric Company, an equipment manufacturer that remains in the neighborhood. By 1950, white Catholics and Reform Jews from Germany had a strong local presence.

At this time, Rogers Park had a reputation among black Chicagoans as a segregated, all-white neighborhood unreceptive to black residents.[134] Some civil rights activists accused local merchants of failing to hire black contractors and charged realtors with actively discriminating against black renters and homebuyers.[135]

But, in August 1966, the Rogers Park Community Council and a local interfaith organization representing over 100 religious and community groups, spoke out *in favor* of fair housing.[136] They issued a welcoming statement that said:

> We support the moral right of all people to live in Rogers Park… We believe
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> that welcoming all new residents to the community, whatever their diverse

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[134] Goldberg, Jerry. 1963. "Despres Says COHR Not Enforcing Housing Law." *Chicago Daily Defender.* Nov 27, pg. A3 ; Ross, Sherwood, 1964. "When Negroes Move In, Property Values Go Up!" *Chicago Daily Defender* Jan. 20, pg. 6; *Chicago Daily Defender.* 1963. "Chicago's Growing Racial Crisis" Mar 4. pg. 9/

[135] Ross, Sherwood. 1964. "The Human Relations Beat." *The Chicago Defender.* Feb. 1. p. 6. *The Chicago Defender* pg. 6; *Chicago Daily Defender.* 1964. "Ministers Denounce Negro Service Move." Oct 22. Pg. 5.

[136] Yackely, Sel. 1967. "Peaceful Integration Progresses Smoothly in Rogers Park Area." *Chicago Tribune* Apr. 20, pg. IND2

backgrounds, is in keeping with American traditions and is basic to the ultimate

good of the community.[137]

This announcement affirmed civil rights' activists' demands for racially fair and inclusive housing. It underscored the moral imperative of inclusion. The meaning of the word, "diverse," was positive and somewhat vague. It applied widely to all kinds of residents, not just black people or racial minorities. In their announcement, these leaders stated that they would encourage their churches, temples, schools, and clubs to communicate the announcement to their members. They also said they would meet with real estate brokers and property owners to discuss fair housing. Community Council leaders had already hosted at least one meeting about open housing with local business and political leaders the previous year.[138]

Community Council leaders had originally developed the welcoming statement a few years earlier in an attempt to keep white, middle class families from moving out of the neighborhood. The Council's membership included residents, businesses, and other community organizations (Welter 1982). The Council had formed in the 1950s to oppose high-rise development on the lakefront. It was led primarily by white, middle class professionals, and it largely represented the concerns of white, middle class residents, particularly homeowners. The group advocated primarily for "community conservation" through community planning, such as maintaining public access to lakefront beaches and parks, averting the loss of single-family homes, and preventing other forms of neighborhood "deterioration." The Council and other organizations and social groups were known to be largely led by Jewish residents (Suttles 1990).

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[137] *Chicago Daily Defender*. 1966. "While others snarl, far north siders welcome negroes." Sept. 3. P. 29.
[138] Sullivan, James. 1962. "Rogers Park Told: Do-It-Yourself to Fight Blight." *Chicago Daily Tribune*. Mar 25. P. N1.

Meanwhile, Irish residents dominated local Aldermanic politics, with support from the city's democratic machine but with some independence from the Mayor.

Council spokespeople often couched the organization's concerns in terms of young, moderate-income (white) families with children who were leaving Rogers Park for the suburbs.[139] The original welcoming statement and the 1966 announcement were part of the Council's broader campaign to keep white families from moving out of the neighborhood. Council leaders believed that the widespread application of open housing laws was one way to retain these families. For example, in 1968, the Council issued an open housing resolution to the Chicago City Council that argued, "'without the establishment of equal housing opportunities for all citizens, the ghetto conditions now existing in some areas of this city will surely spread to many areas of Chicago.'"[140]

The Community Council wanted to quell white residents' fears that their property values would drop if some black people moved into the neighborhood. This relatively tolerant and progressive response to a fair housing proposal, although, like fair housing politics across the nation, it was motivated by white people's racial and class-based fears about neighborhood deterioration (Graham 2000). Council leaders invoked the term "diverse" as part of that agenda. This is one of many examples I observed across my cases in which political leaders rely on diversity rhetoric to signal that minority groups—especially black people—should be included in their institutions and that white people should not be threatened.

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[139] E.g., *Chicago Daily Tribune.* 1957. "Rogers Park Asks Ok for Urban Renewal Site." Nov. 14. p. N8. *Chicago Tribune.* 1964. "Disappear in Rogers Park" Oct 8. pg. N1.
[140] *Chicago Daily Tribune*. 1968. "Rogers Park group urges open housing." June 9.

The meanings that local leaders communicated through early diversity rhetoric and their uses of this rhetoric illustrate a few key dimensions of the diversity project. First, we see how so much of the diversity project is rhetorical, and these rhetorical statements can justify a variety of political actions, agendas, and policies. Political leaders since this incident have used diversity rhetoric to identify various policies as relevant to maintaining and promoting diversity. A second dimension is the moral emphasis in diversity rhetoric. In the welcoming statement, the term "diverse" was part of a moral statement that characterized different of types of people in positive terms.

Third, this example illustrates how the diversity project is rooted in social problems of race and racial inequality, but at the same time diversity rhetoric and initiatives are not solely concerned with race. Here, leaders used diversity rhetoric in response to the demands of activists concerned about black people, in this instance, civil rights and housing activists. This word served here, and elsewhere, as an alternative to explicit language about race such as "Negroes."[141] Finally, white people were—and they continue to be—an important audience for such rhetoric and such policies. Organizational and political elites have invoked diversity discourse to suggest that they want to include minority groups, particularly people of color, while they also assure white people that such inclusion will not be harmful and may even be beneficial.

So, what were the implications? How did the diversity project—in this case, early rhetoric about diversity—affect the project of racial integration and equality? Local community leaders in Rogers Park clearly were defending political efforts to remedy racial disadvantages through residential integration. Following the 1966 announcement, city newspapers identified

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[141] Until the early 1990s, local leaders tended to use the terms "diverse" and "integrated" interchangeably.

Rogers Park as a place that was receptive to black families.[142] *The Chicago Tribune,* for example, quoted both enthusiastic white community leaders, who said they supported "slow" and "peaceful" integration, and satisfied new black residents, such as one man who explained, "'When we heard they were welcoming Negroes here, we took them at their word. We haven't had any trouble.'"[143]

Six months after the announcement, the Cook County Department of Public Aid identified Rogers Park as a good community for welfare families, the vast majority of whom were African-American.[144] Within five years, following a lawsuit over the disproportionate placement of public housing in black neighborhoods, the Chicago Housing Authority selected Rogers Park as one of a few white neighborhoods where it would build new subsidized housing.[145] In the subsequent decade, many more African-American, Latino, and Asian residents moved into the neighborhood. Of course, the open housing announcement was not responsible for all those changes, but it likely contributed to a change in public perception of the neighborhood.

Even as community leaders supported open housing, they redefined the meaning of open housing as a remedy. They implied that it should applicable to all kinds of "diverse" people, not just African-Americans. They also emphasized the benefits of this remedy to a privileged group: white people. Now, this was not a novel strategy. Many fair housing and civil rights activists had

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[142] Washington, Betty. 1967. "Our People Hunt For Apartment On Northside." *Chicago Defender* Apr 15, pg. 1

[143] Yackely, Sel. 1967. "Peaceful Integration Progresses Smoothly in Rogers Park Area." *Chicago Tribune* Apr. 20, pg. IND2.

[144] "Rogers Park Tops Welfare Study." *Chicago Tribune,* Feb 19, pg. L1. "Facts, Fallacies and Future: A Study of the Aid to Dependent Children of Cook County, Illinois," (New York, Greenleigh Associates, Inc., 1960, p. 5 in Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. 1965. "The Negro Family: The Case For National Action." Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor. March, fn. 11

[145] Buck, Thomas. 1972. "CHA Gets OK for 199 Housing Units." *Chicago Tribune,* Feb 11 pg. 2; Getz, Anne. 1967.

framed their claims about integration in terms of the benefits to whites (Lau 2004). But these civic leaders in Rogers Park, unlike the spokespeople for King's campaign, avoided any rationale about remedying racial or economic disadvantage. Neither the welcoming announcement, nor the subsequent political forums, nor the Council's resolution to the city council stressed the need to help low-income, black residents who suffered from housing discrimination and substandard, segregated housing.

This early example illustrates the relationship between the diversity project and the project of racial equality. The early diversity project in Rogers Park was supportive of the political struggle for open housing and residential racial integration in Chicago. Its advocates defended a public policy remedy for the disadvantages experienced by black, predominantly poor residents. At the same time, leaders' rhetoric and political actions transformed the political rationale for supporting open housing. These neighborhood leaders redefined the remedy of open housing and they downplayed problems of disadvantage. They presented this remedy as beneficial to white people. They expanded (at least rhetorically) the potential constituents who might be covered by this remedy, from black people to all different kinds of people. They highlighted neighborhood deterioration, not racial exclusion, as the problem at hand. And they redefined the reason for the remedy—from opportunities for black residents to the retention of white families.

The case of Rogers Park provides new empirical evidence showing that some of the early roots of the diversity project lie in community debates over fair housing in transitioning white neighborhoods. Some urban anthropologists and cultural sociologists have suggested that early diversity rhetoric became popular in the 1970s through neighborhood ethnic festivals and

bicentennial commemorations (Goode 2001a; Spillman 1997). This is part of a larger argument that locates the roots of diversity ideology in popular ideologies of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism (Gleason 1984; Goldberg 1994).

Yet, the case of Rogers Park suggests that the early diversity project emerged in city neighborhoods not just out of ethnic festivals. Community leaders first began to use diversity rhetoric in the politics that surrounded fair and subsidized housing in historically white, racially transitioning neighborhoods. Other scholars have suggested that white ethnics and government officials, threatened by the in-roads that African-Americans and other ethno-racial minorities were making, embraced this cultural pluralist discourse as part of a backlash against the achievements of early social movements (di Leonardo 1998; Goode 2001a; Goode and Maskovsky 2001).

This finding is corroborated by both academic and anecdotal evidence about other similar white Chicago communities, such as Hyde Park on the city's South Side and the suburb of Oak Park to the west (Goodwin 1979; Molotch 1972).[146] In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of white politicians and civic leaders in these communities organized to direct and moderate—but not to oppose wholeheartedly—the in-migration of African-Americans, particularly middle class African-Americans. While these leaders usually described their goals in such terms as maintaining a "stable, integrated community of high standards" (Molotch 1972:77), they sometimes couched issues of racial change and housing in terms of "diversity" (Goodwin 1979).

The political project of diversity continued to evolve in the 1970s and 1980s, taking on features still evident today. This evolution illustrates two other ways in which community leaders

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[146] See also Donahue, E.W. 1958. "Voice of the People" *Chicago Daily Tribune* Sep 21, pg. 24.Kirkhorn, Michael. 1973. "Exemption granted." *Chicago Tribune.* Nov 25, pg. 39;

strategically used diversity ideology: to frame the terms of neighborhood change and low-income housing politics and to reinvent the neighborhood's identity as inclusive. Local leaders were responding to the changing demographics of neighborhood residents and trying shape the implementation of subsidized housing policies.

★ *Framing the Terms of the Neighborhood Change and Low-Income Housing Politics*

Leaders of different political organizations in the neighborhood began to use diversity rhetoric to mean different things or, more often, to support different kinds of claims about neighborhood change.

Creating a New Community Identity

Starting in the 1970s, major demographic changes took place in the neighborhood (see Figure 10). The number of residents in Rogers Park stayed about the same in the latter half of the twentieth century (Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984; Welter 1982). Reform Jews and other middle class whites began to move out of Rogers Park or opted not to move in, following national patterns of neighborhood exodus and racial turnover. Local historians refer to the 1970s and subsequent decades as "Years of Transition and Diversity" (Samors et al. 2000). By the mid-1970s, more black people moved into the neighborhood, and gradually, more Latinos, Eastern Europeans, and Orthodox Jews (Welter 1982), although the neighborhood never lost all of its white residents. The newcomers were, on average, younger, while many remaining white residents were elderly.

Figure 10. Demographic Representation in Rogers Park by Race and Total Population, 1960-2000
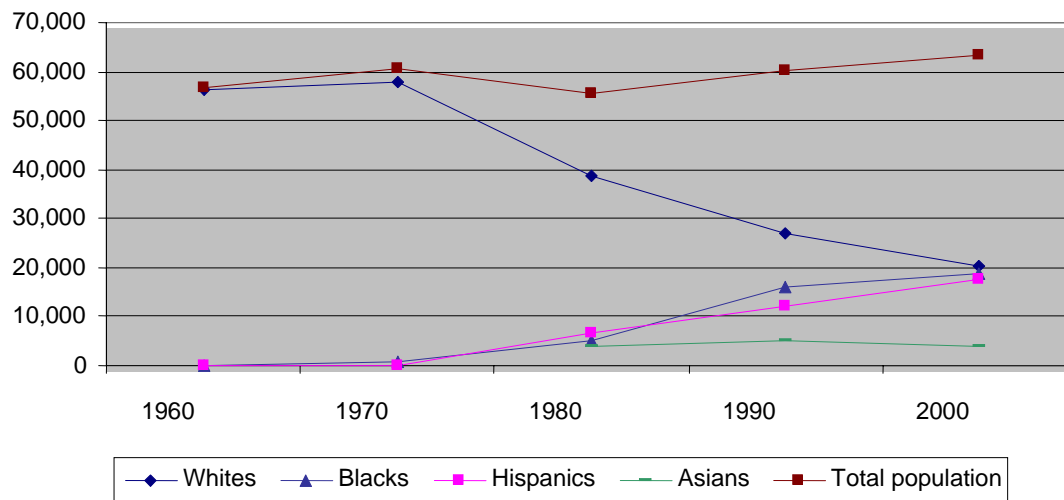
Source: Kitagawa and Taeuber 1963; Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984; Maly and Leachman 1998; U.S. Census Bureau 2000.
Note: 1980, 1990, and 2000 data are adjusted to represent Latinos as a racial group.

Many of the community's new residents of color moved or were steered into a small pocket at the northern end of the neighborhood called North of Howard.[147] In the 1920s, Howard Street had been "one of the liveliest entertainment centers on Chicago's North Side," with taverns, nightclubs, theaters, and apartments that attracted "'a high-class tenancy'" (Samors et al. 2000:65,55).

Newspaper reporters often described the neighborhood's population and these new residents as "diverse," particularly in reference to their racial identity and national origins. For example, a 1973 *Chicago Tribune* article about the elementary school in North of Howard, titled,

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[147] In 1970, in the census tract that primarily includes North of Howard, 5.6% of the residents were black and 3.3% were other nonwhite (Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984). Ten years later, these figures increased to 54% and 30.7% respectively. A greater percentage of people of color lived in this census tract than in any other tract in the neighborhood.

"Gale School's melting pot runneth over," described the "diverse" student body consisting of 51.2% white students, 24% black students, 10.2% Asian-American students, and 14.5% "Latin" students.[148] Some residents began to characterize the neighborhood as diverse. A resident police officer wrote a column in the *Sun-Times* citing the mix of people in Rogers Park as one reason he lived there:

> Our community, as evidenced by our many diverse residents who gather at the
>
> beachfront, is positive proof that Rogers Park is a growing, viable community
>
> where anyone regardless of race, creed, or ethnic background is welcomed.[149]

This police officer's statement also includes the sentiment that many politicians, businesspeople, and civic leaders would reiterate explicitly ten years later: that diversity is compatible with community growth.

Opposing Subsidized Housing in the Face of Competing Political Agendas

During the 1980s, leaders of the Community Council and a few other local organizations also began to describe the neighborhood as diverse. Moreover, some of these civic leaders invoked such descriptions to *oppose* subsidized housing for poor black people.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the poverty rate in Rogers Park rose, many local businesses faltered, and buildings fell into disrepair from landlord neglect and old age (Welter 1982). The metamorphosis around Howard Street was especially dramatic. The story of North of Howard parallels the stories of public housing and other very poor, minority communities suffering from

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[148] Lauerman, Connie. 1973. *Chicago Tribune.* Nov. 20. pg. 8. pg. 8; Felsenthal, Carol Greenberg. 1979. "Lane High: a technical knockout." *Chicago Tribune.* Apr 15. pg. F16; [148] Ansley, Mary Holm. 1981. "Residents, housing varied: Rogers Park- a diverse community." *Chicago Tribune.* Feb 1, pg. W_B2C; Mark Knoblauch.1982. "Restaurants." *Chicago Tribune* . Feb 7. pg. G10.

[149] Pukelis, Stanley R. 1985. "Why I live here: East Rogers Park." *Chicago Sun-Times* July 28, p. 8.

government disinvestment and real estate speculation during this time period. According to one local religious leader, many African-Americans moved in because they had been displaced by government-supported urban renewal projects on Chicago's West Side. In the census tract that includes North of Howard and what are now a few affluent blocks on the lakefront, the non-white population skyrocketed from 9% to 51% between 1970 and 1980 (Center for Urban Research and Learning 2002; Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984).[150] Economic and social conditions in North of Howard also were shaped by the end of prohibition in Evanston, the suburb to the north of Rogers Park, which hurt bars and clubs on Howard Street, as well as the rise of illegal drug trade and youth gangs in the 1980s.

With these demographic and economic changes, local politics became increasingly divided and contentious. New social service organizations, low-income housing providers, and activist groups formed to address issues such as substandard housing, poverty, and redlining. Many of these groups focused their efforts on North of Howard (Welter 1982), which soon became a focus for political conflicts over low-income housing and has been ever since. White residents led and worked for many of these organizations, such as the Lawyers Committee for Better Housing, but people of color also held leadership and decision-making positions in groups such as the Rogers Park Tenants Association, which organized renters, and Peoples Housing, which developed low-cost rental and cooperative buildings. During these decades, crime rates also got worse in the neighborhood. Rogers Park earned a citywide reputation as dangerous. North of Howard was the locus of this image, especially because of gangs, drug violence, and the large proportion of people of color living there.

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[150] The 1970 and 1980 data used to tabulate this figure do not control for Latino origin.

Political cleavages soon developed between the Community Council and a number of these new, more politically radical organizations. They disagreed on such issues as redlining, new institutional buildings like a shelter, and—above all else—subsidized housing.[151] Diversity rhetoric became a part of the debate over such housing, particularly for the opponents. Subsidized housing is housing for poor people that federal and local housing authorities support through subsidies to building owners or to individuals.[152] By 1970, public and subsidized housing had become contentious political issues, city-wide and across the nation. In Chicago, large-scale federal housing projects, first constructed for black and white working class families in the 1930s, had become almost exclusively black and extremely poor. By the late 1960s, Aldermen and (usually white) residents often opposed these large buildings and complexes, as they did not want poor and African-American residents or the problems associated with deteriorated, poorly maintained "projects" (Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000).

The large public housing projects were unpopular, as well, with some black residents and civil rights activists, on the grounds that such housing created and exacerbated residential racial segregation. In the wake of *Gautreaux,* housing authorities in Chicago and many other cities began to move to vouchers and scattered-site subsidized housing in the early 1970s as alternative to the large housing developments, although white political leaders and residents often opposed such subsidized housing.

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[151] Activists in Rogers Park who were aligned with the citywide Citizens Action Program claimed that local financial institutions had redlined—or rejected applications for mortgages and property improvement loans–in the neighborhood, particularly in North of Howard (Welter 1982). The Illinois General Assembly heard these accusations and the State of Illinois and the city of Chicago passed anti-redlining laws. Community Council leaders, fearful of scaring away people who might seek mortgages in the neighborhood, denied that any redlining had occurred.

[152] People involved in Rogers Park politics sometimes used the term "subsidized" also to refer to private housing for poor people financed with tools such as tax credits, or they confused such private housing with subsidized housing.

In the early 1970s, the Community Council had endorsed public housing construction in Rogers Park, even as residents and Aldermen in nearby neighborhoods protested it.[153] But in the early 1980s, around the time that the *Gautreaux* case moved back into the public spotlight, subsidized housing became controversial in Rogers Park. At this time, more than 3% of the housing units in Rogers Park were subsidized—over 900 units in total, 82% of which were for seniors.[154] When the CHA announced a proposal for a building with 12 new subsidized units in the northwestern end of Rogers Park, residents with the Pottawattamie Area Committee staged demonstrations and requested an injunction from the federal district court to stop construction.[155] The Council leadership decided to oppose additional subsidized housing and voted for a moratorium on such housing.

The Council's moratorium was unenforceable, and the CHA eventually built the Pottawattamie Area units. A number of community organizations split off from the Council in protest. These defectors argued for more and better housing, especially for low-income and North of Howard residents. This political schism deepened over the 1980s, as more community organizations formed and successfully created private, subsidized housing, particularly in North of Howard.[156] In the simplest terms, groups on each side advocated that such housing was either a useful or an ill-conceived solution to local social problems.[157]

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[153] Yates, Ronald. 1971. "3 Aldermen Oppose Part of Proposed CHA Plan." *Chicago Tribune.* Apr 24 pg. N6. *Chicago Tribune.* 1971. "Low-Income Housing Proposal Stirs 49th, 50th Wards." May 6. pg. N1.

[154] In the nearby Uptown neighborhood, in comparison, 11% of housing units were subsidized; African-American neighborhoods on the city's south and west had much higher concentrations of subsidized housing, with up to 81% of the units subsidized (Swanson 1980).

[155] Branegan, Jay. "Rogers Park public housing project halted." *Chicago Tribune* Oct 28, pg. D1

[156] See e.g., Swason, Stevenson. 1981. "North of Howard Street, 'the first concern is survival'" *Chicago Tribune* Jun 4 pg. N_A1.

[157] E.g., Swanson, Stevenson.1981. "Rogers Park shelter survives protests." *Chicago Tribune* Mar 19, 1981, pg. N1.

Leaders from the Community Council and from other local groups opposed to subsidized and low-income housing couched their positions in terms of protecting economic and racial integration, eliminating segregation, and equalizing the unfair distribution of subsidized housing units across the city. According to one newspaper account, members of the Pottawattamie Area Committee argued to the district judge, "the housing project could turn the stably integrated neighborhood into a ghetto."[158] Similarly, the executive director of the Rogers Park Neighborhood Development Corporation explained her opposition to subsidized housing to the *Chicago Tribune*:

> We want to have room for everyone, but [subsidized housing developers] shouldn't target specific neighborhoods for the vast majority of subsidized housing. They're just re-creating economic and racial segregation.[159]

Some of these civic leaders defended their opposition to subsidized housing by claiming that their community was already "diverse." The Community Council joined a political coalition fighting for a moratorium on new subsidized housing that would cover the entire 9th congressional district. The coalition chairman explained,

> The 9th Congressional District is a multiracial and economically diverse community, which is a fact we all appreciate… however, we've seen the construction of a significant number of additional publicly assisted housing units in our area… Additional subsidized housing at this point could

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[158] Branegan, Jay. "Rogers Park public housing project halted." *Chicago Tribune* Oct 28, pg. D1

[159] Ansley, Mary Holm. 1981. "Residents, housing varied: Rogers Park- a diverse community." *Chicago Tribune.* Feb 1, pg. W_B2C.

irretrievably overbalance our neighborhoods, destroying all we have worked to

achieve. We therefore, are seeking the moratorium to protect the viability of

our multiracial and diverse community.[160]

For these leaders, government resources targeted to poor, black residents had become *antithetical*

to diversity and stable integration.

★ *Reinventing the Neighborhood's Identity as Inclusive and Diverse*

The neighborhood Alderman began the process of reinventing the neighborhood's identity as

"diverse" in the late 1980s and his predecessor made diversity a central theme of his

administration. In so doing, they sought to change popular images of the neighborhood as a poor

and predominantly minority neighborhood, a dangerous community, a home to low-income and

subsidized housing, and a site of heated tenant activism.

Tenants Rights and Community Mobilization

Through most the 1980s, organizations that promoted low-income housing, such as the Rogers

Park Tenants Committee and Peoples Housing, did not usually invoke language about

"diversity" in housing debates. They typically couched their positions in terms of ending

poverty, community empowerment, landlord accountability, and "'redevelopment without

displacement.'"[161] In newspaper accounts, they usually did not use explicit language about race,

but they did argue for targeted resources for poor people, who in this neighborhood were

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[160] Ziemba, Stanley. 1980. "Coalition battles subsidized housing." Chicago Tribune Oct. 16, p. N3.
[161] See e.g., Swason, Stevenson. 1981. "North of Howard Street, 'the first concern is survival'" *Chicago Tribune* Jun 4 pg. N_A1; Kane, James. 1982. "North of Howard community discovers unity in adversity." *Chicago Tribune,* Oct 7, pg. N1.

predominantly people of color (and often presumed to be people of color). There were a few exceptions: leaders from the Howard Area Community Center had created a Housing Services Center to provide emergency housing support to families in order to maintain "'a multi-ethnic, economically diverse community through the preservation of an adequate number of decent, moderately-priced rental housing units."[162]

These activists had strong support from the neighborhood's representative on city council during the 1980s, Alderman David Orr. A white man known city-wide as an advocate for tenants rights legislation, Orr endorsed low-income and subsidized housing in Rogers Park.[163] He provided support to the new organizations that had formed in the neighborhood; for example, he shared office space with the Lawyers Committee for Better Housing, and he spoke out in favor of People's Housing, which supported a number of low-income housing developments.[164] He characterized the community and his office in terms that invoked community activism and civil rights. He told reporters, "'I've always been a confirmed political activist and concerned about civil rights… I think the spirit of activism in Rogers Park is gaining.'"[165] He also advocated for directed resources to poor residents and to North of Howard: "'Section 8 subsidies are necessary… My key concern is that we have the commitment to find housing for people who live [in the neighborhood] now in overcrowded conditions.'"[166] Orr usually did not use racially

[162] Swanson, Stevenson. 1981. "Busy community center feeds, clothes, houses." *Chicago Tribune.* Jun 4. pg. N_A1
[163] Stevenson Swanson, Stevenson. 1981."Tenants vow renewed fight for rights." *Chicago Tribune* Jan 1, pg. N_A1.
[164] Kane, James. 1982. "North of Howard community discovers unity in adversity."
Chicago Tribune, Oct 7, pg. N1; Swanson, Stevenson. 1981. "Volunteer lawyers fight for Rogers Park housing." Chicago Tribune. Feb 12 pg. N_A1.
[165] Munson, Judy. 1985. "Orr's independence, activism winning over the 49th." *Chicago Tribune.* April 3, pg. G25.
[166] Swanson, Stevenson. 1981. "North of Howard Street, 'the first concern is survival'" *Chicago Tribune.* Jun 4. pg. N_A1

explicit language, but the message he conveyed was that at least some public resources should be directed to poor residents.

Marketing the Neighborhood to Investors

In the late 1980s, the language that Orr used to describe the neighborhood began to change. Investors and journalists had begun to identify Rogers Park as having potential to gentrify.[167] As developers turned their attention to Rogers Park, Orr increasingly emphasized the community's "diversity," stating "Rogers Park [is]…among the most legitimately diverse and integrated neighborhoods in any city in this nation… The good news is we've got people who want to invest."[168] In these accounts, he would point to the challenge of controlling development in order to protect diversity. The person that Orr tapped to be his successor, Joseph Moore, also a white man, came into office in the early 1990's. Moore carried Orr's rhetorical shift even further by more dramatically redefining the neighborhood's political priorities in the name of diversity.

This shift in Orr's political language, from rights to diversity, and related shift in the neighborhood's symbolic identity occurred within the broader political economic context of urban redevelopment in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Across the country, urban political and business leaders increasingly promoted gentrification as a mechanism for urban growth (Berry 1985; Kennedy and Leonard 2001). Successful gentrification involves the physical upgrading and social transformation of formerly working class and poor, predominantly minority communities. It depends on capital investment and financial and political support for new middle

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[167] Hopp-Peters, Elizabeth. 1988. "Rogers Park renaissance: Construction, renovation set stage for comeback. *Chicago Tribune* Dec. 4 p. 1
[168] Rutstein, Dagny. 1988. "Good neighbors, good business, multifaceted communities adding fuel to renaissance" *Chicago Tribune* Sep. 21, p.5.

and upper class residents. These affluent in-movers typically displace poor and minority residents who can no longer afford to remain in the community (Logan and Molotch 1987).

Neighborhood gentrification is unpredictable, often incomplete, and uneven across metropolitan areas. City politicians face political pressure from both middle class constituents and business interest groups to promote gentrification (Sassen 2001). Although political and business leaders cannot completely control or direct it, they have many private and public policy mechanisms to promote it, from building permits for new condominiums to Tax Increment Finance zones.

By the early 1990s, low-income housing development by private organizations had also become more unpopular, both across the country and in Chicago. In Rogers Park, the most well known and most reviled developer was Peoples Housing. This non-profit organization coupled government low-income housing tax credit programs with private and public financing. Between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, Peoples Housing bought and developed at least thirteen residential buildings in North of Howard, other residential buildings throughout Rogers Park, and some commercial property.[169] The organization attracted millions of dollars in private investment for low-income housing (Crain's Chicago Business 1995). But, it gradually stopped managing its properties or screening tenants, and it could not sustain its financing structure. Its buildings cycled in and out of housing court and became hubs for drug and gang activity.

The organization eventually went bankrupt by the mid-1990s, and its properties all went into receivership. Tax-credit syndicates, community organizations, and local government

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[169] In all likelihood, the organization owned or partnered on many more buildings, especially in North of Howard. Crain's Chicago Business (1992) reported that in 1992, People's Housing owned and rented out 300 units in North of Howard at a very low cost or for free. However, some neighborhood leaders estimate that it owned or was a partner for about two-thirds of the units in North of Howard. It was also involved with Triangle Park. The organization also owned buildings in Uptown.

officials had to sort out its dilapidated and often crime-ridden buildings and address the problems

these buildings posed to the local community. The tenants in Peoples Housing buildings liked the

extremely low rents and stability but complained of illegal activity like drug sales and

irresponsible building managers. Although other organizations and agencies developed

subsidized buildings in Rogers Park and many building owners neglected their rental properties,

political and civic leaders in Rogers Park often blamed People's Housing for having especially

negative and far-reaching impacts on the neighborhood. [170] The loss of many of Peoples

Housing's buildings exacerbated the supply of long-term, low-income housing in Rogers Park.

Many, but certainly not all, of the tax-credit buildings across Chicago suffered similar fates

(Chicago Rehab Network 2002). Broader changes to city housing programs, such as the

neoliberal privatization of programs that subsidized rehabilitation, also made low-income

housing development more difficult (Andreoli 1990).

The broader political landscape around fair housing and low-income housing also was

changing in the 1980s. In the 1970s, the federal courts had interpreted Title VIII as establishing a

goal of racial residential integration (The Harvard Law Review Association 1980). By the 1980s,

conservative activists were openly questioning the constitutionality of racial integration

maintenance programs, on the grounds that they promoted quotas and benign steering based on

race. Integration maintenance plans were far less common than affirmative action in the

workplace and education, and the conservative campaign against them never reached the

political or media attention paid to their campaigns against affirmative action. But under

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[170] In the 1980s, Rescorp, a for-profit firm, partnered with Standard Oil of Indiana on the $19.5 million Northpoint rehabilitation project (Chicago Sun-Times 1992; Welter 1983:58 fn 27). As of January 1998, it owned and managed about 300 units of subsidized housing in North of Howard. The CHA and other smaller entities also supported privately or publicly subsidized buildings in the neighborhood.

President Ronald Reagan, the federal courts, HUD, and other government agencies became increasingly hostile to racial integration maintenance programs. Reagan's appointees in the U.S. Justice Department pursued the high profile case, *United States v. Starrett City Associates*, a 1988 case in which the U.S. Court of Appeals found that the housing development' ceiling on black and other racial minority residents was a "quota" that made housing "unavailable" on the basis of race and thus violated Title VII (Daye 2000). [171]

Support for subsidizing housing also took a hit under Reagan. Reagan's administration oversaw an 80% cut in federal funding for subsidized housing and enforcement between 1980 and 1992. Waning popular support for subsidized housing, which had been plagued with serious problems of crime and mismanagement, made such programs a third rail issue for most city politicians. Amidst this decline in public dollars for low-cost housing for poor people, the affordable housing shortage grew more serious (Del Valle and Greising 1992).

In the 1990s, enforcement of fair housing and fair lending received a boost from the 1988 Fair Housing Amendments and the administration of President Bill Clinton, although such enforcement had little impact on real estate brokers and landlords who perpetuated housing discrimination. The U.S. Congress initiated what eventually became the $5 billion HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) program. Under this program, the Chicago Housing Authority began to implement its Plan for Transformation of high-rise public housing buildings to make room for new mixed-income communities (Chicago Housing Authority 2000). The CHA's plan drastically reduced the number of low-income units supported by the CHA and displaced many of the low-income, African-American residents who had lived in the buildings.

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[171] 840 F.2d 1096 (2d Cir. 1988).

Among other consequences, this neoliberal housing strategy redirected the focus of government programs for residential integration from race to class.

Urban scholars long have recognized that people construct symbolic identities for place-based communities (Hunter 1974). In the period from the 1960s to the early 1990s, Rogers Park's popular, symbolic identity shifted from a stable, white, middle class neighborhood of families to a racially mixed neighborhood wrought with crime but ripe for development. This community identity was amenable to changing political economic conditions of development and capital investment (Cox 1999; Logan and Molotch 1987).

This shift to a "diverse" community identity shows how a symbolic neighborhood identity can valorize residential racial integration and account for people who may be in the minority or may be institutionally excluded, even if they are not black. Yet local leaders often invoke this identity to displace, obscure, or counter rhetoric about remedying problems of racial and economic disadvantage. Housing initiatives associated with creating and maintaining a "diverse" neighborhood often are not targeted policies for assisting poor and minority residents. Hence, we see how the emergence of the diversity project ushered in a new identity for Rogers Park. This identity was commensurate with new organizational imperatives, changing demographics, and shifting political and economic terrain. The diversity project broadened issues of minority integration beyond the topic of race or a black-white divide, and it framed integration in terms that were supposed to appeal to white residents. It emphasized the values of inclusion rather than the factors contributing to exclusion. And it subtly decoupled the issue of racial inclusion from government intervention. In other words, it did not require government programs to promote racial integration, particularly programs targeted to poor, black residents. In so doing,

the diversity project helped to displace a political project of racial equality and related efforts to

promote racial and economic integration by serving the disadvantaged.

CHAPTER NINE. ROGERS PARK

THE POLITICS OF GENTRIFICATION AND MIXED-INCOME HOUSING

On a weekday morning in fall 2002, Rogers Park Alderman Joseph Moore and the neighborhood Chamber of Commerce held the 2002 State of Rogers Park Address in a local café. About 35 people attended, mostly directors, employees, and active participants from organizations and businesses in the neighborhood. Before the Alderman spoke, Beth, a white woman who worked for DevCorp North, the neighborhood's chamber of commerce, made some comments. She said:

> We believe that the diversity of Rogers Park– ethnic, racial, and economic– is worth supporting… We are leading the effort to revitalize Rogers Park from the inside out—not through gentrification, but by creating a vibrant mixed-income community and diverse businesses to meet our many needs. Our diversity is not only what we Rogers Parkers have come to love. We believe it's marketable, and we'll trumpet it around town.

In a newspaper article a few years later, Beth elaborated on the meaning of diversity. She said, "Our diversity is not just race and ethnicity, but income, educational attainment and sexual orientation."

Community organizations, journalists, and some residents have heralded Rogers Park's diversity since the early 1980s. By the late 1980s, local politicians and business interest groups

began to promote this identity for the neighborhood to attract investors and, eventually, middle income and affluent homebuyers.

Rogers Park isn't the only urban community where leaders approach race and difference as a matter of "diversity." Diversity rhetoric and diversity initiatives have become more common in neighborhoods and suburbs across the Chicago region—such as the Hyde Park neighborhood on the city's South Side, Oak Park to the wast, and some northwest suburbs—and in other metropolitan areas such as Philadelphia and Monterey Park in California (Goode 2001a; Horton 1995).[172] Promoting income and ethno-racial diversity has become a tenet of urban planning over the last thirty years (Galster and Booza 2007). Such a goal is stated in the American Planning Association's code of ethics, and the APA held a Minority Planning Summit in 2004, which it renamed the Diversity Summit for 2005 (ibid).[173]

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Rogers Park is a neighborhood located on Chicago's far North Side along Lake Michigan. This dense, largely residential community is home to tree-lined streets with large apartment complexes, condominiums, smaller two and three-flat buildings, and single-family homes. Rogers Park hosts twelve schools, Loyola University, a number of retirement homes and social service providers, and at least twenty-five churches, temples, and other religious institutions, as well as a large factory located in the far southwest corner of the community. The commercial strips are lined with Mexican, Belizean, Thai, and a growing number of high-end restaurants as

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[172] http://www.oak-park.us/Village_Background/Village_Background.html
[173] http://www.planning.org/diversity/resources.htm?project=Print . Accessed March 21, 2008.

well as laundromats, Afro-centric shops, liquor stores, and chain and local cafes. It is a historically liberal and politically active neighborhood. Democratic Alderman Joseph Moore, the local elected political official who represents the neighborhood in city hall, is known for his independence from Mayor Richard Daley. In the early 2000s, unlike most Chicago neighborhoods, Rogers Park was home for people of a wide range of racial and ethnic groups and economic backgrounds. But like many Chicago neighborhoods, the pressures of a skyrocketing housing market were changing the neighborhood's character, local political dynamics, and the cost of living.

Local organizational elites in Rogers Park constructed and mobilized the ideology and initiatives of the diversity project in the contemporary political context. These leaders, despite many their differences, shared an interest in community growth (Logan and Molotch 1987; Molotch 1976) and shared similar views of diversity. These leaders include Alderman Joseph Moore, his staff, and other political representatives from the city and the federal government. The main business interest groups were DevCorp North and the Rogers Park Builders Group, which represents local real estate industry professionals. They also include representatives from the more mainstream and politically connected non-profit organizations, most notably the Rogers Park Community Council. I touch on the roles of political activists in the neighborhood who organized tenants and their allies, as these activists played a critical role in shaping neighborhood debates and discourse about development and diversity.

Concerns about diversity in neighborhood politics have focused on demographic change, low-income housing, redevelopment, and gentrification. I demonstrate how local political elites strategically used diversity rhetoric and initiatives to manage the politics surrounding these

issues in the early 2000s. My goal is to reveal the discursive and organizational mechanisms on which local leaders have relied to communicate diversity as the official local ideology of race, difference, and inclusion. I also examine how this racialized project of diversity frames, transforms, and displaces other racial ideologies and political agendas, particularly the project of racial equality.

City politics, the national housing market, law, and the pressures of disinvestment and gentrification all influenced how political leaders in Rogers Park spoke about and managed issues of race and diversity. For example, both federal and local governments have moved away from public housing programs to house very poor renters. Unlike their counterparts at Michigan, local leaders in Rogers Park had only marginal impacts on this broader political and legal context. However, public policy and law are not only defined through formal proceedings and court decisions. They also are shaped by the mechanisms through which they are implemented in local contexts, and local leaders certainly had some influence over these mechanisms.

These local elites faced such imperatives as managing contentious community politics over low-income housing, appealing to homeowners and white residents without alienating residents of color or violating local norms of tolerance and inclusion, shaping the implementation of public policy, and refashioning the neighborhood for neoliberal governance and redevelopment.

These leaders have strategically constructed a symbolic neighborhood identity through symbols, images, and rhetoric of diversity. They have relied on the political project of diversity to frame the issue of development, delineate sides, and present one side as superior. For example, Politicians and social service providers framed the terms of these politics by posing diversity as a

goal and a solution, within the context of the positive and negative effects of development, while business leaders presented diversity as a goal not yet achieved because of the lack of affluent residents and homeowners. In the name of diversity, local organizational elites have endorsed, but redefined, "affordable" housing programs to promote mixed-income condominiums. In these and other ways, they have changed the constituents for inclusion, constructing affluent and homeowning residents as valuable contributors to diversity. These leaders simultaneously have invoked diversity rhetoric and related political actions and initiatives in ways that marginalize alternative political agendas, particularly those promoted by tenant organizers and their allies.

A common theme cuts across these various uses of the diversity project. In the name of diversity, local decision-makers have acknowledged and affirmed race as a marker of cultural differences. At the same time, these leaders have downplayed problems of racial injustice and resource redistribution to low-income renters, who are predominantly African-American and Latinos. In so doing, local political elites have established diversity as the official ideology of race, difference, and inclusion, and they have helped to marginalize and displace other racialized projects, particularly what remains of the project of racial equality.

II. How Demographic Change, Housing Markets, and Community Politics Shaped the Diversity Project in Rogers Park

The most salient institutional factors shaping the diversity project in Rogers Park have been community activism around racial integration and housing, changing residential demographics, political liberalism among the neighborhood's voting constituency, changing government policies for affordable housing, and real estate investment trends.

Demographic Change, Gentrification, and Low-Income Housing in Rogers Park and other

Urban Neighborhoods

Rogers Park has an array of reputations. Some people see it as an outpost of white liberals, aging

hippies, and college students. Others view it as a crime-ridden area. Still others consider it an

immigrant gateway, or a welcoming area for gay people, or a sleepier, affordable alternative to

other North Side lakefront neighborhoods. And, prior to the recent housing downturn, a growing

number of people regarded it as a ripe investment opportunity. With a long tradition of activism,

Rogers Park has also earned notoriety for its spirited politics. But if you ask residents, especially

whites, to characterize their neighborhood, the first thing they are likely to tell you is that they

live in one of the most diverse—if not *the* most diverse— neighborhoods in the city. As one

white professional said to me, with some accuracy, "If you interview anybody, what's the first

thing out of their mouth? Diversity. We love the diversity." Local residents are not alone in these

characterizations; urban scholars have identified Rogers Park as one of the country's stable,

racially and economically mixed neighborhoods (Nyden, Maly and Lukehart 1997).[174]

Since the 1960s, organizational contests over diversity in Rogers Park have centered on

the racial and economic demographics of neighborhood residents and low-income housing. The

neighborhood's demographics have transformed dramatically since the early 1970s. In 1970,

96% of the residents were white, although they varied ethnically and religiously (Chicago Fact

Book Consortium 1984). The median family income was $52,013 (in 2004 dollars), and 8% of

the population lived in poverty. Over the following three decades, the total number of residents

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[174] Nyden, Maly, and Lukehart (1997) use census tract data and interviews to identify stable, diverse neighborhoods out of the ten largest U.S. cities and twelve mid-size or small cities. I, too, rely on the community area designation to define Rogers Park's boundaries because local political participants generally use the same boundaries. However, these designations can differ from residents' perceptions of their neighborhood, hide demographic variation, and understate the importance of the broader urban context (Hunter 1974; Klinenberg 2002).

stayed about the same but white residents moved out or stopped moving in. In 2000, the racial composition was divided among White (32%), African-American (30%), and Latino (28%) residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). This ethno-racial variation also existed at the census tract and block levels.[175] About 34% of residents were born outside the U.S. and over 40% of households spoke a language other than English at home. The neighborhood also became poorer, with family median income dropping to $37,063 (in 2004 dollars).

Stable, ethnically and racially-mixed neighborhoods such as Rogers Park are uncommon, making up less than one-fifth of all neighborhoods in the 1980s (Ellen 2000; Nyden, Maly and Lukehart 1997), although sociologist Ingrid Gould Ellen shows that these neighborhoods have become more common over time. Still, U.S. cities and suburbs are characterized by widespread racial segregation, shaped by the legacy of racist housing policies, the housing market, and ongoing institutional practices, community resistance, and individual stereotypes (Ellen 2000; Galster and Godfrey 2005; Massey and Denton 1993).

Few communities, Rogers Park included, had government integration maintenance policies or community organizations that promoted racial or economic integration between the 1970s and the early 2000s (see, e.g., Briggs, Darden and Aidala 1999; Goodwin 1979; Saltman 1990). Rather, Rogers Park is one of many communities that has what sociologist Phillip Nyden and his colleagues (1997) have called "laissez-faire diversity." In such communities, stable demographic heterogeneity results from economic and social processes related only indirectly to

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[175] According to the Neighborhood Diversity Index, eight of the nine census tracts were "integrated" in 2000 and five of them were among the most integrated in the city (Maly 2000). Similarly, in both 1990 and 2000 all the block groups in Rogers Park had a Diversity Index of over 70, among the highest in Chicago (Sandoval and Li 2004). The Diversity Index measures the evenness of the five ethno-racial groups included in the U.S. Census (White, Black, Latino, Asian, and Other) at the block group level. In a block group with a score of 100, all ethno-racial groups are equally represented. In a block group with a score of 0, there is only one ethno-racial group.

actions taken by local governments or community organizations. While this classification does not take into account the actions by the Community Council to support open housing in the late 1960s, it does adequately capture the broader structural context shaping racial integration in the neighborhood.

As Rogers Park became more racially and economically heterogeneous, it also became poorer and more economically bifurcated. The period between 1970 and 2000 was a time of rising income inequality across the U.S. and within urban neighborhoods (Galster and Booza 2007). The growth of what Galster and Booza call "bipolar" communities has been fueled primarily by growing income inequality across metropolitan regions, more so than by gentrification. These communities typically have a considerably larger share of wealthy families, a mix of racial groups, and sizable numbers of middle-aged people and renters (ibid). Almost every one of the 77 community areas in Chicago, including Rogers Park, experienced a considerable decrease in the number of moderate income families between 1970 and 2000 (Taylor nd). In fact, Rogers Park was one of the 11 neighborhoods in Chicago that became poorer over this period.[176] The percentage of moderate income families—those earning between $38,622 and $78,825 in 2000 (adjusted to 2004 dollars)—declined steadily from 47% to 31% while the percentage of low income families—those earning up to $38,622—increased from 28% to 51%. The percentage of families earning over $78,825 dropped from 25% to 15% in the 1970s, and then slowly climbed to 18% by 2000.

Researchers from Loyola University have estimated, conservatively, that 1,840 housing units in Rogers Park in the early 2000s received a subsidy from federal, county, or city programs

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[176] Metro Chicago Information Center, Income Diversity: Rogers Park.
http://info.mcfol.org/web/datainfo/incomediversity/incomediversity.asp?cid=01. Accessed March 21, 2008.

(Center for Urban Research and Learning 2002). Most of these subsidies support renters earning up to 80% of the area median income, although some are intended for very low-income people and a few fund homeownership. They range from the 17 scattered-site public housing buildings in the neighborhood to the 8 buildings with Class 9 tax reduction incentives. In 2002, 781 tenants in the neighborhood had Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly Section 8) to pay for their rent in subsidized or non-subsidized buildings, although that number of HCV households has since decreased. These subsidized units represented approximately 6.7% of the housing units in the neighborhood, up from 3% of subsidized units in 1980 (Swanson 1980), and about 35.4% of the subsidized units house elderly residents.[177]

Although gentrification is not the modal pattern of neighborhood change in the U.S., it has occurred in many forms in communities throughout Chicago and across the country (Beauregard 1990; Kennedy and Leonard 2001; Pattillo 2007; Williams 1988). Rogers Park experienced uneven but steady gentrification between the mid-1990s and the early 2000s, particularly in the housing market. As is typically the case with gentrification (Mele 2000; Smith 1996), redevelopment in Rogers Park followed decades of economic disinvestment by landlords and businesses, out-migration of affluent residents, and in-migration of poorer residents and people of color. The housing market rebounded in the mid-1990s and became increasingly tight, following trends in Chicago and similar U.S. cities. The median cost of a single-family detached home almost doubled in eight years, and developers converted at least 80 rental buildings into condos between 1996 and 2000 (Center for Urban Research and Learning 2002).

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[177] The increase in subsidized buildings and units between 1980 and the present are driven by new subsidies for seniors.

Housing activists in Rogers Park and throughout Chicago, Boston, New York and other U.S. cities pronounced a "crisis" in low-income and affordable housing. Through the 1990s, the Chicago region had lost 52,000 rental units, in large measure because of condominium conversions (University of Illinois at Chicago 1999). New restrictions on welfare recipients and the transformation of high-rise public housing in Chicago, which would require an additional 15,000 families to relocate because the city was demolishing their units, compounded the city's deficit of 150,000 units of housing for families earning $20,000/year (Schechter, Bernstein and Perkins 2004).

These trends accelerated in the early 2000s, as property owners raised rents, and developers converted rental buildings into condominiums at an increasingly rapid rate, with almost 1000 rental units lost each year in the early 2000s (Lakeside Community Development Corporation 2006). The majority of homeowners and recipients of conventional mortgage loans were white residents, who displaced renters who were predominantly African-American and Latino and presumably lower-income (ibid). Renters and their advocates in Rogers Park often recounted landlord discrimination against tenants with Section 8 vouchers, property owners' illegal displacements of renters to make way for condominium conversions, and permit violations by developers. At the same time, living in Rogers Park was relatively less expensive than other lakefront North Side neighborhoods, and the homeownership rate was 17% in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

The neighborhood has had greater difficulty attracting and maintaining businesses, especially those catering to the middle class. A Starbucks—the "green siren" of gentrification, in one activist's words—opened on Sheridan, but empty storefronts still checker the commercial

streets. The city has taken a number of measures to encourage private investment. These include the establishment of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) zone around Howard to help subsidize a $75 million shopping mall, a $20 million renovation of train and bus stations and streetscaping, and a 120-story mixed-income building for seniors (Pearce 2001).

These demographic changes occurred in Rogers Park amidst dramatic economic and political transformations (di Leonardo 1998; Downey 1999; Omi and Winant 1994; Schuck 2003; Wieviorka 1998). The deindustrialization that followed World War II hit Rust Belt cities like Chicago especially hard, particularly their working class and racial minority populations. Companies moved their facilities to the suburbs, the U.S. sun belt, and overseas. Industries such as information technology, tourism, entertainment, and other specialized services have become leading economic sectors in many cities (Sassen 2001; Wilson 1996). Such industries tend to provide job opportunities at opposite ends of the pay scale and occupational ladder. This labor market structure contributes to rising income inequality and helps to create a bifurcated urban workforce, with pools of affluent and disadvantaged workers that each rely on different types of housing and commercial and public services.

By the 1980s, city governments began embracing neoliberal urban development strategies conducive to these economic trends. Such strategies prioritize free market capitalism and the tenets of economic efficiency, privatization, and individual responsibility (Reed 1999; Ruben 2001). Many city agencies eschewed the urban policies of the recent past, which had supported supply-side public housing and large-scale land clearance (Hirsch 1983). They have cut public funding for social programs and encouraged fiscal growth through policies promoting historic preservation, condominium conversions, and subsidies for private investment in

disadvantaged communities (Zukin 1987). Although suburbanization was still the dominant trend in the 1990s (Wyly and Hammel 1999), upscale residential and commercial amenities have proliferated in gentrifying cities and neighborhoods. These changes frequently displace the low-cost housing, social services, businesses, and social networks upon which poor and racial minority residents rely (Kennedy and Leonard 2001) and heighten social conflicts and tension between residents of different class backgrounds (Anderson 1990; Pattillo 2007).

Amidst these transformations, government officials and for-profit entrepreneurs have tried to symbolically reconstruct cities as places of consumption and spectacle (Fincher and Jacobs 1998; Lloyd and Clark 2001; Mele 2000). People depend upon symbolic means to exercise political and economic power, communicate their agendas, and distribute material resources (Edelman 1977; Kertzer 1988). Accordingly, enthusiastic endorsements of diversity are often a part of efforts to remake cities as cultural, tourist, or investment destinations. Local elites in changing neighborhoods have instrumentally manipulated terms like diversity, multicultural, and mixed-income to encourage gentrification (Bennett and Reed 1999; Berrey 2005; Conquergood 1992; Goode 2001a; Mele 2000).

In the early 2000s, a number of local organizations were active in neighborhood redevelopment and housing politics in Rogers Park. These included business-interests associations, tenant and worker organizers and their allies, service providers, and quality of life initiatives like block clubs and community policing, as well as the city government.[178] With a few exceptions, participants and leaders in all these groups were conspicuously white and middle

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[178] I do not discuss quality of life groups. The conservative participants in such groups tend have similar political agendas and use similar diversity discourse as the Alderman and advocates for gentrification; the liberal participants share more similarities with the white tenant activists.

class. Although many groups had racially mixed boards of directors, most had just a couple of black members, employees, or board members active in housing issues. Latino participants were virtually absent, although the Chamber of Commerce hired a Latino employee to spearhead initiatives with local Latino-owned businesses near the end of my study.

These political officials, business leaders, advocates from non-profit organizations, and grassroots activists disagreed about the extent of gentrification, the impact of redevelopment on the neighborhood and its mix of residents, and the need to support low and moderate-income housing. Diversity rhetoric and initiatives were central to these debates.

The Diversity Project in Rogers Park

To state the obvious, a neighborhood is a different institutional structure than a large bureaucratic organization. This matters for the diversity project in a number of ways. Although many communities have an elected political official who has an office and staff, such as Rogers Park's Alderman, there is no central neighborhood administration with the attendant power, resources, and authority over institutional members and relationships. Leaders in a neighborhood, even elected officials, do not have power over residents' behavior or public rhetoric in the same way that a corporate employer has over its employees or even that a university has over its faculty and students. An employer can hire or fire employees, while a resident rarely needs to seek approval to move into a community. Rather, residents elect to live in a community within such constraints as prices, availability of housing, racially discriminatory real estate practices, and the receptivity of their neighbors. Neighborhood residents have far more leeway in their conduct than do employees, within the bounds of law and the rules

established by the property owner or the association that governs the gated communities, luxury building, or condominium building; in the case of public housing, these rules can be quite severe.

Neighborhood politics are carried out through political and interest group competition over exchange and use-values of property. Political officials, business interest groups, and some non-profit organizations such as universities have far more power in this system than do individual residents or small grassroots organizations, and they frequently ally to promote growth that will support business profits, a hospitable environment for patrons, and taxpayer dollars (Crenson 1983; Logan and Molotch 1987; Suttles 1990).

Two additional factors distinguish the diversity project in Rogers Park from my two other cases in important ways. The first involves the general impetus of efforts to promote neighborhood "diversity." Universities and companies have tried to attract competitive racial minority (and, in some cases, female) students and employees. Neighborhood leaders in Rogers Park and other comparable communities such as Oak Park (Goodwin 1979) have focused on *retaining* white residents when people of color move into the neighborhood.

The other factor is the role of class and classism in the housing market. As legal scholar Peter Schuck (2003) thoughtfully observes, classism is a fundamental feature of the housing market, law, popular culture, and morality in the U.S. While law forbids racism in all but the most private matters, law restricts classism under few circumstances, such as access to voting, and actually protects or promotes class stratification in housing and elsewhere. The federal government contributes, as well, by allowing mortgage interest deductions on housing programs that are more than double the size of government spending on all low-income housing programs (Howard 1997 in Schuck 2003). Yet classism and racism are closely linked through residential

patterns and through the issue of government-subsidized housing. More generally, it means that the politics of diversity in the neighborhood usually play out through rhetoric about economic diversity and policy initiatives intended to support different economic classes and different types of residents, namely renters or owners.

Thus, leaders from different organizations in Rogers Park endorse an ideology of diversity that is less coherent and less consistently agreed upon by organizational members, residents, or political constituents than the ideologies espoused by leaders at University of Michigan or, especially, by Starr Corporation.

That said, leaders from the Builders Group, DevCorp and the Rogers Park Community Council along with Alderman Joseph Moore, his staff, and other local representatives from city and federal government relied on diversity as the official, race-conscious ideology of race, difference, and inclusion for the neighborhood. Their ideology of diversity shares a number of similar features with diversity ideology in my university and corporate cases. They defined "diversity" so that it included, but covered more than, racial minorities or poor people. Beth from the Chamber of Commerce, for example, described diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, income, educational attainment, and sexual orientation. The message here is that *everyone* contributes to diversity, not just people of color. These forms of diversity are malleable and vague and have become increasingly broad over time.

Sociologist John B. Thompson (1984) observes that any ideology contains implicit contrasts. This moral valuation of diversity ideology contrasts diversity with institutional models that repress or limit difference. The contrast here—what the community does *not* value—is a lily-white suburb, or extreme racial segregation, or just plain, boring homogeneity. As I detail

below, however, local elites voiced differing opinions about the extent to which diversity already existed or was an ideal yet to be achieved.

Local organizational elites frequently referred to the institutional benefits of social diversity. Their language about diversity's benefits was comparably less elaborate than that of their university and corporate counterparts. Neighborhood leaders have fewer resources to draw upon to make such claims, as urban scholars have spent far less energy demonstrating the benefits of residential diversity (and those who study this topic have produced less-than rosy findings (e.g., Pattillo 2007; Putnam 2007) than have scholars of higher education and business management. Likewise, groups that advocate for diversity in community planning may provide advice and planning strategies to neighborhood leaders, but their influence pales in comparison to the diversity consulting industry upon which university and corporate administrators rely.

Still, organizational elites in Rogers Park often asserted that diversity is compatible with and can even benefit those central imperatives in urban politics: community growth and development. Again, Beth supported this view when she said, "We are leading the effort to revitalize Rogers Park by creating a vibrant mixed-income community." The Alderman does the same through the boilerplate statements on his web site and in his public speeches such as "The 49th Ward is one of the most diverse and vibrant communities to be found anywhere in the world. Our community is a model for the rest of the city and nation, truly showing that a racially and economically diverse community can thrive and grow." Along these same lines, local leaders frequently present diversity as a commodity available for consumption.

Local leaders in Rogers Park sometimes called for institutional or individual action to support diversity, such as community plans or patronizing Mexican-owned restaurants.

Moreover, diversity rhetoric was the cornerstone of the diversity project in Rogers Park. In other words, they said much but did relatively little in the name of diversity. They did not have a comprehensive set of diversity initiatives comparable to their counterparts at Starr or Michigan. Rather, they used diversity rhetoric to characterize various government policies, community plans, types of residents, businesses, and political and economic interventions as relevant or contrary to "diversity." Tenant activists criticized local planning bodies that failed to represent the renters and racial minority residents, but political leaders rarely had to account for their grandiose claims of supporting diversity.

And local political elites often had open disagreements about how to best promote neighborhood diversity. Likewise, organizational efforts to support residential diversity in Rogers Park have been controversial, fairly decentralized, and rather haphazard. This is not to say that leaders and administrators at Michigan and Starr did not disagree over how to best define or pursue diversity—they certainly did—but open public disagreements were less common or acceptable than in Rogers Park.

However, the Alderman oversees many land use and development decisions, with input from his small staff of about five people and entities such as the Alderman's Land Use and Zoning Advisory Committee and the local Chamber of Commerce/Community Development Corporation (CDC). The city subsidizes much of the commercial development and has cleared land for development and public works, while making few or limited efforts to protect or create low-cost housing.

Such images of and language about diversity appeared in local leaders' public speeches, organizations' mission statements and community planning documents, and popular

representations of the neighborhood. Despite their often divergent agendas, politicians, the local real estate industry trade association, CDCs, and social service providers—as well as the media, local university researchers (Nyden, Maly and Lukehart 1997), and even some tenant activist groups —collectively have cultivated a reputation for Rogers Park as a community where diversity flourishes and is valued.

★ *Constructing a Symbolic Institutional Identity as Inclusive*

The most publicized interpretation of Rogers Park's diversity depicts the neighborhood as a rainbow of demographic and cultural groups co-existing harmoniously, united by their assorted backgrounds and their acceptance of their differences. This image appears everywhere from media coverage of the neighborhood to exhibits at the Chicago and neighborhood historical societies. For example, the banner hanging on street poles throughout the community portrays different colored hands forming a tree (see Figure 11). This same image is on a large, wooden sign at the south eastern end of the neighborhood that greets drivers from the south, "Welcome to Rogers Park, Home of Loyola University." Local high school students painted an award-winning mural near the lakefront with the words "Power in Diversity" surrounded by faces from different ethno-racial and religious backgrounds (see Figure 2).

Figure 11. Neighborhood banner

Figure 12. Lakefront mural

Figure 13. Web page banner for Rogers Park Alderman

In the 1990s, Alderman Moore made the neighborhood's diversity a major theme of his administration. On Moore's web site, the header includes the same image of a tree that decorates poles throughout the neighborhood and the slogan he has used since at least 2002, "Celebrating diversity in the 49th ward" (see Figure 13).

Pro-gentrification groups such as the chamber of commerce and the Builders Group pitch the community's diversity as profitable commodity and asset as they seek to attract business owners, homeowners, and investors. The Builders Group, founded in 1993, is the local trade association for real estate professionals. It functions as a platform for over one hundred developers, realtors, property owners, investors, bank representatives, and representatives of select community agencies. All but a few of the most active participants in the early 2000s were white. The organization tries to help members profit from their local investments, sponsors networking opportunities like a monthly breakfast for artists and small business owners, and promotes cultural events such as the Rogers Park Jazz Festival.

Builders Group leaders work to maintain positive relations with certain social service agencies and quality of life groups, as they are well aware that a local premium is placed on liberal tolerance and that neighborhood constituencies can either facilitate or disrupt their work. Some members are known—by other members and the community at-large—as disreputable landlords, developers who openly engage in illegal practices, or construction companies that produce shoddy property. But the building owners and developers who engage in most egregious practices tend to not join the organization at all. Not all members are motivated solely by quick profits. According to one leader, about a third of the members lived in Rogers Park, and many want to see high-quality development that fits with the character of the neighborhood—not

necessarily low-income housing but not strip malls or dense, poorly constructed condominiums. A number of members have a service ethic and volunteer at the school, belong to other community organizations, or donate resources to local artists or immigrants. They patronize local restaurants and bars, participate in community listservs, and attend neighborhood events such as street festivals.

Regardless of these motives, Builders Group members by and large are concerned with neighborhood social problems only to the extent that these problems interfere with property values, building management, and attracting and maintaining clients, particularly affluent clients. They tend to support solutions to social problems that displace housing for poor people, criminalize racial minority youth, and cater to middle class residents. Despite their boosterism, many members pessimistically believe that the neighborhood is not gentrifying, or at least not quickly enough. They worry that this will affect their ability to pay off their mortgage, cover their children's college tuition, or retire early.

The Builders Group's brochure describes each of the neighborhood's major commercial districts in terms of its "own unique character, mirroring the diversity of its residents," heralding the "eclectic mix" of businesses on Sheridan Road and the "global village" of Mexican, Central and South American restaurants, bakeries, and stores on Clark Street (see Figure 14). Builders Group members regularly organize networking events to patronize local restaurants owned by racial and ethnic minorities in the name of supporting diversity.

Local leaders in many urban communities have sponsored community festivals and bicentennial commemorations that portray communities as mosaics of cultures (Goodwin 1979; Spillman 1997). City boosters have marketed demographic differences as if they were

commodities and have depicted a fictitious kind of community equality through the lens of diversity, making it easier to govern development and obscure their political power (Zukin 1995). More generally, both glamorized portraits of ethnic diversity (Goode 2001a) and gritty, seemingly authentic images of bohemian diversity (Lloyd 2002) appear to be classic symbols of the contemporary urban order.


Rogers Park offers some of Chicago's most interesting and varied restaurants, coffee shops, bistros and music spots. Each commercial district has its own unique character, mirroring the diversity of its residents.

Sheridan Road: An Eclectic Mix

Running the full length of Rogers Park, parallel to and just west of the parks and beaches, Sheridan Road provides a dignified mix of vintage homes and apartment buildings, eclectic shops, restaurants and coffee houses. The southern-most-end is anchored by Loyola University, the high-rise Granada Center and the Loyola EL station. As one travels north, the

Clark Street: A Global Village

Also running the length of the community, a half-mile west of Sheridan Road, Clark Street features dozens of unique restaurants, bakeries, and small stores from all over the world, particularly Mexico, Central and South America. Here you'll find Chicago's only exclusively Indian cinema, one of the north side's most comprehensive produce markets and the Mega-Mall, a mélange of small immigrant shops under one roof. Prominent at the

Howard Street: The Essence of Renaissance

Forming the border between Chicago and Evanston, Howard Street is being revitalized. The two cities are pooling their resources in making the street more visually appealing with vintage-style lighting, tree plantings and street furniture in addition to laying new streets, sidewalks and parking setbacks. These improvements will complement the multi-million-dollar integration of the CTA regional transportation hub with the adjacent

Figure 14. Builders Group brochure

Such depictions of diversity are amenable to a neoliberal vision of racial and ethnic differences as exotic, aesthetically pleasing, and controlled. Neoliberal ideology, as interpreted by its critics, does not uniformly strive to erase race or ethnicity (di Leonardo 1998; Reed 1999; Ruben 2001). It actually allows for and even endorses certain racial identifications. Political scientist Adolph Reed (1999), for example, suggests that supporters of neoliberalism may take conventionally liberal stances on many social issues like integration, as long as those issues do

not interfere with free market capitalism or draw attention to racial inequalities. Therefore, popular discourse about contemporary development frequently frames diversity as a sort of warm fuzzy multiculturalism, an image that papers over the very inequities that development depends upon and exacerbates (Zukin 1995).

Yet however superficial or insidious these endorsements of diversity, they differ importantly from the openly racist attitudes so acceptable among white people through most of Chicago's history and still commonplace within such institutions as the Chicago Police Department (Futterman, Mather and Miles forthcoming). To be sure, racism and xenophobia continue to operate through such institutional mechanisms as racial steering by real estate agents (Galster and Godfrey 2005). They are apparent in the political discourse over such issues as immigration and in the private attitudes of many Americans. But today, urban political leaders in many locales are far less likely to make openly racist statements than they were fifty years ago and, when they do, these opinions are much less socially acceptable. Likewise, popular support for the *idea* of diverse communities is widespread (Hartmann, Edgell and Gerteis 2005)

III. Diversity Ideology and Initiatives and the Politics of Neighborhood Redevelopment

Neighborhood politicians, business interests groups, and mainstream social service providers invoked diversity rhetoric and, sometimes, relied on diversity initiatives to manage contentious neighborhood politics around development and low-income housing.

★ *Framing the Terms of Low-Income Housing and Neighborhood Redevelopment*

Community conflicts often erupt over development in Rogers Park on a project-to-project basis. The neighborhood lacks an elected board to formulate a broader neighborhood plan or convene periodic public forums, nor has the state or a large private entity imposed a master plan for a large-scale intervention, such as public housing or a gated subdivision. This political modus operandi dates back to the 1950s, but current conflicts are rooted in the early 1970s when organizations representing white homeowners clashed with those representing low-income and minority tenants over redlining and subsidized housing (Welter 1982).

In the 1990s, with rising crime rates, the collapse of Peoples Housing, and management problems with other subsidized and tax credit buildings, the cause of low-income housing lost support in the neighborhood and throughout the city (Chicago Rehab Network 2002). Through the 1990s, local business owners formed an association to represent business interests, which became the Rogers Park Builders Group, and other quality of life and anti-crime initiatives developed, such as the City of Chicago's pilot community policing program. As Loyola University sought to attract undergraduates in high-stakes admissions, university leaders also invested more resources into stabilizing, developing, and reducing crime in the surrounding neighborhood. In the early 2000s, tenant activists were still organizing tenants and businesspeople in the neighborhood, although other community organizations and many residents found their actions too disruptive and mistargeted.

These dynamics were indicative of historical turning points in urban activism across the country. Educated, wealthy professionals were mobilizing around quality of life concerns and

unfettered growth. Meanwhile, groups that organized poor and minority residents were active but faced dwindling resources (Logan, Whaley and Crowder 1999).

Local organizational elites attempt to manage political controversies and establish and maintain terms that are favorable to such interests as remaining elected, securing donations, maintaining support from constituents, and earning profits. Towards these ends, neighborhood leaders have relied on diversity rhetoric as they frame discussions and debates about development, low-income housing, and gentrification.

Diversity as a Planning Ideal

Local political leaders framed diversity as an unquestioned good that should be protected and pursued through planned development. Such rhetoric grows out of a strand of urban planning that calls for the preservation and promotion of diversity (Duany and Plater-Zyberk 1993; Jacobs 1961). To be clear, neighborhood leaders did not have a single, coherent plan for development in the neighborhood, although they did have specific plans for particular sub-sections of the neighborhood. They primarily based their metrics of diversity on census data about racial groups in the neighborhood, although some organizations conducted surveys of the housing stock and drew upon applied academic research.

Neighborhood politicians, DevCorp leaders, and Community Council spokespeople commonly suggest that the community has space for many different kinds of people and, in turn, it needs different kinds of housing and commercial development to support these residents and business owners. They have invoked diversity rhetoric to substantiate these claims, referring to diversity as a description of current residents, an ideal for community living, and an

unquestioned good. They suggest, both implicitly and explicitly, that urban planning should promote the ideal of diversity.

Alderman Moore usually stands at the nexus of controversial redevelopment decisions. He has a challenging job—in this politically divided neighborhood, many political activists and observers accuse him of being unassertive and either too supportive or not supportive enough on issues like low-income housing. In the early 2000s, his chief of staff was a white man, and his staff assistants included a white man and two women of color. He has the tacit albeit unenthusiastic approval of many community residents and organizations; in the 2007 Aldermanic election, he won 49.3% of votes in the four-way primary and 51.6% of votes in the final runoff.

Moore has a reputation, especially outside the neighborhood, for being receptive to community input; he has set up community forums, described below, to solicit input from residents on various plans for the neighborhood. Yet his redevelopment task forces and committees almost always consist of white, affluent organizational leaders and homeowners. Under political pressure, he has lent some support to low-income housing and small business preservation. Developers are beholden to the Alderman because most redevelopment involves revisions to zoning codes, which he must approve. He created a policy of requiring developers who need city assistance to set-aside ten percent of units for "affordable" units, but his office rarely exercises this policy (Lakeside CDC 2006). The Alderman is beholden to real estate industry businesses for campaign contributions; between January 2005 and June 2006, 43.6% of donations to his Aldermanic campaign came from businesses and organizations in real estate

construction, development, and management, making the real estate industry his largest single source of contributions.[179]

During our 2002 interview, I asked the Alderman to talk about the major issues that he confronted. He told me, starting with one of his boilerplate statements:

> I view as the overarching issue, overarching reality that we're trying to preserve this neighborhood as its diversity—its racial diversity, its economic diversity… When I first became Alderman, the greater challenge was how do we preserve our diversity, in a sense of trying to reinvigorate the economy of this neighborhood and prevent further disinvestment. Now, it's… we have development, how do we control that development and make sure that it occurs within the context of maintenance of diversity. So, that's *the* major challenge…So, bottom line is my role and I think the role of most of the responsible community organizations in the neighborhood is to try to strike that balance.

Leaders in DevCorp took the position that diversity could be planned for in ways that would satisfy everyone. DevCorp was a chamber of commerce for the entire neighborhood and also an economic and community development corporation. Alderman Moore, along with other community groups, decided to merge what was, in the early 1990s, the Howard/Paulina Development Corporation and a few waning chambers that served specific commercial strips. The organization's focus was economic "revitalization" through retail and commercial

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[179] Developing Government Accountability to the People. Report Card 2007: Alderman Joseph P. Moore, Ward 49. http://www.dgapchicago.org/aldermen/moore. Accessed March 24, 2008. The real estate industry makes an average of 31% of contributions to Aldermanic campaigns city-wide.

development. According to one staff member, the organization's primary funding source was the Department of Planning and Development, which contracted DevCorp to provide assistance to local businesses, although considerable funding also came from other city agencies, foundations, and membership. The organization's mission statement in 2003 explained:

> DevCorp North's mission is to improve the business and economic climate of Rogers Park through economic development, community development, and Chamber of Commerce activities. We value the diversity of Rogers Park and will diligently work to enhance it through balanced growth.

By 2007, under a new director, the organization spelled out its vision of how development could promote diversity:

> Our vision is to lead the way in showing the City of Chicago and the nation that balanced development is possible. Rogers Park will be the model for an advanced and sophisticated form of community development that values diversity, has defined it, planned for it and achieved development projects that serve all constituencies. Rogers Park will be a destination for people who seek a harmoniously diverse neighborhood, rich in arts and culture, in which to live, work, play and raise a family.

Unlike representatives from DevCorp or the Builders Group, Moore would often speak at once of the good and bad of development—the benefits of economic stimulation and the need to counteract the attendant negative effects. He described diversity as that elusive good to be

protected, but without a clear standard for judging when development hurts diversity. In response to a 2006 study showing that high-paced condominium conversions in Rogers Park were displacing poor residents, the *Chicago Tribune* quoted Moore as say, "'It's one of those double-edged swords… Obviously, there are condo conversions occurring because people want to move to Rogers Park and that is a good thing. Of course, the concern is if it's left unabated, it could threaten our neighborhood's diversity.'"[180]

Other political representatives took a similar tack. At one community meeting, a block club activist asked State Congressional representative Harry Osterman, a white man known for his liberal politics, about his thoughts on development and declining commercial districts. Osterman replied:

> We live in a wonderfully diverse community. People come here and stay here for
> the diversity… There's a way to do economic development without displacing
> people. There is a large Latino constituency in the 49th ward that needs services
> and stores…. There's a lot of disposable income in Rogers Park. I can't buy my
> clothes here, books, cds. Morse Ave., which is the heart of RP, needs work.

Similarly, the Community Council published articles by board members, active community residents, and DevCorp staff debating the good and bad of development for diversity. One board member who often weighed in on these matters wrote in 2000,

> Most Rogers Park residents value the economic, cultural, ethnic and racial
> diversity of our community. Through decades of economic stagnation, Rogers

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[180] Olivo, Antonio. 2006. Condos evicting affordable housing ; Rogers Park has lost 900 apartments a year since '03, study finds. *Chicago Tribune*. Oct 25. pg. 11

Park has evolved into an exciting, affordable community. With economic improvement comes a new challenge. Can we add some new elements of prosperity without driving out the elements which we value? Can we have the best of both worlds?

Such rhetorical statements of "the good and the bad" of development depended upon diversity as the fuzzy goal and ideal. Such statements imagine that urban planning is somehow happening or hope that economic development, without an official plan, will still promote diversity.

Diversity as a Goal Not Yet Achieved

Members of the Builders Group also applaud the abstract image of Rogers Park as a model diverse community. The organization's housing policy statement outlines the goal: "To preserve and enhance Rogers Parks' stable residential environment so persons of all ages, races and income can continue to live in sound affordable housing." But, at the same time, participants talk about neighborhood diversity as a goal yet to be achieved. They draw on discourse about growth to argue that redevelopment is the best strategy for improving a neighborhood (Logan and Molotch 1987) and it will actually enhance Rogers Park's diversity.

This view is illustrated in an interview exchange with Mark, a white man who often served as a leader in the organization:

Mark: … I will view this community as having made progress when I could walk up Howard Street and enjoy it.

Ellen: What would that mean, to enjoy it?

M: …To enjoy it would mean that there is diversity, that I would want to take my daughter and not have to worry. I wouldn't have to park my car and leave my dog in it, just to make sure I don't get busted. That I don't see people hanging out in front of storefronts…

E: And when you say diversity, what kind of diversity do you mean? …

M: … I think that this community is uniquely situated to reflect the type of diversity racially, ethnically, and economically that exists [in the U.S. today]. We are truly a rainbow society, and I would like to see this community become even more diverse…You know, I think, when people can learn and do business and associate with one another. That's diversity…. I've got a real blend of different racial, ethnic, and economic levels in my apartment building. I take pride in that.

Mark was referring specifically to the area around Howard Street. This exchange illustrates how, for many real estate professionals, diversity is a goal yet to be achieved. It has not quite arrived, but when it does it promises a better quality of life for residents. For Mark and other real estate professionals, a more representative form of diversity in Rogers Park would make room for middle and upper class residents and serve their commercial needs.

Diversity, not Segregation, Racism, Intolerance, or Homogeneity

Political decision-makers in Rogers Park also framed the terms of neighborhood inclusion by presenting contrasts between diversity and other models of residential living. In so doing, they acknowledged and affirmed racial difference while at the same time, they presented race in non-threatening, cultural terms.

Local political leaders would openly state or more subtly imply that Rogers Park's diversity differs from racial segregation and suburban homogeneity and from intolerant values. In 2001, a white man who served as president of the Rogers Park Community Council wrote in the organization's monthly publication, "Early census reports what all of us have known for a long time. Rogers Park is what this country should be about—a community that thrives in its diversity… Rogers Park equals the City's 3.5 million representation of multiple cultures, values, backgrounds, and ideas." Similarly, during our interview, Alderman Moore told me:

> We are one of the very few truly diverse neighborhoods not only in the city, but in the entire country…. Usually when you look at diverse neighborhoods, they're neighborhoods in transition… This neighborhood is different…. [Over the last 30 years] the change has been the gradual assimilation of people from all across the world. Without a *huge* degree of disinvestment….We're a bold experiment… whether this whole diversity thing can work and whether our nation can survive as we move forward in the 21st century.... The issue is, well, are we actually going to be truly diverse or are we going to wall ourselves into various camps—the black neighborhood, the white neighborhood, the Hispanic neighborhood all throughout the city and all throughout the nation.

People use such statements and tropes to differentiate Rogers Park from the many segregated neighborhoods in Chicago and the city's history of racial conflict and institutional discrimination (Hirsch 1983; Massey and Denton 1993).[181] In so doing they insinuate that residents have a moral commitment to tolerance, genuine or otherwise, and play a role in a bigger national and even international drama of urban change (Cox 1999).

These political leaders downplayed race and its more threatening dimensions through their specific programs to promote diversity and their descriptions of these programs. However, political actors routinely construct the meaning of political programs in ways that have little to do with their policy objectives or the original intentions of their supporters (Edelman 1977). In my years of fieldwork, I never heard leaders from the Community Council, the Alderman's office or the Builders Group talk about—much less endorse or pursue—a specific housing program on the grounds that it would protect or promote ethnic and racial diversity. When these decision-makers spoke specifically about implementing diversity in housing development, they relied primarily on economic measures of diversity: resident income; homeownership or renter status; and types of housing units and their funding sources, such as public or non-profit. When doing fieldwork on Rogers Park politics in the 1970s and 1980s, Gerald Suttles (1990) also observed residents at community meetings talking about controversial issues in terms of income, not race or ethnicity. (However, newspaper reports about local scattered-site public housing in the 1970s, described in the previous chapter, suggest that residents who opposed public housing spoke openly about the racial identity of tenants and community residents.)

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[181] In 2000 Chicago ranked as the fourth most segregated city in terms of black and white residents, the fourth in terms of Hispanics and whites, and the fourteenth in terms of Asians and whites out of the fifty U.S. metropolitan areas with the largest respective minority populations ((Lewis Mumford Center 2001).

Diversity, not a Concentration of Poverty, Subsidized Housing, or Remedial Justice

For politicians and leaders from the Community Council, DevCorp, and the Builders Group, another antithesis of diversity was the "concentration of poverty" that characterized North of Howard. I heard North of Howard characterized as a "concentration of poverty" and "oversaturation of low-income housing" by such disparate leaders as a Community Council housing counselor who worried about the loss of affordable housing in the neighborhood to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's liaison to the neighborhood to prominent members of the Builders Group.

As indicated by the interview excerpt above, Mark of the Builders Group and many of his peers would focus on economic diversity in less gentrified sections of the neighborhood. They claimed that those poorer sections are demographically homogeneous and have a "concentration of poverty," which is antithetical to the community's overall mix.

Some political leaders and activists faulted Alderman Moore for these conditions. During the 1995 Aldermanic campaign, one of the candidates, Karen Hoover, a white woman active with the Community Council and with community policing in North of Howard, chastised Moore for the "faltering," "unsafe," and congested business districts. She said to a reporter, "Our ward brags about how heterogenous it is, but what's happened is we've developed pockets that are culturally and economically segregated…. We have gangs you've never even heard of, one for each ethnic group." [182]

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[182] Ihejirika, Maudlyn.1995. Time for another change, 49th Ward challengers say; Moore defends his record in diverse Rogers Park. *Chicago Sun-Times* Feb. 23. p. 12.

Many local leaders also criticized older, redistributive housing policies and non-profit organizations that created low-income housing in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the North of Howard area, for creating these conditions. To this day, local leaders still sharply differentiate community diversity from subsidized housing, helping to discredit and interfere with such housing.

These leaders also discredit redistributive government interventions through their symbolic constructions of Rogers Park as a place that people choose for its diversity. They imply, and sometimes outright state, that Rogers Park's approach to integration is a superior model because residents have not been forced to live near people of different ethnic, racial or economic backgrounds. Danielle, a white woman and Builders Group member who worked for a non-profit organization that financed multifamily acquisitions and rehabs, contrasted diversity in Rogers Park with Oak Park, a near west suburb. Oak Park had, for many years, an integration maintenance plan to ensure that white residents would remain when new black residents moved in and to encourage racial integration throughout the community. Danielle described the Oak Park housing authority and a non-profit association, explaining:

> They say, "Ok, we have to have four blacks, two whites and two Hispanics in this building." We don't say that up here. And it just happens…. It's total acceptance. And you don't hear somebody say- how many blacks in the building? How many whites in the building? It's not even an issue. Here it's become accepted and not forced.

In these ways, the diversity project in Rogers Park has helped to de-legitimize such redistributive government strategies to support poor people and promote racial minority inclusion.

So, if local political elites wanted to promote diversity but not by redistributing resources to poor people and people of color through government programs or community organizing, then what interventions did they propose? It was towards these ends that leaders called for "affordable" housing, "mixed-income housing," and homeownership programs for the working and middle class.

★ *Endorsing but Redefining Integrationist and Redistributive Programs*

One way that organizational elites in Rogers Park mobilize diversity rhetoric and initiatives is to endorse affordable housing programs and policies that, at some point, have been defined as remedies for racial and economic disadvantage. At the same time, these leaders—like their counterparts in federal and city government—have redefined the purpose of these programs and downplay concerns about disadvantage, especially by promoting "mixed-income" homeownership programs.

These actions only make sense within the broader context of changing public housing policy. Little new federal public housing has been created since the administration of President Richard Nixon. President Ronald Reagan treated the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with disdain. He refused to recognized the HUD secretary, and officials in his administration eventually were convicted for illegally channeling low-income housing subsidies to developers with political connections to the administration.

By the late 1980s, with many public housing high-rises in severe disrepair and plagued by violence and gang activity, the U.S. Congress initiated what eventually became the $5 billion HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) program. This major redevelopment program has helped to change dramatically HUD's housing assistance for poor people. It funds the demolition of "severely distressed" public housing projects that have housed poor families, the creation of new "mixed-income" housing, and the issuance of housing vouchers to some original residents to subsidize their rent in private properties (Popkin et al. 2004). The stated goals were to promote "self-sufficiency" among poor people, to revitalize the residential communities in which public housing projects have been located, and to encourage a "deconcentration of lower-income families.[183] Under HOPE VI, the Chicago Housing Authority pursued the Plan for Transformation, demolishing thousands of units to create housing that attracts "a mix of incomes so that public housing does not again become home to extreme concentrations of poverty" (Chicago Housing Authority 2000:1). Researchers and advocates have criticized these and other redevelopment plans, particularly because they result in a substantial net loss of housing units for poor people.

Also during the 1990s and early 2000s, housing advocates and policy researchers found that the poorest Americans faced severe housing problems and rent burdens while the supply of low-cost housing declined (Nelson, Treskon and Pelletiere 2004). Rising income inequality and escalating housing prices were pinching middle class and even affluent households by the early 2000s, and support for affordable housing became more popular, even in wealthy suburbs.

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[183] See also Section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 as amended by Section 535 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-276).

Although used commonly by HUD, local governments, and advocates alike, the term "affordable" is deceptive. Between the 1930s and the early 1970s, when the federal government was building public housing for low-income renters, the term "affordable" connoted housing for poor people (Schechter 2004). This connotation remains and often provokes community resistance.HUD does not tie its definition of affordability to any particular income bracket. The agency considers housing affordable if household members pay no more than 30% of their gross income towards direct housing costs, and many locales have adopted this same definition. Under this definition, everyone needs affordable housing, regardless of their income. As Gail Schechter (ibid), the executive director of the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs, has noted, developers and politicians have manipulated this term to describe, for example, "affordable senior housing" in the "$500,000 range."

Both the semantics of national and city policy and the actual policy options available shaped the diversity project in Rogers Park. Much to the ire of tenant organizers, representatives from the Alderman's office, DevCorp North, the Community Council, and some other community agencies in Rogers Park commonly proclaimed their support for "affordable" and "mixed-income" housing.

Mixed-Income Housing as Proxy for Diversity

Local organizational elites commonly pointed to city and federal programs to support "economic diversity" and "mixed-income" "affordable" housing as a solution to the housing crisis. Community Council leaders, the Alderman's office, and members of the Builders Group alike called for mixed-income housing as a mechanism for promoting diversity. Such discourse

framed diversity in economic terms such as homeownership or types of housing units, represented through census categories and maps of the neighborhood.

For instance, the Alderman relied on such policies to resolve a protracted fight over two formerly subsidized rental buildings. These buildings had been embroiled in community conflicts for years. They had been owned and managed by Peoples Housing until the non-profit went bankrupt in the mid-1990s. The tenants, who were very poor and predominantly African-American, paid little or no rent for years while dealers sold drugs out of at least one the buildings and they fell into disrepair. With the collapse of Peoples Housing, the buildings first came under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD) and then under the city government, but the city had no plan to preserve them as low-cost housing. Rogers Park Community Action Network—a politically progressive tenants organization—and a few others organized the predominantly black and very poor tenants, with the support of Good News Partners, which had low-income rental and cooperative housing in North of Howard. The activists lobbied the Alderman to protect the buildings and sued HUD on technical grounds.

After much stalling, the Alderman agreed to preserve Jonquil Terrace as a low-income rental building under a twenty-year contract. Hispanic Housing, a non-profit housing developer that belonged to the Builders Group, converted the other building into Vista North, with twenty-two condominiums partially subsidized through the Chicago Partnership for Affordable Neighborhoods (CPAN). Vista North buyers had to earn between $24,000/year and 100% of the area median income ($60,300/year for two people). This city program, however new and small in numbers, was part of a broader shift in federal and local funding toward "affordable" homeownership (and an even more dramatic shift away from housing programs for poor renters).

The income qualifications are such that a household of two people can earn up to $60,300 and still participate. Meanwhile, median income in Rogers Park in 2005 was estimated at just over $33,000, which was nowhere close to the upper limit for the CPAN program (see Figure 15).

Once the plans for the two buildings were established, Moore and his staff pointed to them as evidence of their commitment to diversity, in the form of mixed-income housing. One of the Alderman's staff explained to me that Vista North was for "the working poor" and "a way to maintain diversity and… still improve the neighborhood by giving those people an ownership stake."

Figure 15. Comparison of eligibility requirements for a city affordable housing program and median household income in Chicago and Rogers Park, 2000

Chicago Partnership for Affordable Neighborhoods

Household size	Maximum Household Income (Area Median)	
	100%	80%
1	$52,800	$41,700
2	$60,300	$47,700
3	$67,900	$53,650
4	$75,400	$59,600
5	$81,400	$64,350
6	$87,500	$69,150

Median Household Income, 2000

Rogers Park	Chicago
$31,602	$38,625

At one Builders Group meeting, the Vista North developer assured members that the condos were not permanently affordable—owners could sell at market rate within five years. These condos were among the 1,047 affordable housing units that the Alderman claimed he supported between 1991 and 2000 "to maintain economic diversity."

Mixed-income housing and North of Howard's economic diversity became the central topics of a subsequent Builders Group meeting, featuring the Alderman and Ricardo, a Latino man who represented the Chicago Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation (CMHDC), which was developing the Jonquil Terrace building. CMHDC began in 1982 as an arm of CHA, to help finance the construction and rehabilitation of apartments for low-income residents in Chicago (including Peoples Housing) and to develop homes for public housing residents. In the late 1990s, the organization restructured to become an independent non-profit and move out of public housing, and it now acquire buildings to develop as "affordable" and "market rate" rental properties and condominiums.

At the Builders Group meeting, in the conference room of a branch of a national bank, Alderman Moore first explained:

> I have an interest in stabilizing housing. There is an overabundance of rentals and there has been a recent wave of condo conversions… I have the goal of a stable, mixed-income community, so there should be ownership opportunities, too. But not everyone is able to become an owner, so we still need to have rental options… [These buildings are] good for efforts to maintain economic diversity.

The response to the Alderman's comments revolved around what was and what should be the proper mix of types of housing to achieve economic diversity. Brenda, a white Builders Group officer, told the Alderman, "Builders Group has always recognized the need for supporting mixed-income. But it also wants to diversify. There's already too much low-income housing there." Mark referred to some maps of tax credit, project-based Section 8, and other low-income buildings in North of Howard. Members had created the maps to prove that the area was "saturated" with low-income housing. He said, "We're trying to figure out the real numbers, so we can understand if the 'great gentrifiers' are coming in."

The Alderman got angry, "This [map] must include single family homes! You're screwing the numbers." Quiet laughter broke out in the back of the room. Brenda continued, "Builders Group has always recommended mixed-income. I don't want to see more housing tied up for twenty years!" The snickers grew louder. "Not *more,*" he replied. "This isn't new. This is just preserving fifteen units." Brenda snapped, "How can we expect to diversify if it's tied up for twenty years!" "Fifteen units!" exclaimed the exasperated Alderman. "This week!" she shot back.

At a bar later that evening, the Builders Group members talked about why they thought low-income housing was so detrimental to North of Howard's economic mix. Carl, a white developer and Builders Group officer, explained that it was not the number or percentage of low-income units that mattered. "The real issue," he announced, "is income." The others nodded over their drinks. Brenda asked the group, "How do we diversify economically?" Carl responded, with an eye towards me, "There's someone named – um, Julius Wilson William? He wrote about the importance of mixed-income neighborhoods, that people need to have other opportunities and a

concentration of poor people is bad. He said that this shouldn't happen. I completely agree with that." The others nodded again. Carl's idea had staying power. More than two and a half years later, he and other members of an Builders Group committee contemplated giving the Alderman a copy of a book by William Julius Wilson and inviting Wilson to a meeting.

The exchanges that evening are indicative of the real estate industry's (and many residents') aggressive resistance to low-cost housing programs in Rogers Park. For both sides, diversity boiled down to economics. "Diversity" became "diversify," or "mixed-income" or, simply, income. Of course, Rogers Park is not the only place where this language has strong political appeal. Policymakers, politicians, and real estate professionals beyond the neighborhood have linked economic indicators of diversity with social scientific arguments to justify neoliberal development policies, particularly public housing policy (Bennett and Reed 1999). The current overhaul of public housing in Chicago and Rogers Park's history of poorly managed subsidized housing loom in the background of the discussions like the one at the Builders Group meeting. It comes as no surprise that members invoke similar social scientific and policy concepts to make their claims.

Talking about diversity as individuals' income or housing status is a relatively benign way to argue over development and demographics. It is far more acceptable in Rogers Park to criticize specific kinds of housing, champion certain income levels, or cite the need for disposable income than to publicly scorn minorities and, to a lesser extent, poor individuals.

Mixed-income housing and homeownership for non-poor households have become central tenets of public housing in Chicago and other U.S. cities (Bennett & Reed 1999). Such housing can create opportunities for homeownership and, potentially, upward class mobility for

people who otherwise could not buy a home. This was true for at least one couple that bought in Vista North. Yet, such initiatives were small in number and posed little threat to elites' interests in promoting redevelopment and growth. This example illustrates how the diversity project may not be race-targeted at all and can justify organizational resources devoted to the working and middle classes, rather than the poor.

"Fair Share"

Activist homeowners, members of the Builders Group, and some politicians commonly asserted that Rogers Park had more than its "fair share" of subsidized and institutional housing. Alderman Patrick O'Connor, whose jurisdiction included the southern most end of Rogers Park, told me in an interview that homeowners in Rogers Park believe that

> a lot of the institutionalized housing that exists in the area, a lot of the scattered site, a lot of the Section 8, there's a growing sentiment that they've done their part. They have enough. Find new places…. Rogers Park, in my estimation, is just tired of all forms of government-sponsored or government paid for or institutionalized living that they've had to swallow over the years…. SROs, homes for battered women…. I think that most people would agree that Rogers Park has more than its fair share of subsidized housing, public housing, or however you want—all the various things that make it up.

These political elites would invent percentages of such housing that they believed were unacceptable, or they would adapt percentages from the *Gautreaux* decision to substantiate their

claims. One Builders Group member told me that the neighborhood had around 800 Section 8 vouchers, and this was over the "50% amount" allowed. This was a fictional statistic. Except for a few experimental programs, the voucher program does not set limits on where voucher holders can live. Similarly, during the Builders Group meeting with the Alderman and CMHDC, the following exchanged went on between Carl, the Builders Group member, and Ricardo of CMHDC:

Carl: I recall the scattered-site guidelines- there can't be units in an area that is already 30%. Isn't North of Howard? Do you have guidelines to preclude you from going into a saturated area?"

Ricardo: "No. *Gautreaux* only applies to public housing. This is not public housing."

Tim: "But the concept is to get people to live in better situations, where they have access to opportunities."

RL: "But we're aware about how much housing is in the area. We don't do housing in areas with an overabundance of low-income housing."

Such characterizations and loose interpretations of judicial decisions and housing policy guidelines are another way that political elites endorse but redefine remedies for racial and economic disadvantage (see also Pattillo 2007).

★ *Shaping the Implementation of Law and Public Policy*

With mixed-income housing as the ideal, pro-gentrification organizations had easy grounds to criticize any programs or buildings for poor people. Prior to the Builders Group meeting about Jonquil Terrace, Mark set up a lunch with Ricardo and invited me to join them. Over lunch at an upscale restaurant in downtown Chicago, it quickly became clear that Mark's agenda was to convince Ricardo not to develop the units as low-income, to find out how much he knew about neighborhood politics and North of Howard, and to prepare him for the upcoming Builders Group meeting. Mark seemed to fail on every front. Mark quizzed Ricardo about Peoples Housing, proper management techniques, and how long he had "been here." Ricardo answered curtly and stoically, if at all. The breakdown of CMHDC's buildings was typically 25% market rate and 75% low-income and very-low-income. However, because of a HUD decree pursuant to RPCAN's lawsuit, Jonquil Terrace would be 100% very low income.

Mark explained that he and the other Builders Group members believed that North of Howard was "oversaturated," showing Ricardo the organization's maps of former Peoples Housing buildings, other tax credit housing, and project-based Section 8 buildings Ricardo did not seem very interested. Worried about how the upcoming meeting would go, Mark kept repeating, "I've learned to say 'low to moderate income' not 'low income,'" but Ricardo continued to describe the building as very low income.

(Not) Representing Diversity in Planning Decisions

Compared to many Chicago Alders, Alderman Moore had a number of mechanisms to solicit community input into redevelopment proposals and plans. Although such community input could

stall development and frustrate officials, many local political elites heralded the Alderman's openness to community residents. Gerry, a white man who worked for DevCorp, described the Alderman's Land Use and Zoning Advisory Committee as "a pretty good, broad based representation of community groups and business groups like ours." He described it as evidence of the Alderman's openness to democratic community input in planning, "I don't think any other community has this in Chicago. In other places, the Alderman just does this stuff himself or herself. This is democratic. This is a big deal." Moore would commonly make statements such as the following, which referenced a project to convert a building that had housed a beauty school into a bank and upscale condominiums: "As with every proposed zoning change in the neighborhood, this proposal must be subject to a thorough community review process. I look forward to hearing from the members of the community."

Some local leaders relied on diversity rhetoric and initiatives to characterize such mechanisms for soliciting community input into planning decisions. As DevCorp's 2006 revitalization plan for Howard Street and Morse Avenue states, such input is a key component of "an advanced and sophisticated form of community development that values diversity and achieves development projects that serve all constituencies."

As, RPCAN activists were quick to point out, almost all of the members of the decision-making bodies that the Alderman convened were white property-owners. This was the case, for example with the Devon-Sheridan TIF task force. Tax Increment Financing districts are a controversial but commonly used urban renewal policy in Chicago. A TIF enables the government to offer developers tax breaks, subsidies, and loans to promote development in "blighted," industrial or "conservation" areas. This money is generated by channeling additional

tax revenue back into the TIF, rather than allowing taxing bodies like the Chicago Public Schools or the Park District to collect these revenues. TIFs are one of very few policy instruments that provide local government with considerable control over development. They have been highly controversial, as they can contribute to the displacement of poor people, they divert taxes from infrastructure and other basic city services–$392 million in 2002 alone (Lydersen 2003)–and they have been used in areas that are already gentrifying (Joravsky 2006).

The Devon-Sheridan TIF covered Alderman Moore and Alderman O'Connor's jurisdictions, and Loyola University played a central role in orchestrating its creation. Moore and O'Connor convened a Task Force that created a 3-page Redevelopment Plan and held four community meetings to solicit input for the plan (but not to question the decision to create a TIF in the first place). According to Alderman Moore,

> The role of the TIF Task Force was not to come up with, on their own, a redevelopment plan and a TIF map. Their role was to put into place the process by which that occurred, the process that Alderman O'Conner and I then implemented. They acted as scribes. They took down what was presented at community meetings that were open to everyone of every race, creed and national origin, economic status, owners as well as renters… anyone was welcome to attend those meetings (Bess 2003).

The process was praised by the TIF watchdog National Capital Budget Group. But as RPCAN activists observed at some of these meetings, not one of the 17 members of the task force was African-American, Latino, some other racial minority, or a renter. When pressed on this point by a local newspaper editor, Alderman defensively said, "First of all, people in my community

and Alderman Pat O'Connor's community should at least be thankful that they have a process to criticize. There has never been a TIF proposed anywhere in the city in which there has been as much process and community debate… " He criticized RPCAN activists for being obstructionist and for waiting until the end of the process to voice their opinions.

This example illustrates how political elites may use diversity rhetoric to shape the implementation of public policy. They rhetorically justify diversity as a policy goal and institutionalize this goal into their development plans; the Devon-Sheridan Redevelopment Plan had, among its objectives, "support retail growth that contributes to the diversity and vitality of the neighborhood" and "preserve and create housing for diverse markets." But at the same time, these political leaders do not identify, as their priorities, demographic diversity in political representation or the protection of housing for poor, predominantly minority residents.

★ Changing the Constituents: Valorizing Affluent Residents

In Rogers Park, the task that local political leaders confronted was to assert—in the face of gentrification—that middle class and affluent residents, their skill sets, and the businesses that served them would be good for diversity. One way they did so was by identifying the race and ethnicity of residents or in-movers of color, or just praising them as "diverse." A white developer asserted in the organization's newsletter, "[In Rogers Park] the typical buyers are 25 to 40 years old, single, professional… Our clients are very diverse, multi-ethnic, and typically Lincoln Park or Lakeview refugees." Political leaders often pointed to residents of color whom they perceived as legitimate, valuable community members, and beneficial for economic growth. Judy

frequently praised her "hard-working" minority clients, such as the Latino household that pooled its assets to start a bicycle shop**.**

Political leaders' emphasis on affluent and upwardly-striving residents of color was part of a broader pattern of ethno-racial designation and hierarchy in the U.S. As numerous scholars of race and ethnicity have observed recently, changing patterns of mobility and discrimination have left the current racial hierarchy in the U.S. in flux (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Gans 1999; Gold 2004; Twine and Warren 2000). It is unclear which groups constitute the key ethno-racial categories, although analysts largely agree that African-Americans make up all or much of the bottom tier. Those at the top of the hierarchy include so-called model minorities, such as Chinese Americans (Kibria 2002). Popular political discourse in Rogers Park portrayed black, Latino, and South Asian, and other racial minorities who were middle class or appeared to be striving for economic upward mobility as such model minorities, at least in reputation if not in material fact.[184]

Community leaders also helped to change the constituents by characterizing affluent in-movers and new, predominantly white homebuyers as people who value diversity. Marie, a white woman who worked for a community development corporation affiliated with the Community

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[184] Many of these leaders prided themselves on their tolerant and benevolent attitudes towards poor people, immigrants, and people of color in the neighborhood. Judy, a leader in the Builders Group, told me that there were a few people in the organization with whom who she disagreed or found "horrendous," such as one person who had said of low-income renters "those people live like dogs."

At the same time, many members of the Builders Group and other pro-gentrification activists did not talk about poor people or people of color as valued members of the community's diversity when such residents seemed to stand in the way of gentrification. Instead, these organizational elites implied that they felt personally uncomfortable around minority groups or they stated outright that these groups hurt their property values. For instance, when the city announced a proposal to demolish a mall where Latino, African, and Asian vendors sold items like socks and CDs in order to build a much-needed firehouse, a heated community debate broke out. The Builders Group endorsed the city's proposal. A leader in the organization posted his opinion on a listserv discussion about the plan, "I'd love to have a place to shop in the neighborhood. I went into the mall once when it first opened. I felt like I was in a third world country."

Council, described her interactions with these residents through the CDC's first-time homeowner program and its training program for condominium associations:

> The people individually are just wonderful, they really are marvelous folks moving into this community. Many of them who had lived here years ago as a student when they went to Loyola or Northwestern and they had rental property here and they really liked the amenities of the community, and they really enjoyed the diversity of the community, and they're coming back for that.

Homeowners active in neighborhood politics often described themselves in similar terms. During a group interview, five white homeowners talked about recent demographic changes in the neighborhood. Kevin explained, "It's always been kind of a melting pot." Yael said, "It's always been kind of kaleidoscopic. I think it still is. A snapshot at any given time might be different, but it's always been mixed. In a fun way. I mean, I like it. I think if any of us were really bothered by that, we'd live someplace else." Some Builders Group members also would refer to their organization's membership as multicultural and diverse.

Local organizational elites also were quick to assert that homeowners contributed to diversity and reassure them of such. A Community Council board member published, in one Council newsletter, an article about "Rogers Park in the Year 2000." In the following issue, two new condominium owners wrote a letter complaining about the board member's speculation that the neighborhood could be "overrun by yuppies." They wrote,

> My wife and I are looking forward to becoming part of the community. We don't wish to be ostracized because of our age and professional status. My advice to

you… is to welcome ALL members of the community and to NOT bite the hand

that feeds you!!!

The board member replied apologetically: "Unfortunately, there are some groups in Rogers Park who do believe that gentrification and in-migration of professional households is a danger to Rogers Park's diverse population." She went on to encourage the couple to get involved in block clubs, community policing, the Community Council, and other local efforts:

"Yuppies" are indeed welcome in Rogers Park because they have skills and energy to make our community a safer and better place to live and work. We should all remember what makes Rogers Park special—it is the mixture and celebration of diversity.

Similarly, as evident in my interview exchange with Mark, active members of the Builders Group invoke diversity rhetoric to argue for more high-end housing and retail, claiming that there are not enough wealthy people in the neighborhood. This valorization of "yuppies" and other affluent residents is part of a more general discourse—in Rogers Park, in urban communities, and nationally—about the advantages of homeowners and homeownership (Williams 1988).

These leaders' applause for affluent and upwardly mobile people of color helped to affirm the presence of racial minorities in the neighborhood. At the same time, they further silenced certain racial and class dimensions of gentrification, especially the ethno-racial identities of poor people hurt by the process. By praising white people as members of diversity and as people who value diversity, these political leaders constructed an affirming identity

politics for affluent white people (Lipsitz 1998) while also leaving their white racial status and privilege unnamed and unmarked (Lewis 2004).

As discussed above, such programs as the new Section 8 homeownership initiative have made homeownership an emphasis, commensurate with a broader shift towards "self-sufficiency" in redistributive social welfare and housing programs.

★ *Marginalizing Alternative Viewpoints and Agendas*

In the early 2000s, researchers and staff from Loyola University helped to convene the Community of Opportunity Affordable Housing Coalition (COAHC). The coalition included the local Community Council, social service providers, a faith-based housing provider, and intermittently RPCAN activists. The coalition members drafted a vision statement over the course of many meetings which stated:

> The [coalition] believes that one of the strengths of the Rogers Park neighborhood lies in its cultural and economic diversity, which is highly valued by our community. The coalition also recognizes that left unchecked, "market forces" often threaten those residents who are least able to compete economically in a neighborhood facing the pressures of gentrification…. The coalition works together to create opportunities with information, resources, and support, encouraging all residents to fully participate in the process of preserving the cultural and economic diversity of our community.

At one of the coalition's meetings, some exchanges took place that illustrate how the dominant ideology of diversity in the neighborhood could marginalize more radical viewpoints. At this meeting, Jon—a white man who was a leader at Good News Partners, the faith-based housing organization—raised objections to the vision statement. He explained what he wanted the statement to say. "We don't just like a diverse neighborhood, but we want to support people here. Talk in terms of people, not ideals or a model neighborhood. When [people are] forced to leave, we want to help them go somewhere better. This is nice, but it's not going to get us anywhere."

No one at the meeting responded directly to his comments. A white woman from a social service agency suggested that the last sentence say: all "current and low-income" residents. A white woman from the Community Council, Renee, disagreed: "That doesn't help us because there are middle class and higher" residents who live in the neighborhood. Then someone changed the topic.

Later on in the meeting, Jon brought up one of the coalition's original goals, which was to expand his organizations' buildings. His organization provides interim, rental, and cooperative housing for very low-income people. A large portion of their constituents are African-American or Latino. Many have been homeless, are recovering from drug addiction, and face other serious problems. The other members of the coalition seemed sympathetic to this idea of expanding his properties but also very cautious. Renee said, of his tenants, "People drink, pitch pennies. It's very disruptive in a neighborhood that considers itself as residential." Jon explained, "We always have people sign agreements... We have evictions counselors." Another white woman from a social service agency responded, "People want them out." A few members suggested strategies

that Good News Partners could use to garner support from neighborhood residents. Jon finally said, ""Our mission is to help people no one else will help out… When people say they want diversity, do they want already successful people?"

This very topic came up again at the next COAHC meeting. Another white woman from the Community Council suggested that Jon work on a broader strategy to get support from both newcomers and long-time residents. Such a strategy, she explained, "implies that some problems are solved but doesn't state 'Would you accept a piece of diversity in Rogers Park to be more problem residents?' That wouldn't work." Jon responded

> We want to say that part of diversity is working with people who have problems
>
> and saying that we welcome people who already have problems, not just people
>
> from here… There are lots of failures, but Chicago housing policy says put 'em in
>
> jail or kill them… We want to say 'We as a community can address this. How can
>
> we help people who are economically, politically and culturally disadvantaged?'

The affordable housing coalition never revised the vision statement to include Jon's point. This exchange illustrates first, how community leaders could invoke the popular ideology of diversity in ways that exclude arguments about remedying class inequality and racial disadvantage as possible alternatives. It also shows how the organizational initiatives and political actions that were supposed to flow from the coalition's diversity vision statement could work *against* some advocates' agenda to support poor, minority residents in the neighborhood. Here, we see that community leaders may rely on diversity ideology and initiatives in ways that recognize some of the problems affecting poor and minority residents, while they also may discredit, undermine, or

suppress redistributive social programs and political actions that challenge gentrification and the local power structure of white and wealthy property owners.

CHAPTER TEN. POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE DIVERSITY ERA

The diversity project raises quandaries for political activists, particularly on the left but also on the right, as does any orthodox set of ideas and policies that incorporates some of the concerns of political outsiders. The accommodating and benevolent logic of diversity makes room for a variety of political claims. Yet, this same logic also can stymie activists' attempts to change the politics of inclusion, and some diversity initiatives work *against* the interests of the people they represent. The diversity project—especially diversity ideology—can delimit and contain political mobilization over inclusion and racial disadvantage.

In my three cases, activists of different political persuasions negotiated the diversity project in three key ways. Some activists avoided the word by rejecting it in favor of alternative rhetoric or by intentionally *not* developing an official position on the term. Many activists used political rhetoric about "diversity" but defined the term differently than did organizational elites by rhetorically expanding its meaning (similar to frame extension, as described by scholars of social movements, e.g. Snow, et. al 1986; Benford and Snow 2000). And, using a related strategy, some activists invoked what I label *street-level semiotics* to critique organizational elites' rhetoric about diversity.

In this explicitly comparative chapter, I discuss political activists in my three cases but focus primarily on my Michigan and Rogers Park cases. Two pro-affirmative action groups were active at Michigan during this study. The Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action and Fight for Equality by Any Means Necessary (BAMN) was a national organization with a chapter on Michigan's campus. Students Supporting Affirmative Action (SSAA) was a campus-based

student group that formed primarily for the purposes of the lawsuits.[185] A few small groups organized on Michigan's campus to oppose to racial preferences, most notably Young Americans for Freedom and *The Michigan Review* newspaper. Their positions and rhetoric aligned closely with national think tanks and advocacy organizations that supported the plaintiffs in *Gratz* and *Grutter.*[186]

In Rogers Park, two political organizations actively organized and represented renters in issues of redevelopment and tenants' rights. The Rogers Park Community Action Network (RPCAN) was a small grassroots organization that mobilized direct actions and campaigns against gentrification. The Section 8 Tenants Council, an even smaller group, represented renters who paid for their rent with vouchers subsidized by the federal government.

When Starr openly supported a gay and lesbian cause, pro-family activists within the state and nationally targeted the company for boycott. My data about these activists ae more anecdotal but support my general findings (I also provide fewer details about these activists in order to protect the company's anonymity).

These various activist organizations did not necessarily represent the views of the larger constituents they claimed to represent. At Michigan, for example, BAMN and SSAA were far more vocal and visible than the opponents of affirmative action, although the student body expressed very mixed support for the university's admissions policies. In mid-February 2003,

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[185] Other campus groups proceeded and followed these, such as Students For America in the late 1990s.

[186] During this study, there was comparatively more activism around the lawsuits at Michigan among undergraduates than among students in graduate or professional school. There was activism at other levels of the university; for example, Michigan's Faculty United for Peace and Human Rights opposed Bush's attacks on Michigan's affirmative action policies, and Michigan law student associations organized to write a brief supporting the university's diversity rationale. There was little organized opposition to the cases at the law school. Curt Levy, the spokesperson for CIR, suggested that members of the Federalist Society at the Michigan Law School believed it was too "risky" to get involved in campus politics around the lawsuits by co-sponsoring a debate with BAMN.

after nearly six hours of contentious debate, the LS&A student government passed a resolution supporting the university's admissions policies (Kaplan 2003). Campus polls about the topic suggested that the student body also was divided on the topic. In a December 2002 poll of graduate students, 58% said that they supported the university's overall use of race-conscious admissions and 29% did not (Johnson 2002). A poll of undergraduates a few weeks before the Supreme Court oral arguments found that 42% opposed the university's admissions policies, 41% supported them, and 18% wanted more information (Berkowitz 2003b).

In Rogers Park, participants in other community organizations often vilified RPCAN activists, although many residents ideologically supported some of RPCAN's positions. For example, in 2003, as part of a broader citywide campaign by the Coalition for Fair Community Development, RPCAN activists successfully added a non-binding advisory referendum to the election ballot in one precinct. The referendum called for developers to set aside 30% of units as affordable in new and redeveloped buildings that had ten or more units. Voters in that precinct overwhelmingly favored the referendum, with 184 in favor and 14 opposed.

Avoiding "Diversity"

The leaders of some activist organizations in my cases avoided taking an official position on diversity. Some preferred an alternative rhetoric, such as focusing on discrimination and tenants rights. Others avoided the term because they wanted to focus on multi-racial coalition building and short-term goals rather than building a shared ideological platform.

Rogers Park Section 8 Tenants Council: Tenants Rights and Discrimination

Not all groups found diversity rhetoric useful. The members of the Rogers Park Section 8 Tenants Council had little need for it. The Tenants Council began as an RPCAN committee but, because of funding requirements and leadership differences, split off from RPCAN in 2001 and took with them many of RPCAN's most active African-American activists. The Council supported tenants in Rogers Park who have government-subsidized vouchers to supplement their rent—2.8% of local households in 2003 (Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission 2005).[187] The members were primarily concerned with helping local voucher holders deal with landlords and CHAC, the organization that manages the program. There were few other neighborhood-based groups of this kind in Chicago, given the difficulty of organizing very poor tenants dispersed throughout the city (one premise of the voucher program is that voucher-recipients can blend into a community, rather than stand out or live segregated from other residents in public housing high-rises).

The leadership of the Tenants Council consisted of about six middle-aged and elderly African-American women and a few white and black men, all of whom considered themselves advocates of "Section 8." They staffed a tenant hotline, held events to educate voucher holders about the program and their rights, and occasionally met with CHAC administrators and other organizations in Rogers Park. One member claimed that she had sued landlords in three buildings for discriminating against her as a voucher holder; under the Chicago Human Rights and the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinances, it is illegal to discriminate against someone based on their source of income, which includes these vouchers.

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[187] Although the vouchers are now technically considered Housing Choice Vouchers, people still colloquially refer to them by their previous name, Section 8.

Rejecting Diversity Rhetoric

The word "diversity" was virtually absent from the political vocabulary of the advocates from the Tenants Council. Instead, they drew on rhetoric about tenants rights, empowerment, and discrimination. A few leaders articulated these sentiments when they gave invigorating speeches at the beginning of a joint meeting with the RPCAN housing committee. Dionne, an African-American Tenants Council leader, stood up and said:

> There are so many tenants that get knocked around. We need to let them know not to be afraid. Landlords have a tendency to frighten tenants… I'm an affordable person, and I'm not afraid of any landlord. We have to fight for our rights!

Ruby, another African-American leader and RPCAN board member, built on her enthusiasm:

> I am a Section 8 holder and I fight…. Tenants have power! We just have to come together. Power is in education! In power we can win! … Let's stop some of this! We have a right to be here as much as anyone else! I'm not going to be pushed around!

Soon everyone in the room was clapping, looking excited and motivated.

While the Section 8 Tenants Council leadership did not have a formal critique of diversity discourse, members occasionally showed skepticism about other groups' use of the word. For example, Ruby and Marnie, another advocate, sat in on a Community Exchange steering committee meeting. After Bill, the RPCAN leader, said that the first workshop would involve "talking about what it means to be diverse," Marnie appealed to the white attendees, "We've been talking about diversity for a long time in Rogers Park and across Chicago. Trying to get people to come in and talk about their ideas—it will be hard… How are we going to keep

people here? How we going to teach people to keep fighting?!" No one responded. She and Ruby soon left to attend a Section 8 Tenants Council member's birthday party.

Yet the Tenants Council advocates rarely posed criticisms like Marnie's. They were far more likely to denounce public officials' statements about new programs for low- and mixed-income "affordable" housing. At a training session about HUD and changes in public housing, Latoya, a former resident of Juneway Commons and a Tenants Council activist, pointed out, "My building said it would be 'affordable,' but that's not true." Another African American woman added, "They're tearing down [the Cabrini Green public housing] projects and building little Stepford houses with driveways. There is no black skin in there. Where are we going to go?" The African-American woman who was leading the training session added, in reference to redevelopment near Cabrini Green, "They said it was going to be mixed-income at Cabrini. There are four families! It's all smoke and mirrors. It was never real."

These advocates had good reasons to be skeptical about government officials' promises for better housing programs. Most had been displaced from their apartments at least once because their landlords increased the rent or converted the building into condos, and they repeatedly experienced landlord discrimination when looking for new apartments, with little recourse from the city. Few had seen the benefits of new initiatives like mixed-income public housing or the Section 8 homeownership program which, despite much fanfare, had enabled just one voucher holder in the city to close on a home as of June 2002. Affordable housing programs actually destabilized the lives of some members like Latoya. She received a voucher when she was displaced from Juneway Commons to make room for the so-called affordable condominiums supported by the mayor's New Homes program. After months of searching, she found a landlord

who would rent a 3-bedroom apartment to her and her sons, but she had to move within a year because that building was converted into condos.

The advocates initially proposed that they could become formal liaisons to CHAC, but the agency rejected that idea. Over the years, these advocates struggled to develop a stronger relationship with CHAC. By summer 2002, the organization's relationship with CHAC improved considerably.

Unlike RPCAN organizers (or, for that matter, the members of the Builders Group), activists with the Tenants Council did not want to talk about their personal identities or political values in terms of "diversity." One could imagine these members asserting themselves as "the face of diversity" or a critical stripe in Rogers Park's rainbow, but they did not. On rare occasions, they offhandedly mentioned diversity as a characteristic of the neighborhood (and not necessarily as a positive one), yet they seemed to view it as an external category. They did not use it to express their views of themselves or their location in the community. Rather, in discussions about housing, they explained their presence in the neighborhood by referring to specific identities that served as the basis of claims about their rights, such as Section 8, tenants, black, or disabled.

For Tenant Council activists, diversity rhetoric did not invoke a sense of African-American pride, a call to action, or a demand for economic justice. Their preference for rights discourse was congruent with their organization's single-issue focus and the historical legacy of African-American community activism in the U.S. Thus, rhetoric about diversity seemed incompatible with their narrow class interests, their spirit of racial solidarity, and their political objectives. It did not provide them with cultural meaning relevant to their agenda nor did they try

to redefine it towards those ends. At the same time, this organization did not have a great deal of interaction with other community organizations working on housing in Rogers Park; they focused more on CHAC than on local political officials. Their lack of a critique of diversity rhetoric may be a symptom of this.

Students Supporting Affirmative Action: The "Student Voice" and Multi-racial Coalition Building

SSAA was, according to its members, a "multi-ethnic" "informal collective" composed of student leaders from approximately 30 Michigan student organizations supporting affirmative action. These organizations included the Black Student Union, College Democrats, Michigan Student Assembly, Students for Choice, United Asian American Organizations, and others, representing what activists referred to as five or six "communities." The core organizers—primarily white, African-American, Asian-American, and Latino undergraduates—first convened in 2001. They joined up again in winter of 2003, first meeting privately and then, less than two months before the April 1 Supreme Court oral arguments, they actively began to organize Michigan students.

SSAA activists had very narrow goals: to represent the "student voice" at Michigan and to get as many students as possible to D.C. for the march. They were quite successful at achieving these goals. SSAA leaders were featured throughout the print and television press about the caes, and they raised about $60,000 in six weeks to send 13 buses carrying more than 700 students to D.C. They organized other events related to the lawsuits, including a Day of Silence in which students of color wore gags to symbolize campus life without their presence,

rallies, and a few press conferences, including one with representatives from the U.S. Congress on the day of the oral arguments and another on Decision Day. Few SSAA organizers had any affiliation with BAMN, which they criticized for failing to represent Michigan students. These organizers created and intentionally framed SSAA as the "student voice," in contrast to BAMN.

SSAA activists relied on the resources of their member organizations, which included the Michigan student government offices and student organization listservs. They raised money from departments, student assembly funds, and faculty, whom activists described as "tremendously helpful." At the last minute, the Vice President of Student Affairs donated $8,000 for two "viewpoint neutral" buses, after student opponents of affirmative action complained that the announcements advertising bus seats sent by SSAA and the student government had primarily gone to liberal campus groups. SSAA activists coordinated some of their work with the university's General Council's office and the Office of the Vice President of Communications, whose staff provided them with information, advised about messaging, and shared media contacts. Suffice to say, university administrators involved in the lawsuits were relieved when SSAA formed as an alternative to BAMN. As Julie Peterson of the VPC office told me,

> It was really helpful when the SSAA took some leadership because that really was a student group and everyone in it was an active student, so we could really engage them and represent them to media as the U of M students."

Prior to the April 1 march, SSAA activists also worked with Americans for a Fair Chance, a progressive national organization and, after the march, with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, an older civil rights organization.

SSAA activists invoked, as their source of authority, the fact that they were students and that they represented different ethno-racial backgrounds. One press release described SSAA by saying: "This broadly based group represents persons of great diversity." Ensuring that these two factors received media attention was foremost in activists' minds, from their logo to their decisions about who would speak at rallies to their plan for assigning bus seats.

SSAA activists were particularly concerned with creating the appearance of demographic diversity among their ranks, among their public speakers and in the composition of the buses they sent to D.C. (Berrey 2004). For example, during a meeting held the day before the buses departed, SSAA leaders spent an hour and a half deliberating about who would speak at the March 31 Rally for Justice and at the April 1 press conference in D.C. They had lists of possible speakers, and their main concern was figuring out which speakers would provide the best representation in terms of ethno-racial and gender background, status as Law School students and undergraduates, and "messaging". They used "diversity" descriptively, to describe people's ethno-racial backgrounds. A black female leader explained, "We're trying to have good law-undergrad and good diversity… balance by gender and by diversity." They included a speaker from the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization included because she would speak about, in one activist's words, "the issue of all those people who are poor and can't even afford college." Other leaders clapped and cheered at this suggestion about messaging.

SSAA leaders faced a similar set of concerns when assigning seats on the buses. This task also raised a more complex racial issue on campus: students tended to be friends with, and belong to student organizations composed of, people of the same ethno-racial background. At the SSAA planning meeting, activists agreed that no more than 70% of the people on a bus could be

from the same organization, or else the buses would get cliquish. A black female leader said, "We don't want all the black student organizations on one bus. It isn't gonna look like diversity is working at all."

Sidestepping the Diversity Rationale in Public

But most SSAA leaders avoided taking a public position on the university's diversity rationale. This was a strategic decision. It was symptomatic of SSAA's broader political strategy, in which the organization's political platform took a backseat to SSAA's public image and its efforts to organize across racial boundaries. SSAA activists deliberately created an organization that was short term, goal-oriented, and without an elaborate, substantive platform. The leaders felt that their organization would be more productive and would more successfully mobilize students if they avoided efforts to develop an internal consensus about why they supported affirmative action. Such a platform, they felt, was largely irrelevant to their narrow objectives.

They also worried that efforts to develop a shared political platform would interfere with their fragile multi-racial organizing efforts. A number of SSAA activists understood their coalition as a rare model for successful, multi-racial campus organizing, which historically has been fraught with problems such as white students dominating coalitions and mistrust among students of color. Just because the organization focused on pragmatic tactics does not mean that it was free of racial tensions. An Asian-American woman explained at the debriefing meeting, "[SSAA] came out of informal relationships. It was very hard. From the outside, it looked united... [but] there are a lot of identity politics, especially with students of color." A black

female leader added, "People of color lose respect from their communities for working with whites... Anyone involved in multi-racial coalition-building takes a lot of shit from someone."

The organization's placards for the April 1, 2003 March on Washington and press conference did have the tag line, "Support diversity and stop the resegregation of higher education!" However, most of the core SSAA organizers distanced themselves from the diversity rationale. They generally avoided talking about diversity, and leaders never developed a unified position on the term. Their literature, t-shirts, signs, and public statements emphasized themes of "educational justice," "equal rights for all," and overcoming "inequality" and anti-racist statements such as "You want me to be a marine but not a wolverine!"

SSAA's most important "messaging" device was the t-shirt that many SSAA activists wore at public events (see Figure 16). The dark blue shirts intentionally invoked Michigan school spirit and colors, featuring the large, maize "M" logo with the words "Justice" through it. The back of the shirts read, "Race must be a factor because racism is a factor." One activist described the shirts as a sufficient stand-in for a political platform: they provided "visual continuity." When students were wearing the shirts, organizers did not have to worry about coordinating the actual *content* of what those students were saying.

Figure 16. SSAA M-Justice t-shirt. Photo by author.

Similarly, at the April 1 D.C. press conference, participants sang the U-M fight song and chanted, "Go black, go brown, go yellow, go blue. We need affirmative action, and so do you!" Another common theme, especially among SSAA activists of color, was that as students of color, they belonged at the university. An African-American male activist said at the Rally for Educational Justice, "Even if opponents of affirmative action don't like it- we belong here, you belong here, and I belong here!"

SSAA participants presented a wide variety of reasons for why they supported affirmative action—including the diversity rationale—at rallies and press conferences and in press statements. As a white, female leader told me, "The joke we have going is that if you took a classic SSAA meeting and you asked us why we support affirmative action, you would get fifteen different answers."

For example, SSAA's press kit for Decision Day included quotes about affirmative action from seventeen student activists. Most referred to the importance of affirmative action for overcoming injustice, discrimination, and inequality, particularly racial inequality. In nine of the

statements, the speaker invoked his or her status as a student or familiarity with the university's campus. A few also emphasized the need for opportunity. Only two statements cited elements of the university's diversity rationale and used the word "diversity." Three other statements in the packet invoked aspects of the diversity rationale without referring to "diversity," or referred to "diversity" without citing any part of the diversity rationale. For example, Angela Galardi, a white undergraduate and president of the Michigan Student Assembly, states, "I believe that Affirmative Action is important because learning from people who are different from yourself is such a large part of our college education. You can only learn so much from books and coursepacks." SSAA's structure and goals made this rhetorical incoherence across speakers possible and even desirable: students felt they could express independent opinions or the opinions of their respective organizations, and reporters had a variety of quotes from which they could draw.

Just because SSAA activists did not agree on the diversity rationale does not mean that they did not use the term. SSAA activists who invoked it in their public speeches usually used it to describe racial minority group representation or differences. For example, at the Rally for Educational Justice, an Asian-American leader listed examples of racism against Asian-Americans, among them: "the diversity within the Asian-American community is still overlooked and negatively affected." Likewise, the political officials and political leaders who spoke at SSAA events, such as U.S. Congressman John Dingell (Michigan), often invoked aspects of the university administration's diversity rationale.

Redefining the Meaning of "Diversity"

Three sets of organizations—RPCAN, YAF and *Michigan Review,* and pro-family activists sought to define diversity differently than political and organizational elites. BAMN did so as well, but to a lesser extent, as I discuss in the next section.

RPCAN: Diversity as a Social Justice Mandate

RPCAN members used direct action, protests, a tenant hotline, and training sessions to organize tenants and workers, promote low-cost housing, denounce discrimination, and interfere with upscale development. The organization claimed 250 members, the most active of whom were middle-aged or older. While the board of directors was racially and economically mixed, most of the leaders directing the day-to-day political work are middle class white progressives. Members tended to be female, low-income, African-American, and to a lesser extent Latino.

RPCAN activists angered and alienated many residents and members of mainstream local organizations, who perceived them as obstructionist and counterproductive. There was often a mutual antagonism between RPCAN and these groups. In some cases, the organizations systematically excluded RPCAN from decision-making opportunities. In other cases, RPCAN actively refused to participate in political coalitions. RPCAN had some local allies, like an arts organization and Good News Partners, the faith-based housing provider in North of Howard.

Like other transformative community organizations (Smock 2004), RPCAN subscribed to a model of neighborhood activism that presumes that global structural inequalities are at the root of local problems. The leaders identified the organization as "the progressive voice in Rogers

Park." They believed that in order to address neighborhood issues, RPCAN also had to work for broader systemic change and challenge unjust political and economic institutions.

RPCAN activists—especially those who were white and middle class—tended to enthusiastically embrace rhetoric valorizing diversity as a moral value. They invoked the familiar image of Rogers Park as a model community to praise the neighborhood's current demographic mix and to argue that poor people, minorities, and renters belong in that mix. A favorite RPCAN protest chant repeated, "1-2-3-4 Diversity's worth fighting for! 5-6-7-8 Mix us in, it's not too late!" These activists added a warning: diversity was in danger. A low-income white renter who faced imminent displacement from her apartment lamented at a meeting, "What's unique about Rogers Park is the incredible variety of races and economic groups… Why are all these yuppies trying to come here and ruin it?" RPCAN's task, then, was to defend certain elements of "diversity" already in Rogers Park.

These white and middle class progressives usually used the word "diversity" to refer to poor people and, especially, people of color both in the organization and in the neighborhood (Brown-Saracino 2004), as the following fieldnote excerpt from a RPCAN meeting illustrates:

> At the end of the meeting, three or four white people volunteered for the outreach committee. Jackie [a white leader] started to lament that the committee would be "all white" just as Regina [an African-American member and Section 8 activist] raised her arm to volunteer. Then Jackie, looking pleased, put her hands on Regina's shoulders and said, "Good. We don't want it to be an all white committee, because that doesn't represent the diversity of Rogers Park. We already only represent one language group."

Jackie's comments were, in fact, an unusually straightforward reference to a committee's demographic composition. These white progressives did not typically refer to themselves as diverse. Moreover, in the day-to-day political work that I observed over many years—like meetings, marches, and routine office conversations—RPCAN leaders and members alike rarely spoke openly about the organization's internal racial or class dynamics.

At the same time, these activists promoted a progressive agenda in the name of diversity. They rhetorically connected diversity with concerns about structural inequality, social justice, and low-income housing preservation. The organization's mission statement read, "Justice Alliance seeks social justice and builds power by organizing and empowering residents… to maintain and improve a livable neighborhood for our economically and racially diverse community." The standard RPCAN t-shirt had the slogan "Diversity/Affordability" on the front and "Join the campaign for Diversity, Affordability & Justice" on the back (See Figure 17). These activists wanted to underscore the shared interests of the many different demographic groups that gentrification threatened. Diversity was a convenient, umbrella term for referring to all those groups.

Figure 17. RPCAN t-shirt

***YAF* and the *Michigan Review:* Diversity as Intellectual, not Racial, Differences**

The University of Michigan's massive public relations campaign cast a long shadow over the campus. Few students openly opposed the university's race-conscious admissions policies. Those few conservative and libertarian activists who did speak out against what they called "racial preferences" worked with Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), the *Michigan Review* newspaper, and to a lesser extent the Michigan College Republicans. Although CIR did not coordinate its litigation or its political efforts with these campus groups, the groups had political allies at the national level, from groups such as CEO, which filed briefs supporting the Center for Individual Rights, as well as sympathetic conservative think tanks, bloggers, and media outlets, such as the conservative *The National Review* magazine.

The campus groups and the national groups that opposed racial preferences had similar platforms and used similar rhetoric (although not surprisingly, students often were not as articulate nor did they know the legal details as thoroughly). The national groups often funded, wrote about, and disseminated articles by campus activists. Further, all three campus groups were affiliated with and sometimes funded by broader, well-financed national networks of conservative campus organizations. Such alliances between campus activists and national organizations are characteristic of the modern conservative movement (Colapinto 2003).

CIR, which filed the *Gratz* and *Grutter* lawsuits against Michigan, and the organization's allies that objected to racial preferences set the context in which campus activists made claims about diversity. These national leaders argued in and out of court that that the goal of racial diversity in college admissions was unconstitutional. They sometimes noted that diversity, in

general, was a reasonable goal for college admissions. Kirk Kolbo took this position in his oral arguments, and Curt Levy, a spokesperson for CIR, said on AM talk radio on the day of the Court decision, "Michigan should follow public opinion and the wishes of the voter and try to come up with non-discriminatory ways to achieve diversity." But they did not frame their ideals and goals in terms of diversity. They instead spoke of opposing racial and gender preferences in government, ending discrimination on the basis of skin color, achieving equal opportunity, and protecting individual rights.

Campus activists opposed to racial preferences argued that the university used "quotas" and practiced "racial discrimination" by accounting for applicants' skin color in admissions decisions. They suggested that the university instead take a "colorblind" approach and use "merit" factors like grade point average and test scores. Like their counterparts at the national level (e.g., Horowitz 2002), they portrayed themselves as marginalized outsiders up against a culture of "political correctness" and institutions dominated by liberals and timid Republicans. They claimed that the university administration and the student government only sponsored liberal speakers. They believed that *The Michigan Daily,* the main student newspaper, ignored their anti-affirmative action organizing efforts. One member wrote a letter to the editor complaining that the *Daily* unfairly portrayed YAF as an organization composed of "dark, evil, right-winged overlords" (Wang 2002).

One YAF activist at Michigan described his organization as "an activist group based on free market ideas, traditional values, and some other generally American ideals" (Wang 2002). YAF members who participated in public events related to the lawsuits, like their counterparts in College Republicans and the *Michigan Review,* were predominantly white and male, although a

few men of color and occasionally a woman or two were visible. (YAF was founded in the early 1960s by William J. Buckley, Jr.—considered a grandfather of the modern conservative movement—and the organization is known for its adulation of President Reagan.) Nationally, YAF claimed chapters in 18 states, many on college campuses.[188] On Michigan's campus, the organization had a reputation for being—as one College Republican told me— "pretty extreme right" and for using incendiary language deriding "'left-wing anti-American liberals'" and "'declaring the Midwest a liberal-free zone'" (*The Michigan Daily 2002*).

The *Michigan Review* is an independent conservative and libertarian student paper. During the 2002-03 school year, it produced a bi-monthly, 12-page paper that had a circulation of 4,000 and received funding from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's Collegiate Network, which has helped to create "the great talent pools of the Right" (Miller 2004) by supporting right-wing student journalism. The *Michigan Review* opined against racial preferences and Michigan's policies, did investigative reporting, and engaged in some political actions. Media sources often turned to Justin James Wilson, the paper's editor-in-chief, as *the* conservative campus spokesperson on affirmative action. Although outspoken critics of racial preferences were small in number on campus, the newspaper helped to disseminate their viewpoints and their criticisms of the administration's admissions policies and of other groups, particularly BAMN.

The College Republicans claim that their movement actually began at Michigan in 1892, and as of fall 2003, the College Republican National Committee reported over 120,000 members on 1,148 campuses (Krehely, House and Kernan 2004). The College Republican National Committee and the Michigan Federation of College Republicans were parent organizations to the

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[188] http://www.yaf.com/local.shtml accessed October 3, 2006.

Michigan chapter, which had 1000 members in 2005.[189] Although a number of Michigan College Republicans opposed affirmative action, those members often also were involved with YAF, and the organization focused more on state and national electoral campaigns than on the lawsuits.

YAF and *The Michigan Review* staged counterprotests on campus over the lawsuits that attracted between 10 and 25 participants. They also brought in speakers and wrote articles and editorials. Sometimes they coordinated their organizing work with each other and with the Michigan College Republicans,, such as protesting the bias of those who organized the D.C. bus caravan.

The *Michigan Review's* February 2003 bake sale was perhaps the most publicized political action by these groups. Mocking the university's undergraduate point system, the organizers set different prices for baked goods based on the buyer's race and geographic origin. For example, a bagel sold for 80 cents to a black student and $1 to a white student, with a 16 cent discount for residents of the Upper Peninsula. The Michigan bake sale, along with a similar sale at University of California-Los Angeles a few weeks earlier, received national media attention and soon groups at Southern Methodist University, Northwestern University, and other schools hosted their own.

Activists with YAF and the *Michigan Review* argued that universities should award preferences to applicants based on their socio-economic position. They drew on legal rhetoric to claim that diversity was an acceptable admissions goal but that racial diversity was not, and they redefined the university's definition of diversity by emphasizing intellectual and socio-economic diversity.

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[189] http://crncchatter.blogspot.com/2005/07/7-university-of-michigan.html. Accessed October 6, 2006.

These campus activists' conceptualized the categories of diversity as university leaders did: individual-level characteristics, influenced by ones background, expressed through viewpoints. Many agreed that diversity was a reasonable goal for college admissions. In an interview with *Ann Arbor News,* Adam Haba, president of the College Republicans, praised President Bush's position on affirmative action and said, "I think that we need to continue to find ways to promote diversity here, but we got to do it other ways. We have to look for different means of bringing people together from different backgrounds and different walks of life."[190] Not once did I observe a campus or national opponent of racial preferences claim that they, personally, did not like diversity.

However, these activists invoked legal rhetoric to claim that university policies should not try to achieve *racial* diversity because it was unconstitutional and discriminatory. At a counter-protest against BAMN in January 2003, I caught up with some YAF activists carrying signs with slogans such as, "Diversity is More than Skin Deep" (see Figure 18). One white male activist described Michigan's policies to me as "state-sponsored racism" because they accounted for race: "You can't actually achieve true diversity because people are still looking at race [in admissions decisions]."

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[190] "Special Reports with Ann Arbor News: Inside Affirmative Action." January 2003. http://www.mlive.com/aanews/special/affirmative_action/index.ssf?/aanews/special/affirmative_action/affiliate_media/rally.html. Accessed October 10, 2006.

Figure 18. YAF counterprotester. Photo by author.

Campus opponents of racial preferences distinguished between racial and other forms of diversity, especially intellectual diversity, and they advocated for greater representation of intellectual differences on campus. By intellectual diversity, they usually meant political orientation. When I asked some YAF activists about their opinion of the university's argument about diversity, one young white man responded,

> Diversity of ideas is what I like. If you have a diverse student body with diverse
>
> ideas, and it's a diverse place, it's a better place to go to school, in which to live,
>
> in which to pursue your education, whether it be graduate or undergraduate….
>
> That's what the goal of diversity should be. Diversity is not based on race. It's
>
> based on ideas and experiences, and if you get people from different places,
>
> different experiences, you'll get diversity.

Likewise, when I asked Curt Levy of CIR about his organization's perspective on diversity, he responded: "Well again, define diversity. You mean, intellectual diversity, or racial diversity?"

Calls for intellectual diversity were paralleled in the broader conservative movement among media sources, political groups like College Republican National Committee, and think tanks such as American Enterprise Institute (e.g., American Enterprise Institute 2002; American Enterprise Institute 2003).

Both on campus and off, opponents of racial preferences referred to "intellectual," "academic," or "real" diversity to talk about party affiliation and to advocate for greater representation of conservative viewpoints. For example, in spring 2002, a representative from the Collegiate Network commented on David Horowitz's visit to Michigan on the *Daily's* web site, writing, "Congratulations to YAF and the Michigan Review for bringing true diversity to the University of Michigan."[191]

These campus activists made comparable arguments for greater socio-economic diversity. For example, another white male YAF activist told me, "The system here at U of M is not fair. Some other sort of system needs to be in place where it's not completely based on race, but socio-economic conditions." Some of these activists invoked "race-neutral" alternatives that give preference based on socioeconomic factors and class rank, as implemented by President Bush as Governor of Texas and by several other state university systems (U.S. Department of Education 2003). They sometimes added religious diversity, as well. As one 2002 *Michigan Review* editorial opined, "Slack-jawed, conservative Southern Baptists are certainly under represented. Where are their diversity points?"

Right-wing organizing efforts successfully ended race-conscious admissions practices at Michigan in 2006 with Proposition 2. Their efforts to mobilize support for intellectual diversity

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[191]http://www.michigandaily.com/home/index.cfm?event=displayArticleComments&ustory_id=53b3c315-21e5-4542-8dd0-fa96e92fc407#a7be2c14-0e58-4453-8bac-51bb76ca9155 Accessed October 13, 2006.

at Michigan and nationally gained some momentum but, thus far, have been largely ineffective. The student general counsel of the Michigan Student Assembly, Russ Garber, initiated a "Diversity of Thought Select Committee," which was supported by some College Republicans and approved by the Assembly in fall 2005. Garber described to me the motivation for this committee:

> Basically I thought that there was a dichotomy between the "ideals" of diversity that MSA preached and the actual expenditures put into creating a diverse educational climate. Quite simply, MSA saw diversity as bringing left leaning political commentary to campus. There was not the "robust exchange of ideas" that Sandra Day O'Conner wrote about in 2002 [sic] in the Affirmative Action cases.

The Diversity of Thought Committee achieved little at first but continued to have the assembly's support.

Beyond Michigan, the cause of intellectual diversity had support from groups such as the National College Republicans and David Horowitz's Campaign for Fairness and Inclusion in Higher Education, which called for inquiry into the political bias in student funding for campus speakers and championed an "Academic Bill of Rights." Versions of this document, which encouraged "an environment of intellectual diversity that protects and fosters independence of thought and speech," have been introduced in 19 state legislatures and the U.S. House of Representatives (Hebel 2004).[192] There was other activism around this issue in at least two other

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[192] http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/. Accessed October 11, 2006.

states, but according to the National Education Association, the campaign was "largely unsuccessful" as of late 2006.[193] Other sympathizers have conducted research about the political viewpoints of university professors and speakers, such as law school faculties, to demonstrate a lack of conservative and other viewpoints (Lindgren 2006).

The Family Values Campaign against Starr: Diversity without a Moral Compass

In the mid-2000s, a few "family values" organizations launched a boycott of Starr for sponsoring a gay and lesbian event. Similar boycotts have been mounted against the majority of Fortune 100 companies, although they seemed to have had little impact. An senior executive at Starr responded to the boycott by issuing a letter affirming the company's support for gays and lesbians and for this event in the name of "diversity." The letter referred to Starr's "inclusive" view of diversity, which included sexual orientation. The company distributed the letter to employees, as well, and soon pro- and anti-gay organizations were circulating it on the internet. A stockholder also introduced a proposal to stop Starr from supporting "homosexual" life styles and activities, but virtually all shareholders voted against the proposal.

In documents posted on their web sites, the pro-family activists framed their agenda for this and other campaigns in such terms as Biblical truth, marriage, and traditional morality. They did not focus on Starr's use of the term diversity, but, they did criticize Starr's use of the term diversity as having "no limits." An action alert by one group described raunchy activities that allegedly occurred at another gay event and suggested that Starr supported those activities as well, writing that the activities represent "diversity" but they were "sick" and "depraved."

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[193] http://www2.nea.org/he/freedom/aboraction.html#sd. Accessed October 13, 2006.

Critiquing "Diversity" with Street-Level Semiotics: Diversity as Disingenuous

Leaders in many of the activist organizations in my cases relied on what I call a *street level semiotics* to construct their political rhetoric and to manage politics in an era in which organizational elites frame their positions in terms of diversity. With street level semiotics, activists analyze and criticize how politically powerful leaders talk about a term, such as diversity, as a means of educating other activists and challenging the leaders' credibility.

One of the primary goals of both RPCAN and BAMN, as organizations, was to question existing ideological frameworks and to encourage members to formulate different conceptual categories (BAMN also taught members to use the organization's hard-line rhetoric through such exercises as repeating the organization's pledge in unison, with fists raised in the air [see Figure 19]). So, leaders of these two groups, like similar transformative organizations, organized activities and events that incorporated popular education and reflection. In the spirit of rethinking popular ideology, they often dissected the language used by political and organizational elites, whether they were university administrators or the Alderman and his staff. These activists criticized these organizational decision-makers for giving lip service to diversity but not supporting it in their actions, or for misrepresenting the meaning of diversity altogether. They used street-level semiotics selectively: not all words were "constructs" and not all narratives were "myths."

The most formal method of street-level semiotics was the political education sessions that activist leaders sometimes organized for their members. These sessions included lessons in code-reading, and the activists and academics who led these lessons drew upon concepts from what sociologists commonly call social constructionism and discourse analysis. Their lessons focused

on the language that political opponents used, suggesting that the opponents were disingenuous, hateful, or both, and activists could learn to discern those motivations by analyzing their language. BAMN and RPCAN leaders implied that an individual or organization's position on a particular word was a gauge of their political commitments and their credibility.

Figure 19. Participants at a BAMN rally, reciting the BAMN pledge.

Source: www.bamn.com

RPCAN: Diversity as an Empty Agenda

RPCAN leaders and activists commonly criticized the Alderman's use of language. At a meeting to plan an upcoming RPCAN march, organizers from a few neighborhood groups debated for at least half an hour about whether they should invite the Alderman to speak at the march. Frank, a white board member, made a prediction about the Alderman: "He'll get up there and say, 'I support diversity.' And someone will say, 'Why didn't you support…?'" (implying there was a litany of diversity-related projects that the Alderman had not backed). Frank later added

animatedly, "Look at diversity on his projects. His committees don't look like the neighborhood. The most diverse neighborhood in Chicago? Not even cosmetic!" Some of the other activists rolled their eyes, smiling in agreement.

On this and other occasions, Frank reasoned that the political bodies that make decisions about development should reflect the local demographics. Therefore, the larger power structure in Rogers Park was inequitable because it excluded a diversity of poor renters, people of color, and religious minorities. Diversity was his measure for proportional political representation.

RPCAN organizers taught members to question and redefine the meaning of diversity as they trained them to be politically active. This happened during the Community Exchange, spearheaded by RPCAN. According to the brochure, the Community Exchange would host workshops that "raise community awareness on selected topics, educate a cross-section of the community and enable us to seek common ground on strategies to make Rogers Park a successful, diverse community." RPCAN leaders convened a small steering committee of white church leaders and activists from a few local organizations. The first phase was a three-part series on "Development and Diversity," piloted at a partner Christian church. The Community Exchange was similar to many of the educational workshop series sponsored by RPCAN. In this case, leaders would urge participants to rethink critically the dominant ideological framework of diversity and development, using intellectual analysis and open discussion. At one steering committee meeting, Bill, a white RPCAN organizer and the primary leader for the project, described the upcoming series, "Part of it is talking about what it means to be diverse. For a lot of newer people [to the neighborhood], their idea of diversity is very different."

Fifteen people attended the first workshop in the series. Most were middle-aged or elderly and appeared to be middle class. Four were African-American and the rest, white. Bill introduced the first session by asking, "What do we mean by diversity?… Do we have the same perceptions and definitions of what it means?" he queried. "We've all been to lots of meetings… [The] leaders don't represent how we talk about diversity." Following Bill's instructions, everyone wrote their definitions of diversity on a map of Rogers Park that hung on the wall. A white woman noted, "all kinds of races and genders, language." A white man cited problems with "community unification" and knowing "how to talk to people." A gay white man jotted, "economic status, nationalities, and sexual orientation." A black man added, "kids to seniors." Bill built on this exercise, shifting the conversation to a discussion of housing quotas, landlord control, and the best balance between home ownership and rental units.

A few participants gradually began posing questions similar to Bill's. A white man asked, "We can take a position to maintain our current diversity. Or is diversity something you're working for? … When you talk about diversity, which approach are we working for?" An elderly white man commented, "Diversity may not always be the goal. Inclusiveness… may be." Participants pressed Bill for more information about demographics and housing policy. He used these comments to segue into other exercises—like an activity in which the participants physically created a human bar graph to represent rising national income inequality—to reconstruct a definition of diversity conducive to progressive politics and ideology.

While it is impossible to measure RPCAN's broader impact on residents' understanding of diversity, the activists have used diversity discourse to raise the visibility of political representation in the local government, as in their letters about the Sheridan-Devon TIF that were

published in the local newspaper. RPCAN was not free from internal racial and class divisions, but it was somewhat successful at implementing its version of demographic diversity by, for example, electing minorities and low-income residents to its board.

As Kristina Smock observes (2004:55), racial and class cleavages within groups such as RPCAN may be unintentionally exacerbated by discussions like the one at the Community Exchange. It is often easier for the predominantly middle-class members to take part in these discussions, as they depend on "a culture of interaction rooted in a middle class tradition of individualism that assumes a certain level of cultural capital" (ibid:138). This is not to say that members with less formal education are incapable of participating. Rather, for the poor and racial minority members, such workshops can seem like a diversion from their pressing basic needs.

The RPCAN activists' version of diversity suggests that progressives, too, have a place in a community but they do not explicitly have a place in its diversity. The white and middle-income progressives can use diversity discourse both to affirm that marginalized groups are entitled to stay in Rogers Park and to justify their own presence without drawing attention to their relative positions of power within the organization or the community at large.

BAMN: Diversity as a Distraction from Racial Integration

BAMN leaders disagreed with the University of Michigan administration's diversity rationale and believed they had to respond to this rationale. Like their counterparts opposed to affirmative action, BAMN leaders used street-level semiotics to frame diversity as a social and legal construct, limited at best and demeaning and deceptive at worst.

BAMN, the *Grutter* interveners, and their affiliates had an elaborate, qualified critique of the diversity concept. They described their legal and political arguments for integration and equality as a contrast to the university's diversity rationale. A December 2001 press release from Scheff & Washington stated, "This case is about more than diversity. We ask you to hold that the affirmative action plan being challenged here is justified because it promotes integration and equality." The student interveners' brief to the Supreme Court for *Grutter* criticized the diversity rationale while reluctantly identifying it as a legal precedent. The brief described Justice Powell's decision as "an inadequate one, a decision that helped slow down progress towards 'genuine equality'" because it "obscured affirmative action's fundamental nature as a means of achieving integration and equality" and "left university administrations with only a single partial, but nonetheless true, defense for their use of race-based admissions policies—intellectual diversity" (pp.17,30). The brief also argued that law school administrators were backed into endorsing only the diversity rationale. Administrators could not acknowledge other justifications for affirmative action, "given the character of the *Bakke* decision, the coordinated attack on affirmative action by far-right law Foundations…and this litigation itself" (p.49). This was a legal iteration of the organization's political rhetoric and platform (see Figure 20).

Figure 20. BAMN march in Ann Arbor. Source: www.bamn.com

BAMN activists still acknowledged the merits of the university's argument about diversity, if for no other reason than to demonstrate that they understood legal argumentation and precedent. After all, the lawsuits, particularly the administrations arguments for race-conscious admissions, were couched in the language of diversity. In so doing, BAMN organizers highlighted race as the most important form of diversity and (like RPCAN activists) paired diversity with other concepts, such as integration. For example, the December 2001 press release from Scheff & Washington stated, "Racial diversity divorced from integration is a meaningless construct." Similarly, at a BAMN conference panel at the Michigan Law School, attorney Miranda Massie, who represented the *Grutter* interveners, told the audience,

> [Justice] Powell was not thinking about racial diversity as just another kind of diversity... along the axis of preferences for polka dots not stripes or geographic diversity... He was talking about race. Race is unlike every other category in

American life, and it always has been... Race has a singular importance... It's

inseparable from the idea of racial integration.

Likewise, BAMN held a press conference on Michigan's campus on June 23, 2003, one of 20 across the country that BAMN planned for "Decision Day." A reporter asked Shanta Driver—a biracial woman in her 40s who had a law degree and was a prominent national BAMN spokesperson—if the law school admissions policy was now a model for the undergraduate program. Driver replied that undergraduate admissions now "will require more work, but I think the costs are diversity and integration, and that deserves hiring 8 or 10 more admissions officers, if that's what necessary. That is a small price to pay to be able to maintain integration in this nation."

BAMN activists had other complaints about "diversity." Like SSAA activists described below, BAMN activists also felt that the term was not a useful basis for mobilization. I witnessed this during my first day of fieldwork with BAMN, when I introduced myself to three activist leaders at a spring 2002 BAMN conference. I told them that I was studying the affirmative action lawsuits and that I was especially interested in the different ways that groups involved understood the term diversity. They were pleased to find out that I was a sociologist and immediately indicated that they understood what I was saying.[194] Miranda Massie told me, "You can't wage a war over diversity," and an African-American woman who was a BAMN national organizer added, "Try talking about equality—that's something you can fight for."

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[194] The American Sociological Association—along with the Law and Society Association, the Society for the Study of Social Problems, the Association of Black Sociologists and Sociologists for Women in Society—filed amicus briefs in *Gratz* and *Grutter* in support of Michigan. BAMN activists told me that the argument made by these professional associations, which criticized standardized tests as a measure of achievement, was the only brief that aligned closely with BAMN's arguments. Disclaimer: This author is a member of a number of these professional organizations.

BAMN activists also described diversity as demeaning to people of color. At a BAMN recruitment event at North Park University in Chicago, an audience member asked, "When is it acceptable for a school to say we need diversity to get a better education?" Jodi Masley—a white Michigan alumna, a lawyer for the *Grutter* interveners, and a BAMN national organizer—replied:

> Diversity has been kind of a code word for a few but not everyone... We're perfectly happy to use the term diversity... At first I found the diversity concept kind of insulting. It says: "If you're white, young, male you might as well have some women around, some black people around." It was determined because it would help men hear what women have to say... We think there's something more fundamental.

Similarly, at the BAMN press conference on Decision Day, a white male BAMN activist from California told me, "Diversity is important, but it has the tenor of being simply beneficial to rich white people's experience and education. But the fight for affirmative action is about the fight for equality, about the dignity and equality of all people—black, Latino, Asian-American, poor people."

BAMN leaders invoked their definition of diversity to differentiate BAMN from other organizations involved in the affirmative action debate and to criticize those organizations. One white student organizer for Michigan BAMN told me that the Appeals Court judges made their decision using BAMN's language, not the "right wing's version of diversity," which was "meaningless". Other Michigan BAMN activists described the conservative version of diversity as "tokenism" (Abeobua and Royal 2002). In a January 2003 email, BAMN organizers wrote, "It

is pure cynicism and hypocrisy for Bush to praise diversity out of one side of his mouth while urging the U.S, Supreme Court to outlaw the actual programs that have desegregated higher education in America out of the other."

BAMN leaders also pointed to this position to differentiate the organization from other affirmative action supporters. At a June 2002 conference, Shanta Driver criticized mainstream civil rights organizations such as PUSH, NAACP, and CORE for following the same tack as the university and using the terms of the court from the *Bakke* decision. "They would only speak in terms of academic diversity," she told the audience. "They would never use affirmative action or inequality… We were clear about not just defending academic diversity, which is certainly valuable, but [affirmative action] was about opening universities in the North and in the South to being integrated."

These various quotes also illustrate the ways in which BAMN leaders drew attention to diversity *as a word*. Diversity, they believed, was a "concept," a "construct," and even a "code word." This reflected a broader orientation that BAMN leaders had toward particular words and narratives. They understood language as a political device that people in power employed in strategic and disingenuous ways. BAMN leaders argued that an individual or organization's position on a particular word was a gauge of their political commitments and their credibility. Diversity was not the only term they treated this way. For instance, Miranda Massie referred to "reverse discrimination" as "a dubious concept," and many BAMN activists and leaders questioned political conservatives' rhetoric about "colorblindness."

BAMN's political education of its members included lessons in street level semiotics, usually taught by the *Grutter* interveners' expert witnesses and other academics and reinforced

by BAMN leaders. For example, at a January 2003 conference, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, a Latino professor of sociology from Texas A & M University, described to the racially mixed audience of about 120 people what he called "colorblind racism." He said that no one wishes to think of themselves as racist, but "racism still exists… Colorblind racism is the modern, effective, safe, George Bush way for whites to rationalize their views." He described four primary "frames" that white people used to buttress this "ideology." With "naturalization," for example, "Whites attempt to normalize [racist] events… using terms like 'natural' or 'that's the way it is.'" Pedro Noguera, an energetic Latino professor of education at Harvard University, spoke on that same panel. Noguera said in a booming deep voice, as he paced across the stage, "The call for an end to affirmative action is based on three myths," such as the idea that whites are hurt by reverse discrimination, and he criticized these myths for the audience.

The audience members responded especially enthusiastically to this panel. During the Q&A session, young people made such comments as, "I'm leaving with a commitment to filibust!" and "This is very encouraging to be here today." National organizer Luke Massie urged them to read up on affirmative action "so we can argue about how Bush lies."

SSAA: Diversity as Contrary to their Personal Experience

SSAA activists, like those in BAMN, recognized that the diversity rationale was a strategic legal argument, but they relied on street-level semiotics to critique the diversity rationale as patronizing and an inaccurate representation of their personal concerns and experiences. Diego Bernal—one of the authors of the amicus brief from Michigan law students, an intervener in the Law School case, and a popular speaker at SSAA and other events—often made public

comments such as, "diversity is not an intellectually honest argument." At an affirmative action event at the Michigan School of Social Work, he told me that the Supreme Court would not take seriously the interveners' argument about using affirmative action to remedy racial inequality. When he worked with the Latino, African-American, Asian-American, and Native American law student groups to draft an amicus brief, they were told by a Michigan dean that the Supreme Court justices would probably read their brief, as it was the only one written by Michigan students. Deans, professors, and others advised them that they could write a brief as a "symbolic gesture" or "play the game to win" by endorsing the university's diversity rationale. After some discussion, the law students wrote a brief endorsing the diversity rationale.

Diego told me that he had torn feelings about this choice, saying it was "very difficult" because the diversity argument did not represent "what people really think about diversity… Your hope for your child isn't really hope that they can go to school with a lot of different people". He and other SSAA activists occasionally criticized the diversity rationale by citing the ways that it did not describe their personal experiences on campus. As he told the cheering crowd at SSAA's Rally for Educational Justice, the day before the April 1 March on Washington:

> I think in our briefs, in our conversations, when we talk to the media, we try to
> make intellectual arguments for affirmative action. And what I mean by that is
> diversity. Diversity is important. Take a quick look around you. It's important,
> and it works. The benefits of diversity are real. But when we're at home, on the
> phones, in our living rooms, diversity is not the first word out of our mouths…

Another white SSAA leader told me in an interview that the diversity rationale did not adequately describe her experiences in multi-racial organizing or in cross-racial friendships:

> [Diversity] is not a political argument I would make. … Diversity has been so used and misused by so many people that it doesn't mean anything politically anymore…. Diversity doesn't affect my politics, but certainly the concept of multi-racial organizing does. And the concept of crossing color lines does… And it's *not* warm and fuzzy. Let's take the politics out of it. Interpersonally, in my relationships that I've had with black women [and] other women of color, race comes up. My privilege comes up, and barriers come up. That's never warm and fuzzy. I've grown as a person tremendously from these relationships, but they don't invoke shiny sunny days where we're all sitting taking pictures together.

Diego and this woman, like many others in SSAA, felt that the challenges of interpersonal relationships and cross-racial organizing were more influential than their classroom exchanges with students of different backgrounds.

Unlike BAMN activists, SSAA organizers did not make a critique of "diversity" a central component their public rhetoric. They sometimes noted that the diversity rationale could be demeaning. At an educational panel about SSAA, a few activists agreed that the diversity rationale made student of color seem "like a tree, to add color" and "on campus to educate white students." One woman explained, "It's very limiting for me but strategic of the university because they wouldn't win with other arguments."

These activists primarily depended on street-level semiotics, combining academic analysis with political reasoning to critique the arguments against affirmative action. SSAA's packet of materials for the bus ride to D.C. included four "Talking Points," three of which questioned the language used by opponents of racial preferences. For example, "UM's admissions policies are not 'quotas' and take into consideration a broad variety of factors…" This analysis often was provided by Michigan faculty and graduate students. For instance, also included in the SSAA bus packets was a December 1999 article entitled, "Don't believe the hype: Behind the Smokescreen of Class-Based Affirmative Action Arguments" written by a Michigan political science graduate student for a newsletter circulated by Michigan's Academics for Affirmative Action and Social Justice.

These activists often tailored their street-level semiotics to their campus experiences as Michigan students, particularly as students of color. One strategy was to draw attention to the negative ways that people use a term and to suggest positive ways of redefining that term. At the SSAA press conference in D.C., an African-American SSAA organizer and graduate student spoke about the classes that he instructed,

> There's a dirty word around Michigan's campus sometimes—there's two words actually—it begins with an A and an A, and it's not Ann Arbor. It's the word we're here for—affirmative action. You get a lot of shrugs and "Awh god. The twenty points! Oh we got to talk about the 20 points!" Well, those 20 points are the points that I stand and claim as a benefactor of affirmative action. I know I am qualified. I know my students are qualified. I continue every day to test

everyone's qualifications in the class—if you don't know, come to one of my sections.

.

Another strategy was to encourage activists to reject myths that they had "internalized." An Asian-American SSAA activist, when speaking before a cheering crowd at the Rally for Educational Justice, criticized conservative rhetoric and chastised Asian-Americans for internalizing it:

> If you listen carefully, you'll hear the same conservative rhetoric being drilled into our heads. It's the idea that Asian-Americans, along with whites, are the victims of affirmative action. … I'm angry that so many people, including Asian-Americans, still buy into the model minority myth. And I'm angry that we're no longer treated as a community of people but rather as a wedge, a tool, an object for someone else's agenda. While not discounting the efforts of our families that helped us get where we are today, I only wanted to highlight the racist undertones of conservative rhetoric out there right now. To my [Asian-Pacific American] brothers and sisters out there, don't let anyone speak on our behalf… This voice affects you, yourself, and your community!

Many speakers at SSAA events, particularly faculty and political officials, encouraged SSAA activists to think critically about national politics and to make connections between the war in Iraq and affirmative action. At the Rally for Justice, a Latina professor from a humanities department read a statement from UM Faculty of Color United for Peace and Racial Justice:

"The same spurious reasoning guides Bush's attack on affirmative action and his characterization of the University of Michigan's admissions processes as a quota system. We feel that both of these attacks are part of a unified strategy that not only threatens the safety of Iraqis and their regional neighbors, but also averts human rights and civil rights in this country."

Two weeks after the April 1 march, SSAA held a debriefing meeting about the experience. A professor from the Michigan Women's Studies department advised the students about how to respond to common arguments against affirmative action. "Students of color are easily silenced by the affirmative action debate," she said, listing points to think about and use when addressing the media. "The word 'quota' is used all the time, and a lot of students feel bad about it." She provided examples of how the word was used in ways she believed to be inaccurate, citing different times in history when the quota for white was 100%. "Can a white student be a quota?... 'Quota' is a code for race." She had similar comments about "reverse discrimination." She also mentioned "inherited intellectual capital", which she said she saw in her own classroom, as some students have spent the summer in France and subscribe to the *New York Times* and some students are from Cass High School in Detroit. "As a teacher, I see the difference between those students… When we get rid of inherited intellectual capital, affirmative action can end."

YAF and *Michigan Review:* Diversity as a Hidden Social Justice Agenda

Activists involved with YAF and the *Michigan Review* also used street-level semiotics, but to suggest that the university's professed support for diversity was "disingenuous" and part of a hidden social justice agenda. They drew attention to the university's use of diversity as a

linguistic device, describing the term as a deceptive, socially constructed concept. An editorial in the *Michigan Review* cited the university's argument that diversity was a compelling state interest as a "disingenuous lie… a semantic change in motivation, not a substantial change in policy" (*The Michigan Review* 2002). Another *Michigan Review* writer (Schwartz 2000) complained:

> One would think that at an institution of higher learning, students would study all
>
> sides of an issue - after all, that's what "diversity" should mean. But too often,
>
> President Bollinger's lauded 'commitment to diversity' refers to skin color only,
>
> and in class conservative students are ostracized…

These activists implied that university leaders' motives were suspect because they used such a woolly term.

Likewise, their counterparts among conservative think tank analysts, journalists, and writers at the national level often put quotation marks around the word diversity when they wrote about it. They described diversity as a "mother's milk" term (Kay 2003), "in plain language, race and gender preferences underpinned by multiculturalism that elevates ethnic identities over a common American identity" (O'Sullivan 2002), and comparable to Wyoming: "a big part of everyone's map of America, but there is not much there" (Wood 2003).[195] Curt Levy of CIR told me why he thought diversity had become an "all-powerful mantra."

> In the late seventies, the synonyms for it—like proportionality, racial balancing
>
> and quotas—fell out of favor. This is a euphemism that's a very effective

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[195] Peter Wood (ibid) italicizes the word diversity throughout his entire book, *Diversity: Invention of a Concept,* to distinguish between diversity as a social construct and what he considers to be "real diversity" between groups of people.

euphemism, in that it sounds good…. [W]hen you're talking about racial

diversity, again, it's just a euphemism for now a discredited word.

These campus activists also argued that the concept of diversity was demeaning and the university's definition of it inaccurate. Like attorney Kirk Kolbo in his oral arguments for the plaintiffs, these activists often said that race was not an adequate measure for viewpoint. James Justin Wilson, the white senior and *Michigan Review* editor-in-chief, explained during our interview, "If [Michigan administrators] really wanted diversity, it seems obvious that they'd measure more than just race and geography and socioeconomic status. Those are pretty poor proxies for their greater concept of diversity."

These opponents of racial preferences, like activists from BAMN and SSAA, also characterized university leaders' views of minorities as demeaning. Wilson went on to describe a presentation by Professor Patricia Gurin about her research on diversity:

[I]t was the most insulting. She referred to minorities as 'diverse peers' and the

rest as 'non-diverse peers.' As if they were bringing something to my education,

and that I was using them as a tool to get a better education in the university—

that's disingenuous.

These activists' national counterparts had launched a rabid critique of Gurin's work (Lerner and Nagai 1998; Wood and Sherman 2001), one of which was published in a peer reviewed journal (Rothman, Lipset and Nevitte 2003)).

Finally, in their street-level semiotics, campus and national critics of racial preferences derided Michigan policies and programs that enabled minority students and faculty members to "self-segregate" on campus. They primarily directed these criticisms at such behavior among African-American students. They pointed to dorms that were popular with a particular racial group; separate supplemental graduation ceremonies for students based on their racial or gay/lesbian identity, such as the Black Celebratory; the William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center, which houses multicultural student groups; and academic programs such as African-American Studies. These activists argued that such initiatives run counter to the university's goal, as stated in diversity rationale, of encouraging interaction across racial groups. This, too, was a common criticism among national opponents of affirmative admissions. During the *Gratz* oral arguments, Supreme Court Anthony Scalia asked Michigan's attorney, John Payton, if the university had an African-American dorm, and Payton emphatically said that there was not.

What impact, if any, resulted from these critics' rhetoric and organizing efforts? Curt Levy told me that Michigan administrators never mentioned socio-economic status in its arguments until around 2002, but then they started to make more references to the 20 points awarded to applicants for their low socio-economic status. The university did in fact refer to socio-economic status, disadvantage or background three times in a 1998 brief, four times in a 2001 brief to the Appeals Court, and seven times in the 2003 brief to the Supreme Court. But Rogers Clegg was correct when he told me that the campaign against racial and gender preferences would not be won in the court of diversity. These activists successfully banned affirmative action in public institutions by framing it as an affront to civil rights and fairness, as

they did in the Michigan Civil Rights Institute under Ward Connerly and Jennifer Gratz's leadership.

Discussion

These characteristics of street-level semiotics point to some of the challenges that diversity ideology poses for activists. The contrast between rhetoric about diversity and rhetoric about rights and equality is especially striking. These discourses are distinctive but not inherently incompatible. For example, RPCAN and BAMN activists sometimes used both. But when political participants in my cases framed social problems in terms of diversity, they easily overshadowed the issues around which poor people and people of color have organized.

Legal rights historically have been an important mechanism through which women, people of color, and other marginalized groups have redressed discrimination, as has been rhetoric about those rights (Tarrow 1998). In the neighborhood context, legal rights are also probably the most powerful mechanism that people of color have to protect themselves in the housing market. Although policies and laws like the 1968 Fair Housing Act have failed to address adequately problems at an institutional level, they do support an individual's right to file litigation and they have facilitated successes in fights over such issues as public housing segregation and denial of credit for residents in black neighborhoods (Massey and Denton 1993). Today, tenant ordinances, like the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance, also provide residents with clearly defined forms of legal protection against discrimination. In fact, the Leadership Council on Metropolitan Open Communities, now defunct, initiated a Section 8 testing program in the early 2000s to document systemic landlord discrimination against voucher holders, using the

model

model of earlier fair housing testing. Some members of the Section 8 Tenants Council even attended a training with the Leadership Council.

Many of the concerns of the Section 8 Tenant Council require legal action, such as housing testing and lawsuits against landlords, to be enforced. But such actions have little support in a political environment where middle class homeownership and public-private partnerships—rather than low-cost housing or grassroots activism—are priorities.

Furthermore, diversity is not even a constitutionally accepted goal in neighborhood policies (Malamud, 2001).[196] There also are few entitlements to low-cost housing in contemporary neoliberal redevelopment policies. One notable exception is HUD's obligation to fund replacement housing for a portion of the public housing development slated for demolition across the country, although housing advocates have criticized the viability, adequacy, and restrictions of these plans. Thus, diversity discourse may not be strategically useful for low-income minorities, who have more to gain from a legal and rhetorical focus on justice and the right to fair housing.

One implication, across all my cases, is that politically powerful groups may invoke the idea of "diversity" as a revised measure of inequality and exclusion. If diversity is the goal, then any given initiative will inevitably leave out some demographic group. Activists and detractors then criticize the initiative on the grounds that their constituents—whether people of color, poor people, white people, homeowners, or supporters of traditional values—have been left out. Exclusion from the mix serves as the standard for judging fairness. This is a very different barometer than a standard such as fair housing or proportional demographic representation.

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[196] According to the courts, higher education is the only place where diversity is a legally acceptable end (Malamud 2001).

Such assertions are part of a current trend among some groups not categorically protected by government anti-discrimination policy, like white men or Christians, who increasingly make claims that they experience reverse discrimination because of their race, gender, or class (e.g., Lynch 1997) or who adopt the mantle of" minority" to protest their perceived marginalization (Skrenty 2001). Diversity becomes an elusive, moving standard. This may not be the intention of anyone who uses the term, but it is a pitfall of relying on it.

Diversity rhetoric is not the sole domain of university leaders, corporate executives, or urban boosters. Nor is it devoid of progressive or conservative political punch. But the term does lend itself to a self-conscious war of words. Some activists, such as the white and middle class activists with RPCAN, appropriated the word and imbued it with progressive connotations, while conservative students at Michigan sought to redefine it *not* to mean race. In order to hold onto this concept, these activists must constantly spell out what "diversity" should mean and why they have a rightful claim to it. They end up endorsing it and discrediting it at the same time.

CONCLUSION

Diversity is a racialized political project, an ideologically-charged shift towards racial reconstruction at the turn of the 21st century. Over the last 30 years, organizational and political elites—at the University of Michigan, at Starr Corporation, in Rogers Park, and in many other institutional sites—have made diversity the orthodox, race-conscious ideology of difference and institutional inclusion. Diversity ideology exalts racial and other social identities. It posits an aspirational and moral vision of an inclusive society. It emphasizes the institutional pay-offs of inclusion. It calls for institutional accommodation and action. Decision-makers communicate and instantiate this racial orthodoxy through official rhetoric, symbols, organizational structures, and political processes.

Organizational and political elites have embraced the diversity project in the context of changing demographic, social, political and economic conditions and shifting institutional imperatives. They must peacefully manage student bodies, workforces, and residential communities that are increasingly heterogeneous even as they are more economically unequal. Progressive political activists have put racial accommodation on the table and have helped to shift cultural norms towards racial tolerance, while New Right advocates have constrained what leaders can say and do about race. Organizational and political decision-makers face pressures to signal both legal and normative compliance with laws concerning non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and race-conscious admissions practices. As they confront the heightened demands of market competition, they need sophisticated public relations strategies to sell their institutions and their commodities to potential clients and consumers. These imperatives are not only

external forces impressed upon decision-makers from outside and above. Rather, decision-makers reinforce, shape, and reconstitute these pressures in their own institutional settings.

Decision-makers in my three cases—representing very different institutional contexts—have managed these pressures by strategically invoking diversity rhetoric and diversity initiatives in patterned ways. They reframe issues of racial integration by establishing diversity as the reasonable position and goal and by communicating diversity ideology with local expert discourses. They draw on diversity rhetoric and symbols to construct an institutional identity as inclusive. These strategies help to make the language, goal, and organizational structures of diversity appear to be organizational common sense.

Through their use of diversity rhetoric and their implementation of diversity programs, these local leaders also shape the content and implementation of law and public policy. They endorse pro-integrationist policies, both public and private, but redefine these policies as good for diversity, not as remedies to racial and class disadvantage. These leaders change the constituents for their programs for inclusion by allocating resources both for marginalized groups other than African-Americans and for people who are wealthy and in high occupational status positions. They define middle class human and cultural capital to include the ability to communicate about "diversity" and the skills of interacting across racial boundaries. And they have marginalized the alternative ideologies and agendas of detractors and political challengers.

Organizational and political leaders have transformed the terms of racial inclusion through these strategic uses of diversity ideology and initiatives. They have bureaucratized racial integration as a value, and sometimes they create organizational mechanisms to encourage and support such integration. They direct material resources and cultural affirmation to people of

color, women, and other marginalized groups. But as they acknowledge, valorize, and accommodate racial identity, they often downplay problems of inequality, the political ideal of remedying racial and class disadvantage, and pro-integrationist organizational policies, especially those of the federal government. In so doing, they have helped to displace the political project of racial equality

Organizational elites have refashioned fundamental issues about racial integration and institutional inclusion—namely, who should learn, work, or live here—in terms that are compatible with organizational and political demands of the neoliberal, post-civil rights era. The diversity project has become orthodox because it enables elites to institutionally include some historically excluded groups, particularly people of color, while minimizing the threats to the class structure, to white people, to middle and upper class economic interests, and to the organizational commitments of people in power.

Any orthodoxy comes with cracks. The most executive political leaders, such as university presidents, adhere closely to an official public script on diversity. But such an official script is a characterization and simplification of social reality, not a mirror of it. Other organizational elites, such as upper-level managers, confront the more mundane tasks of implementing this script. They find ways to reconcile the official line on diversity with the sometimes contradictory organizational tasks of their employment and volunteer work and their own personal convictions. They make decisions about which "diverse" groups merit their attention because those groups are the most likely to succeed, the least likely to succeed, the most at risk, the easiest to deal with, the least offensive, or the most lucrative. They ask questions

and raise doubts about how much their organizations, coalitions, and leaders really believe in diversity.

These cracks also create leverage for political activists. Some activists avoid the language of diversity altogether. Many others on both the left and the right reinforce some of the central tenets of diversity ideology, particularly the moral value of diversity, while modifying and challenging others, particularly elites' definitions of diversity and the nature of their commitment to it. These activists exploit the vagueness of diversity rhetoric to develop their own definitions of diversity, and they school their members in street-level semiotics to decipher and critique elites' political discourse on diversity.

These findings provide new ways to think about racial formation, neoliberalism and class inequality, and political culture, ideology, and power.

Racial Formation

These findings elaborate and improve basic concepts in racial formation theory and expand our understanding of contemporary processes and patterns of racial formation and domination.

Improving Concepts in Racial Formation Theory

My analysis complicates the "racial" in a racial project to avoid overstating the determinant power of race (Bonilla-Silva 1996; Nagel 1988). The diversity project is centrally, but not exclusively, concerned with race and racial inclusion. Historically, leaders in each of these sites used diversity rhetoric to characterize people of color, especially black people, and programs for

them. At later points in history, diversity rhetoric continued to connote people of color, and some diversity initiatives continued to focus on them even as they also included other groups.

However, the *zeitgeist* of the diversity project—particularly of diversity ideology—has become the inclusion of more generic differences. Official diversity rhetoric adds other categories of difference from gender to geography. It frames race as analogical to and commensurate with these categories, and it underscores the institutional benefits of including many different kinds of people. For organizational elites, the logic and practices of diversity help to organize the myriad tasks of managing the inclusion of these different groups. Organizational elites' inclusion of groups other than racial minorities can benefit those groups and add legitimacy to diversity efforts while also overshadowing the unique history and contemporary social conditions of racism and racial inequality. I characterize diversity as a racialized political project to account for these various themes.

Racial formation theory also has been criticized for failing to account for the meso-level of organizational and political practices (Staiger 2006). In my opinion, it suffers a related flaw: it provides unclear direction about how to incorporate issues of political economy and broader structures of racial domination and power into analyses of everyday empirical phenomena. I try to remedy these shortcomings by incorporating qualitative data about the structure, implementation, symbolic construction, and experience of organizational initiatives considered relevant to diversity, such as corporate diversity trainings, urban development plans, and undergraduate recruitment activities. I borrow insights from organizational sociology, particularly studies of private companies, to do so. I show that organizations and decision-makers may adopt particular language and practices in the context of broader social structural

and ideological influences, but they communicate this language and these practices according to local organizational and political norms, in locally appropriate discourses, for local constituents. The strategic uses of diversity rhetoric and initiatives that I identify in the dissertation represent general organizational-level patterns that shape the contours of racial formation and the meanings of race and difference.

Racial formation theory tends to prioritize the role of the state as the central actor in racial projects. My analysis points to discursive and organizational patterns that may be inspired in large measure by state action—notably, Powell's opinion in *Bakke—*but whose enactment is carried out by private and public organizations alike. Racial formation theory needs to account better for the role of private entities. Corporations, in particular, have never been more powerful in U.S. history than they are now and play a central role in defining and legitimizing diversity ideology and initiatives. Along these same lines, I show that many patterns of language, organizational activity, and power shape racial formation across different institutional domains. (This also is a way to bridge and build upon the often disparate fields of urban studies, educational studies, and organizational studies.)

However minor the modifications, I think the notion of a racialized political project provides a stronger analytical lens for conceptualizing and analyzing such phenomena. It is particularly well-suited to the current political climate, in which the other major racial project, colorblindness, also de-racializes the issue of race. Likewise, the meso-level of organizational activity provides some of the connective tissue to show how broader political, economic, and social structural conditions—such as the rise of the New Right—influence and relate to micro-level practices. By "bringing the organization back in" and borrowing concepts from

organizational sociology, I show how some organizational mechanisms shape racial formation. (Alternately, the field of organizational studies, by and large, has not been concerned with racial formation and domination or political economic change). By identifying strategic patterns in the use of diversity rhetoric and initiatives that cut across different institutional settings, I have identified generalizable patterns of power and racial formation that scholars can investigate in other contexts. I believe these modifications and insights provide scholars with stronger tools for understanding racial formation and domination amidst de-racialization without flattening our empirical data, depriving our subjects of agency, or losing sight of broader political economic processes.

Diversity and Racial Domination

As numerous scholars of race and ethnicity have observed recently, changing patterns of mobility and discrimination have left the current racial hierarchy in the U.S. in flux (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Gans 1999; Gold 2004; Twine and Warren 2000). At the same time, people of color, women, and visible gays and lesbians have gained greater representation in the middle and upper class and in many professions (e.g., Collins 1983; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2006). How does the diversity project shape dynamics of racial domination in this context?

These fluctuating hierarchies and shifting demographics suggest that analysts may need to develop more sophisticated analyses of racial formation and racial domination along class lines. (Admittedly, I rely on crude indicators of class here, but my goal is to provoke us to consider these general patterns.) Diversity rhetoric and diversity initiatives are relevant to the middle class, the affluent, and the educated class in two general respects. First, they provide

cultural and organizational resources for accommodating some historically excluded groups within the economic elite, within high prestige, well-paid jobs, and among property owners. As I have argued throughout the dissertation, diversity rhetoric is particularly conducive to talking about and managing the demographic differences among these groups. We see this, for example, in organizational leaders' conceptions of middle class cultural and human capital and in the ways that decision-makers have expanded the constituents of inclusion programs to include middle class and affluent people. Diversity ideology affirms and reifies race and other markers of difference, primarily in terms of identity and cultural orientations that manifest in interpersonal, interracial, cross-cultural interactions.

Diversity rhetoric and initiatives also provide an ideological and pragmatic orientation towards poor and working people, particularly people of color. This orientation combines benevolence with distancing and denial. In Rogers Park, diversity rhetoric may help predominantly white affluent residents and property owners feel comfortable with poor and working class residents who are predominantly African-American and Latino and non-Anglo business owners. It may provide a kind of place-based identity politics for urban professionals who consider themselves tolerant and open-minded and who choose not to live and invest in predominantly white suburbs or more affluent neighborhoods (Berrey 2005).

At Starr, diversity rhetoric and initiatives enable executives and managers—at least in corporate headquarters—to disregard lower level employees. (I suspect that these dynamics are different outside of corporate offices.) At the same time, corporate leaders consider the company's charitable giving and supplier diversity programs to be relevant to diversity management, and these programs serve low-income and working class people of color, albeit in

more distanced and different ways than corporate trainings and affinity groups. Admissions administrators at Michigan actively pursue of students of color, who are disproportionately poorer than their white counterparts.

And what about white racial domination in the diversity era? The case of diversity illustrates how an orthodox racial order can *challenge* the privileged status of white people (and men and heterosexuals) while at the same time it *reinforces* racial hierarchies and class inequalities by posing few challenges to structures of economic class, political power and organizational decision-making.

Scholars and practitioners have identified two key indicators of diversity in organizations that are moderately helpful in understanding white domination: numerical representation and perceptions of cultural climate. Not surprisingly, these indicators are relatively easier to assess in bureaucratic organizations like companies and universities than in neighborhoods.

Numerical representation is far easier to study. Since the early 1970s, numerical representation has become highly codified as a measure for understanding segregation and desegregation and for promoting integration. Numerous studies have shown that pro-integrationist programs have led to measurable changes in the numerical representation of women and people of color in higher education and employment (e.g., Bowen and Bok 1998; Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005; Tomaskociv-Devey and Stainback 2007).

Only one sociological study provides definitive evidence of the comparable effects of diversity management programs. Alexandra Kalev, Frank Dobbin, and Erin Kelly (2006) compare the effects of different corporate "diversity" programs (by which they mean both corporate diversity management and affirmative action) on the representation of white women,

African-American women, and African-American men in middle and upper management. As I note in Chapter Nine, they find that programs that assign accountability for results through offices, positions, and task forces have the greatest impact, and diversity management has a greater impact when coupled with affirmative action. They show that some diversity management programs, such as networking initiatives like affinity groups, have little impact on managerial representation, and mandatory diversity trainings can even have *negative* effects. (Not surprisingly, these results have been denounced by some diversity management industry organizations.) But diversity management programs by no means have ended the disproportionate representation of white people among managers and executives: their study found that, in 2002, white men comprised 61% of managers and white women comprised 26%.

Demographic trends at Michigan and Starr point to increases in the representation of people of color and, at Starr, women in tandem with the implementation of strategic diversity plans, recruitment, and management initiatives. Figure 1 in Chapter Four shows that the overall percentage of undergraduates of color at Michigan increased from 13% in 1988 to 26% in 1996, coinciding with the implementation of university president Duderstadt's Michigan Mandate. During this period, gains occurred in the representation of all subgroups: African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans (the percentage of students not identifying their race also increased by 2.5 percentage points).

Figure 6 in Chapter Seven shows that the representation of exempt women and people of color in Starr's workforce also increased between 1989 and 1996, from 25% to 32% female and from 10% to almost 16% racial minority. By 2006, these figures were 35% and 18%, respectively. Of course, these are only correlations, but the patterns are striking. They show that

white racial domination—measured numerically—is not what it was in 1965, when racial minorities held 2.1% of the clerical, office, and managerial jobs. In 2006, employees of color made up an even larger percentage of the overall Starr workforce—26%—compared with 6% in 1965.

Measures of cultural climate, skills and knowledge, and workgroup performance in these sites are relatively more difficult to obtain and relatively less standardized across sites (although it should come as no surprise that measuring the cultural climate became more important within a racial order that has emphasized cultural expressions of race, interracial interactions, and cultural knowledge of racial difference.) The Michigan Student Study found that, among first year students at Michigan in the early 1990s, most white, Asian-American, and Latino students felt that interracial relationships on campus were friendly and limited in conflict (Matlock, Gurin and Wade-Golden nd). About half of African-Americans shared this view. Seventy percent of white students and almost two-thirds of Asian Americans and Latino agreed that the university was "more supportive of students of color" than most comparable universities, while only 20% of African-Americans felt so. Over the four years they spent on campus, the percentage of white students who agreed that university was committed to admitting students of color and developing an environment conducive to their success *increased* while the percentage of African-American students agreeing *decreased* (ibid).

Clearly, these indicators are far narrower than the concepts on which critical race scholars rely to understand white racial domination. In my own fuzzy way, I will say that it makes sense that we have a fuzzy language of diversity at a time of shifting racial hierarchies but ongoing overrepresentation of white people in positions of power at companies, in elite colleges

and universities, and among homeowners. The diversity project also indicates how race can serve as an instrument of class domination, with potentially different expectations of people's skills in cross-racial interaction and communication based on their class and occupational backgrounds.

The Transformation of Racial Projects

Some of the most compelling studies of changing racial projects examine broad patterns of historical transformation (Almaguer 1993; Jacobson 1998; Marx 1998). Because of their scope, however, these studies easily miss the micro-level processes through which the discourse and organizational and political practices of one racial order transform. My findings, particularly about the ways in which organizational leaders endorse but redefine pro-integrationist policies, are illustrative in this respect.

As many scholars have noted, historical periodization can reify social processes into static entities when these processes are ongoing and fluid. Even as one racial project supplants another—as in the transition from formal, legal white domination through most of U.S. history to legal racial inclusion and informal domination in the mid-twentieth century—remnants of the prior racial order remain. Their traces are found in formal and informal organizational practices, social hierarchies, racial identification, the distribution of resources such as wealth, physical structures such as buildings, and more marginalized cultural ideologies. Proponents of a new hegemonic or orthodox racial order still need to frame, explain, and assert some sort of distinction between the current order and the previous one. There are many ways to do this. It may be through denial and erasure, stereotypical simplifications, reinterpretation, condemnation, selective appropriation, or glorification.

Diversity rhetoric and initiatives, for instance, endorse pro-integrationist policies such as race-based affirmative admissions while at the same time they change the structure of these policies, redefine their purpose—to promote better learning, say—and seek to conceal them from scrutiny or minimize their importance. Similar processes of racialized collective memory, redefinition, and differentiation occur around such disparate examples as Martin Luther King, Junior's "I Have A Dream" speech (Brown et al. 2003), the Confederate battle flag (Brundage 2005), and Afro-centric school curricula (Binder 2004). Property owners in the U.S. South have made many plantations into tourist destinations that romanticize or deny slavery, while a select few have restored the working quarters and kitchens of historic sites to tell an educational story of slaves and slavery (Hamilton 2005). Black leaders hoping to redevelop Chicago's historically-black Bronzeville have recast and sanitized the story of neighborhood life in the early twentieth century, a process that political scientist Michelle Boyd calls Jim Crow nostalgia (2008).

These empirical, local, and highly symbolic processes contribute to the ongoing transformation of prior racial orders as they legitimize (or question) the current order. Like broader historical and social structural transformations in racial formation, these processes are constructed both by elites from "above" and by the real and perceived threats of social movement activists from "below" (Marx 1998:269).

Diversity and Colorblindness

My findings provide new ways to think about the relationship between the projects of diversity and colorblindness, their differences, and their similarities. Recently, scholars of race and ethnicity have produced important insights about the ideology and politics of colorblindness

(Bonilla-Silva 2001; Bonilla-Silva 2003; Bonilla-Silva, Lewis and Embrick 2004; Brown et al. 2003; Gallagher 2003). Colorblindness plays a major role in defining the current racial order. However, to tell the story of contemporary racial domination and resistance as primarily the story of colorblindness is to miss enormously important processes of racial accommodation and inclusion. Diversity matters at the level of organizations and politics; many institutional leaders depend upon, reify, and even valorize race to manage organizations and politics peacefully. Likewise, we would be missing important parts of the story if we assume that individuals truly believe in colorblind racism while they only subscribe to diversity ideology out of social decorum.

My discussion of the relationship between the projects of diversity and colorblindness during the Michigan lawsuits stressed the distinctions between these two racial orders. These projects overlap in some ways, as well. Diversity ideology, like colorblindness, may trivialize the significance of race, and diversity programs certainly can reinforce the dominant status of white people. But the leaders I describe in this study are not avoiding or denying racial issues altogether. They may endorse "colorblind" policies and support institutional practices that reinforce the dominant status of white people, but they do not necessarily arrive at such policies by avoiding racial issues altogether. Similarly, the discourse of diversity—like colorblindness—often involves cultural explanations of how people of color behave or their viewpoints. Diversity rhetoric, however, glorifies these cultural differences.

Colorblindness has not been my central topic of analysis or point of comparison in the dissertation. We still need more in-depth analyses of the similarities between diversity and

colorblind ideology, the ways in which they co-exist in individuals' perceptions and organizational activity, and the ways in which one trumps the other.

The Future of Racialization

The diversity project has helped to displace the pro-integrationist strategies of the civil rights era, and it may displace future racial projects premised on other logics, such as reparations. Insights from racial formation theory and studies provide fodder for speculating about the future of the diversity project, racial formation, and racial domination. Even with the transition from a racial order of white supremacy to formal racial inclusion in the mid-twentieth century U.S., white domination has continued, albeit it often takes new forms and may depend on somewhat different mechanisms. Is the ideology of racial inclusion as powerful as white domination? If campaigns for colorblindness continue to succeed, will proponents of diversity insist on subverting and reframing their practices into new forms? New Right critics of Michigan's admissions policies have argued just this, claiming that Michigan administrators recast illegal racial quotas in the language of diversity without actually modifying their admissions practices.

The New Right has successfully undermined the legal rationale for diversity and race-and-gender-conscious workplace affirmative action by passing state laws that end racial and gender "preferences" in public institutions. If conservative activists and political leaders succeed in ending workplace affirmative action or challenging corporate diversity programs in the courts, as Roger Clegg of the Center for Equal Opportunity has suggested, would corporate diversity management change? If colorblindness comes to define national policy—at its most extreme, eliminating any state racial classifications whatsoever—what would happen to diversity ideology

and initiatives? Perhaps organizational and political elites will hold on to "diversity" but drop race out of the formula altogether. Without state requirements to collect racial data, normative pressures on employers to do so probably would dissipate. Without commensuration and statistics about race, the racial categories that comprise the diversity project would lose much of their power, joining the fuzzy terrain of "style" and "viewpoint." (This would completely disable the enforcement of non-discrimination laws concerning race, among other things.)

Or perhaps organizational leaders will hold on to the principles of diversity and look to quasi-private, incentive and market-based approaches to promoting racial inclusion. Given the hostility of the current Supreme Court to racial integration policies in public K-12 schools, evidenced in the recent *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, et al* , and the likelihood that the Court could reverse *Grutter*, some civil rights activists and scholars have proposed an incentive-based approach. In "How Colleges and Universities Can Promote K-12 Diversity: A Modest Proposal," Julius Chambers, John Charles Boger, and William Tobin (2008) argue that elite universities and colleges can shape parents' priorities around K-12 education by creating incentives for children to attend racially integrated elementary and high schools. Institutions of higher education can create a demand for students who have "diversity capital," or the learned "qualities, skills, and life experiences that enable a student to communicate, cooperate and achieve in a truly inclusive setting." Admissions criteria could, for example, make attendance at a "racially and economically diverse high school" a "plus factor." Such diversity capital would be legal, race-neutral in language and intent, and potentially accessible to all, although it would favor students of color because they are more likely to attend

racially heterogeneous schools. Many university presidents and chancellors are rallying around this proposal.

Even without the radical success of the colorblind agenda, the racial, ethnic, and caste hierarchies of other countries may pose yet another challenge to the diversity project as companies go "global," universities educate foreign students and open up branches overseas, and the financial and tourist economies of large cities become more embedded in global processes. This is particularly an issue for bureaucratic units abroad. Starr Corporation does not use the standard U.S. racial categories to characterize its non-U.S. workforce or to design overseas diversity programs, as such racial classifications often do not make sense in other national contexts and, in some countries, are forbidden by law. Executives at Starr—and I am sure they are not alone—agree that gender is the only category that cuts clearly across national boundaries. This is another possible direction of change.

Anthony Marx (1998) argues that white elites in the U.S. historically depended on white supremacy and coalition-building among white constituents to consolidate the nation-state and develop the nation, but social movement pressures and threats of black violence changed the dynamics of coalition-building in the mid-twentieth century. Now the demographic composition of the country's elite has changed, not radically but in important and high profile ways (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2006), as have cultural norms about what that elite *should* look like. As I write now, many voters in America are seriously considering a white woman and a black man as presidential candidates. We are at a historical moment in which a racial regime of moderate inclusion may be a way of preserving and developing the nation-state and the economy. Sandra Day O'Conner's majority opinion in *Grutter* made exactly this argument.

How might this evolve or change? Diversity is reformist and integrationist, an approach to racialization that tends to encourage "more moderate, often integrationist forms of protest" (Marx 1998:21). The ideology of racial inclusion prevalent in so many universities and companies and at least some urban communities helps to accommodate racial minorities and women in the elite. This, in turn, encourages women and people of color to pursue accommodationist political strategies, especially as they become more invested in maintaining their economic privilege and occupational power and prestige. Proponents of colorblindness might become more successful on a national scale and build stronger political coalitions with anti-immigration activists and political leaders, who have gained following amidst the revival of xenophobic immigration policies and vigilantism that followed the terrorist attacks of September 2001. If this happens, will people of color make greater demands for separatism and reparations? If the project of colorblindness becomes more successful, might we see a splintering of the elite and greater racial separatism? Say, a renewed call for black capitalism?

Beyond these thought-experiments, real empirical questions remain about the diversity project and racial formation. How common are the features of diversity ideology that I observed across other universities, companies, and communities? How common are organizational leaders' distinctions between diversity programs and pro-integrationist policies? Do particular structural features demarcate the organizations and institutions whose leaders embrace "diversity"? One of these features might be a global orientation, rather than a regional one, as we see in companies whose employees and operations extend far beyond the U.S., neighborhoods within so-called global cities by virtue of their economies and growing immigrant populations, and elite universities whose students and faculty come from around the world. Regional variation

within the U.S. is another consideration. The North, South, and West had different experiences of slavery and state desegregation efforts, and perhaps this means something for contemporary diversity rhetoric and programs. And what predicts state diversity or multicultural policies on an international scale? Scholars also should consider how we can modify racial formation theory, which focuses primarily on the state, to understand better the role of private entities, particularly corporations, in supporting racialization and deracialization.

Diversity, Neoliberalism, and Class Inequality

The racialized project of diversity organizes race and difference within and for neoliberalism. The ideas, rhetoric, and policies of neoliberalism emphasize the economy and the relationship between the economy and the state. Not surprisingly, most social scientific studies of neoliberalism—particularly of neoliberalism in the U.S. (e.g., Campbell and Pedersen 2001; Hackworth 2007)—have emphasized its economic and regulatory dimensions and its consequences for the class structure. They have paid less attention to neoliberalism's cultural dimensions and its articulation with such institutions as race and gender (but see, e.g., di Leonardo 2008; Reed 1999). However, economic systems communicate and depend on cultural formations such as an ideal of the individual "self" (Sennett 2006), on status differences, and—in racialized societies like the U.S.—on racial domination (Winant 2000).

Both the causes and consequences of neoliberalism shaped my field sites. For example, during the 1990s and into the mid-2000s, income and wealth inequality in the three sites that I studied worsened, as they did across the country. In 2002, considerably more first-year students at Michigan were wealthy and considerably fewer were poor compared to the study body nine

years earlier (Matney 2003). Income inequality in Rogers Park became more pronounced between 1990 and 2000. The neighborhood overall became poorer, mostly because of the loss of middle-income residents, although the number of high income families grew by 18% (Taylor nd).

Starr had fairly high rates of unionization, but it is difficult to imagine that the average worker's compensation was anywhere close to the CEO's total compensation package of $17 million in the mid-2000s. These changes have been driven by myriad causes, such as the loss of moderate-income jobs with the rise of poorly paid service sector jobs and companies' movement of their operations from the unionized Rust Belt to the Sunbelt and overseas.

My research underscores how neoliberalism can be accompanied by an explicitly racial ideology that condemns racial exclusion and even racial inequality and calls for racially inclusive institutions. Neoliberalism creates pressures on organizations and their leaders to carve out distinctive market niches, develop institutional identities that communicate those niches, succeed in arenas of heightened competition, and demonstrate efficient, accountable practices of governance. The logic and language of diversity resonate with neoliberalism, particularly because diversity ideology emphasizes the institutional benefits of inclusion, often in the form of greater competitiveness and profits. Organizational participants in my cases present racial inclusion (and inclusion along such lines as gender and sexual orientation) as a competitive asset for the pursuit of applicants, consumers, investment capital, and homebuyers.

The diversity project is part of what Lisa Duggan (2003:xii) calls an "emergent 'multicultural,' neoliberal 'equality' designed for global consumption during the twenty-first century, and compatible with continued upward redistribution of resources." Organizational and

political elites' ideology of diversity usually fails to challenge, and it often supports, the shifting of wealth and income up the class ladder that has been a hallmark of neoliberalism. Diversity rhetoric and initiatives fashion race and difference in terms that rarely challenge this unequal distribution of wealth, and they can reinforce a broader rolling back of public policies to redistribute resources to poor people and people of color, policies that supposedly "interfere" with the free market.

My findings also suggest that diversity rhetoric is especially conducive to communicating about inclusion and difference among the people most valorized by neoliberalism—the affluent and those in prestigious occupational positions—and that diversity initiatives often target these groups. In these and other ways, the diversity project is both compatible with neoliberalism and it refashions race for the neoliberal context.

These insights call for studies that empirically investigate further the relationship between neoliberalism and diversity. Is there a relationship between eroding support for pro-integrationist policies and rising class polarization? What are the implications of using market principles to measure, assess, and legitimize the effects of diversity programs? Scholars should be careful not to reproduce some of the assumptions of corporate diversity management by studying racial and gender integration only at the top levels of an organization.

Power and the Political Culture of Language

Political Orthodoxy and Powerful Words

My dissertation identifies seven ways in which political and organizational leaders strategically invoke diversity rhetoric and initiatives. These seven patterns are representative of more than just

the diversity project. I believe they represent more general strategies of political power, symbolic communication, and organizational action in contemporary racial politics. They go hand-in-hand with activists' counterstrategies of avoidance, redefinition, and street-level semiotics. These patterns are likely to occur around other orthodoxies of race, gender, and class.

The case of diversity ideology also highlights an important relationship between ideology and specific words. Omi and Winant describe contemporary racial projects as hegemonic, with consent secured from people who are governed. My findings show that organizational leaders *try* to achieve a hegemonic agreement on diversity. But there is a great deal of political contestation over what these leaders are doing about diversity—as in the *Gratz* and *Grutter* legal cases or the fights over Juneway Commons and Jonquil Terrace—and there is not widespread agreement about how to define diversity, even among managers at Starr.

However, there *is* widespread buy-in into the term "diversity," as evidenced in my cases and in survey research (University of Minnesota American Mosaic Project 2006). This suggests that people with power may exercise their power by putting certain words at the center of politics, by making certain ideas orthodox. But they cannot ensure that those they govern agree with the official ideology surrounding these words. Such dynamics occur with other similar terms, such as democracy—we are all for it, even if we are not sure exactly what the founding fathers meant. The case of diversity shows how ideologies can introduce and legitimize certain words that can reinforce inequality and domination, even if people do not accept or necessarily know the entire ideology surrounding those terms. [197]

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[197] This process may be closer to what Pierre Bourdieu (1977) describes as *doxa*. These are the unquestioned, deep-seated beliefs that dominant groups have introduced and shaped, often ways that reinforce their privilege, and that people internalize and make part of their understanding of the world.

Discourse, Ambivalence, and Political Contests

One feature of political discourse is that people can interpret similar political terms in divergent ways. As political scientist William Connolly (1974:10) elaborates, "people committed to partly discrepant assumptions and ideas are likely to construe shared concepts in rather different ways." The colloquial and official meanings of a political word or phrase—like any kind of key word (Williams 1983)—also change across social contexts and over time. At the same time, some meanings are more influential than others and can influence perception and action in a particular direction, whether this occurs at the level of national elections or in small group settings (Eliasoph 1999; Polletta 2002 see also Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003). Political language can shape people's political preferences and behavior (Lakoff 2004; Luntz 2006). For example, the wording of public opinion questionnaires about affirmative action matter for people's opinions about this often-contentious topic (Bobo 2001).

My research highlights the organizational negotiations and political contests over orthodox discourses. Administrators redefine diversity to fit their political objectives and organizational needs. Political challengers make competing claims about the meanings of a common cultural symbol. For example, in neighborhood politics around redevelopment and in campus politics around affirmative admissions, a multivalent and plastic concept like diversity makes room for vastly different meanings and goals (see also Berrey 2005). This insight runs contrary to what is often implied in Gramscian analyses of culture and power (e.g. Lamont and Wuthnow 1990 see also Somers 1995).

Ambivalence accompanies such ideological confidence. Organizational participants may openly contest the veracity of elites' ideology, as we see with street-level semiotics. Activists

analyze and critique decision-makers' use of the term "diversity," sometimes even gesturing air quotes around the word diversity as they recount what decision-makers have said in speeches and at meetings. Or organizational participants may quietly "grumble" about institutional leaders' sincerity and their commitment to realizing the promises of that ideology, as did many diversity managers at Starr and minority recruiters at Michigan.

The malleability and vagueness that make a term like diversity so appealing can lead to surprising and novel variations. Campus activists involved in the politics surrounding the Michigan lawsuits—particularly conservative opponents of affirmative action—bemoaned the lack of socio-economic diversity at the university. These complaints contributed to the national conversation about how to make elite education more financially accessible, which has been a rallying cry for progressive student activists for over a decade. A few elite colleges have taken steps in this direction. In February 2004, Harvard University president Lawrence Summers announced the university's new initiative to attract low and moderate income students, including full tuition coverage for college students whose families make less than $40,000 a year.

Moreover, such verbal maneuvering may be a feature of engaging in politics in a hyper-media age. Political analysts such as George Lakoff (2004) and Frank Luntz (2006) have emphasized the heightened importance of political "framing" in debates over contentious issues, and media-saturated symbolic economies are now central to many cities' economic vitality. As sociologist Sharon Zukin (1995:2-3,7) explains,

> the cultural power to create an image, to frame a vision, of the city has become
>
> more important… Building a city depends on how people combine the traditional

economic factors of land, labor, and capital… [and] how they manipulate symbolic languages of exclusion and entitlement.

Words are up for grabs, and the ability to define them—the strategic skills of manipulation—matter tremendously. Organizational and political elites long have asserted their power through their ability to manipulate language. During the economic boom of the late 19th century, industrialists renamed places of cultural development—the town, school, and hills in the countryside—after foreign cultures, while the names of the mines remained Appalachian (Gaventa 1980). Political leaders today are deliberately schooled in "po-lingo." Activists and political challengers of any political persuasion may need to cultivate analytical and rhetorical skills in order to negotiate this terrain of politics. This is a dimension of contemporary symbolic politics that merits further study.

METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

My dissertation research design is based on three qualitative case studies. As I explain in the Introduction, I selected these three cases because they were extreme cases—institutional settings known to be leaders in diversity—to develop parallel demonstrations of theory. I gathered ethnographic, interview, and documentary data about these cases over the course of more than six years, studying gentrification and community politics in Rogers Park between 2000 and 2003, lawsuits and campus activities concerning admissions at the University of Michigan between 2002 and 2005, and human resource practices at Starr Corporation 2005-06.

I began this project by gathering observational, interview, and documentary data about my contemporary cases. While I was studying the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Michigan, I came upon the set of view books that the office had produced over the past thirty years. The view books fascinated me. They helped me understand the university, diversity ideology, and race-conscious programs in a new light, as historical evidence so often does. I soon became more interested in the histories of these cases.

So, near the end of my data collection period, I sought out more original historical sources. I wanted to identify the predecessors of diversity rhetoric and programs and to tell the story of how the diversity project emerged and evolved in each case. My ethnographic and interview data had identified important words, concepts, and issues in each site, so I looked for their development in these historical sources. But I also let the historical sources "speak for themselves" by looking for words, concepts, and issues that were relevant for each case at earlier points in history but were no longer salient in the early 2000s. I developed the findings that I

report in the dissertation by triangulating what I learned from these historical sources with my contemporary data sources.

Here, I detail the specific methods I used for each site in chronological order and discuss relevant issues for each cases, such as anonymity and my role in the sites.

Rogers Park

My case study of Rogers Park examines local organizations active in neighborhood development politics and focused specifically on low-income housing between the 1960s and the early 2000s. These organizations included the local city government, business-interests associations, tenant and worker organizers and their allies, and social service providers. My contemporary data collection also covered some quality-of-life initiatives like block clubs and community policing.

I did participant observation and interviews and collected primary documents for my analysis of contemporary neighborhood politics over the course of almost three years (summer 2000 to spring 2003). I observed or participated in organizations' internal meetings, coalition meetings, and public forums; political activities like marches, door knocking with a tenant organizer, and an anticrime sit out; community events like a playground-building day; social activities; and casual conversations in parks, stores, and people's homes. I conducted 25 semi-structured interviews, one of which was a group interview, with a total of 29 organizational leaders, participants, and some non-participants. I drew on organizations' documents and print and electronic media, such as community listservs and the weekly newspaper covering Chicago's Far North Side, as well. I identified and selected organizations for study and research participants

based on local media sources, the sociological literature, my initial observations, and through snowball sampling—namely, recommendations from people I had already contacted.

I lived in the neighborhood while conducting this research. For two years of this study, I was gainfully employed as a research assistant for a study of reception of public housing residents in Chicago, led by Northwestern University professors Mary Pattillo and Dan Lewis. Thank you, Mary!

For my historical analysis of Rogers Park, I examined the *Chicago Tribune* coverage from 1960-2005, and I searched digital records of this coverage for articles and editorials that referred to (East) Rogers Park and the words diverse, diversity, housing, integration, (Alderman David) Orr, tenants rights, and Rogers Park Community Council. I also relied on on-line newspapers and magazines that covered more limited time frames, such as *The Chicago Defender (*1849-1985, 1989-present*), The Chicago Sun-Times* (1985-present*),* and *Crain's Chicago* (1986-present*);* the Chicago Community Fact book; and a 1983 Loyola University report about the neighborhood. I collected these sources through the Northwestern University Library, the Chicago Historical Museum, and the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society.

I use first-name pseudonyms for all individuals in the Rogers Park case study except elected officials, but I use the real names of community organizations. This is a departure from an earlier article I wrote about Rogers Park, in which I disguised the names of community organizations. I made this decision after doing historical research about the neighborhood, when I developed an incredible appreciation for those rare scholarly documents that chronicle the neighborhood and its inhabitants. I decided that the value of my dissertation, as a contribution to this historical record, outweighs the need to protect local organizations' identities. (When I

presented and published my research about the neighborhood, these pseudonyms also were completely ineffective at shielding the organizations' identities from the many scholars and practitioners who know the neighborhood, so they just started to seem goofy.) I believe that using the real names of these organizations does not compromise the confidentiality of any of the individuals who I describe or quote in this dissertation or in that article.

Doing fieldwork in a politically divided neighborhood can be trying. Organizational participants invariably suspected that I was siding with their adversaries, especially with the tenant activists. This does not surprise me, for many reasons. I began my study with RPCAN, and although not everyone in neighborhood politics knew that, I am sure some people did. I also certainly shared some sympathies with their political cause. Their analysis of social problems in the neighborhood resonated in many ways with the analytical tools of sociology that I was learning in graduate school, and some RPCAN leaders deliberately drew on sociological concepts. At one meeting, a leader critiqued how local developers use the word "diversity," referring to his analysis as "Sociology 101." So, my analysis here shares certain sociological precepts with these activists: broader structural problems shape local issues and discourse analysis can reveal how people use language to frame social problems. Unlike most organizations in the neighborhood, RPCAN and the Section 8 Tenants Council were led by and politically represented poor people and people of color, and it was important to me to consider these groups' opinions and political platforms.

But my association with tenant activists was not the only grounds for suspicion. I have no doubt that some activists and service providers questioned relationships to developers, and I got

caught in the middle of political conflict between university researchers and some social service providers involved in the Affordable Housing Coalition.

In most of the organizations I studied, community leaders frequently asked me to take on leadership roles or assumed that I would do so. The Builders Group even assigned me a role without my knowledge; one day, I discovered that I was listed as an advisor on their web site (I promptly asked that they remove my name, and they did). I avoided taking these positions as best I could, wary that it would compromise my ability to cross over political battle lines. Instead, I offered technical or research support when it seemed appropriate, such as teaching computer classes or creating charts of demographic data. Four years after I finished my ethnographic data collection about Rogers Park, I became an advisor to the Section 8 Tenants Council and served in that capacity for a little over a year.

University of Michigan

For my case study of Michigan, I studied race-conscious affirmative admissions at the university and the legal and political controversies surrounding these practices between the mid-1960s and the mid-2000s. I focused primarily on the undergraduate admission office, the university's executive administration and spokespeople, some campus diversity programs, student and national activist organizations, particularly those that favored race-conscious policies, and a few national organizations that oppose "racial preferences."

My study of contemporary dynamics at Michigan was, essentially, an ethnography of the *Gratz* and *Grutter* lawsuits and their effects throughout the university. I collected data about key individual actors, bureaucratic units of the university, and activist organizations that were

immediately involved in the lawsuits, directly impacted by the lawsuits, or concerned with educating the student body about the lawsuits over the course of three years (spring 2002 to spring 2005). I collected most of the data during two distinct phases. Between spring 2002 and the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in June 2003, I investigated the university's public activities and the political activism around the lawsuits. Between July 2003 and Spring 2005, I studied subsequent changes in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) and in campus diversity programming. I identified and selected organizations for study and research participants based on local media sources, the sociological literature, research on the Internet, my initial observations, and through snowball sampling—namely, recommendations from people I had already contacted.

I did most of the research on Michigan's Ann Arbor campus and in the university's satellite undergraduate admissions office in Detroit. I conducted some ethnographic research in Chicago and made two trips to Washington, D.C. as well. I did not live in Ann Arbor during this study. Between November 2002 and January 2005, I traveled to Ann Arbor and Detroit an average of once or twice a month for three to five days per visit to collect data.

My data sources included participant observations, interviews, primary texts, and media reporting; I drew upon historical documents and secondary quantitative data as well. Prior to the Court decision, I attended events such as educational panels, marches, rallies, and a bus trip from Ann Arbor to D.C. the night before the Supreme Court oral arguments (Berrey 2004). Following the decision, I had greater access to the administration and focused intensively on the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA). I attended OUA campus recruitment sessions, high school student outreach in different cities, training for OUA application reviewers, and meetings in

which reviewers made decisions about applicants. Throughout the study, particularly in the last year, I also collected evidence about campus diversity programming, such as the opening for the film *Campus Diversity, Student Voices,* pedagogical theater productions concerning diversity, and a large planning conference in 2005 for Michigan's proposed Center for Institutional Diversity. I obtained and transcribed video and audio recordings of some of these events.

My closest, repeated contact was with administrators in the undergraduate admissions office and with activists in Students Supporting Affirmative Action and BAMN. I also interviewed leaders in and observed events involving the university's executive administration, the Law School Admissions Office, campus diversity programs (e.g. Dialogues on Diversity, the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, the National Center for Institutional Diversity), and opponents of the university's policies (e.g., Young Americans for Freedom, *Michigan Review,* the Center for Individual Rights, and the Center for Equal Opportunity). Most of my data about the executive university leaders are based on observations, texts, and secondary sources.

I interviewed a cross-section of organizational participants, ranging from upper-level deans to student activists. I conducted 30 formal interviews with student and non-student activists, a CIR spokesperson, upper level administrators such as deans and a university lawyer, the directors of admissions for the law school and undergraduate program, recruiters in the OUA, faculty, national figures involved the lawsuits, and staff in different diversity programs as well as innumerable informal interviews during events like marches. Interviews averaged between 1-2 hours. Most were tape-recorded. Interviews usually occurred in the interviewees' work settings or in public places on campus. All but one interview were conducted face-to-face.

Texts analyzed included the legal filings and court decisions and promotional materials for undergraduate admissions. I drew upon the vast range of scholarship and policy analysis about affirmative action and racial preferences as academic texts when appropriate, but I also tried to treat these sources as primary data to better understand the contours of the debates over the legal cases.

Campus media sources included *The Michigan Daily, The Michigan Record, the University Record,* press releases from the Michigan News and Information Services, and Michigan's extensive website devoted to the cases.[198] I also followed some coverage of the cases in regional and national media and popular culture sources, such as the *Detroit Free Press, New York Times, Fox News, National Public Radio,* and *Chronicle of Higher Education.* I relied on secondary quantitative data, as well.

I use the real names of organizations in this case study. It would be impossible to disguise their identities, even if I wanted to. Public sources have documented thoroughly the legal action against Michigan, which itself is a public university. The media coverage and historical significance of the lawsuits would make that task even more difficult. I use first-name pseudonyms for all individuals unless they have public identities that I could not possibly conceal (such as the university president), made comments on the public record, and/or gave me written permission to use their real names (almost all interviewees consented to this).

My primary historical source was the application view book that the undergraduate admissions office produced and distributed to potential applicants from 1971 to 2005. I reviewed the entire viewbook but focused on the introductory description of the university, the description

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[198] See www.umich.edu/~urel/admissions/ Accessed May 5, 2005.

of Michigan students, the letter from the university president or other university officer, and descriptions of race-targeted programs. I analyzed the use of terms such as disadvantaged, opportunity, diversity, diverse, race, and minority throughout the text. I also coded for depictions of the race-targeted programs—particularly the Opportunity Program—the university, the student body, and the general tone of the text.

I also analyzed the on-line archives of the minutes of the university's Board of Regents, focusing on the period between 1966 and 1995 and on the terms diverse, diversity, Opportunity Program, minority recruitment, minority report, *Bakke*, and Michigan Mandate. My other data sources included admissions materials produced by the OUA prior to 1960, OUA newsletters for guidance counselors, pamphlets and other historical admissions materials from the Michigan Bentley Historical Library, major university documents related to minority inclusion such as strategic plans, and secondary sources written about the university. I collected the archival sources from the University of Michigan Bentley Library, the university's Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA), and the university's web site as well as some retrospective interview accounts.

This case study posed many challenges, particularly the contemporary data collection. It was difficult to define the parameters of this case study. The legal issues and media spotlight made many university leaders that much more inaccessible. I was entering a field in which so many wiser, more educated and seasoned analysts, reporters, and scholars had not only tread but also were supposed to be my research subjects (more than one person I interviewed at the university asked me what my research question was). Alternately, I obtained great access to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, perhaps because the leaders there wanted to demonstrate

that they had nothing to hide from the public eye. My experiences in Detroit with admissions staff who worked on minority recruitment provided incredibly useful insights into the daily, organizational routines of affirmative admissions and a helpful vantage point on the university's campaign around the lawsuits.

When I was spending time with SSAA activists, I found myself most acutely aware of my age and of my racial identity. Racial and cohort lines play an important role in defining social relationships among students on campus, and in subtle but important ways, they sometimes shaped my access to students. As I wrote in an article for *Contexts,* I encountered some of these lines the evening before the April 1 march in Washington, when I initially (and unsuccessfully) tried to get a seat on a bus that was carrying almost only black students. I witnessed white students' blunders in their interactions with black students, who often were quick to point these out, and I certainly made a few of my own.

Excruciatingly uncomfortable fieldwork experiences are part of doing ethnographic research. Once we recover from the embarrassments and do our best to repair any damage, we hopefully can use these experiences to make our analyses stronger. Through such experiences, I came to appreciate on a deeper level the university administration's legal arguments about the learning that happens in racially mixed contexts and the importance of teaching students to think critically and reflectively about cross-racial interactions. But I also could see more clearly some of the absences in the legal diversity rationale. These absences include the powerful ways that friendship networks shape cross-racial interaction (or lack thereof) and how those dynamics could lead white students to feel powerless and "excluded." The diversity rationale also leaves out the assumptions and blinders of white privilege that so many white students bring to campus,

the insults and frustrations experienced by many students of color in their interpersonal interactions with white students, and their informal schooling of white students on racial etiquette.

Starr Corporation

My case study of Starr Corporation investigates a single complex organization—a company—and issues of affirmative action, diversity management, and employee inclusion between 1960 and the mid-2000s.

My fieldwork and interviews investigated employee diversity programming and other business processes that the company considered relevant to diversity over ten months (April 2005 to January 2006). Data collection focused on key managers, executives, and bureaucratic units within the company that were active in diversity programming. These included the Global Diversity Management Department, "Diversity Business Advisors" (human resource managers throughout the company who had responsibilities for diversity within their function, business, or "organization"), the nine diversity affinity groups, senior executives with oversight over diversity, and other departments such as multicultural marketing, supplier diversity, recruiting, and charitable contributions.

My data sources included participant observations, interviews, internal intranet and externally available internet web site content, and some media reporting. In the field, I obtained access to limited company historical documents and quantitative data as well. I conducted 31 interviews with staff from the diversity management department, Diversity Business Advisors (DBAs), leaders of the affinity groups, senior executives, and staff from other departments such

as multicultural marketing. I conducted observations of diversity training, internal organizational meetings of the DBAs and council leaders, individual and collaborative council meetings, celebratory council events, a three day Women's Summit, and an afternoon employee appreciation day and diversity event in one of the subsidiary businesses in another state.

Text analyzed includes managers' Powerpoint presentations on diversity-related topics as well as internal web site content for the nine employee councils and the Diversity Management Department (the department's web site was overhauled in the course of the study, so I compared content from both versions).

For Starr's history, my primary historical source was the annual reports produced by Starr Corporation or its parent company between 1960 and 2005. I analyzed these reports by looking for sections of the report that included terms such as minority, disadvantaged, diversity, and diverse and by coding for general depictions of the company, employees, race, gender, diversity, key consumers, and key marketing strategies.

I supplemented my analysis of these annual reports with a small set of newsletter articles, brochures, a policy plan, and other documents related to affirmative action and diversity that Starr's private corporate archives released to me. I relied on a few retrospective interviews with corporate leaders, documents that the company's Employee Affinity Groups posted on the company's private intranet, the public Internet Archives, and company materials available at the Chicago Historical Museum archives, as well. A few public relations publications from the company also were available through various university libraries, including Northwestern, and a few industry web sites that track corporate history provided useful historical background about the company.

Conducting empirical sociological and historical research about a corporation is a challenging task. Perhaps the greatest obstacle is secrecy; companies have the power to limit outsiders' knowledge by restricting public access to employees, company facilities and events, and print documents. Companies do not routinely release to the public their internal documentary materials, and in-depth news reporting on internal human resource practices is rare. The size of the company is another obstacle; ethnographic research can only cover a miniscule and geographically-circumscribed area of the organization.

Telling a coherent, accurate modern history of a company also is complicated. One issue concerns how to define the corporation as an object of study. Starr went through numerous mergers, acquisitions, and changes in ownership structures during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Some of these were small, while a few were major and very consequential. The name of the company that I refer to as "Starr" actually was modified more than seven times between 1960 and 2006.

A set of restructurings that began in the late 1980s had the most significant methodological consequences for this study. Starr was bought by another U.S. company—which I call Michelson Companies—in the late 1980s, and Michelson merged Starr with a third another company—which I call Light & Co.—throughout the 1990s. Thus, between the late 1980s and the early 2000s, Starr was one of a few major businesses within Michelson. Starr did not produce its own annual reports during this period, so I use Michelson's annual reports as a proxy. Michelson made Starr public again in the early 2000s, so Starr began to produce its own separate annual reports.

This change in ownership and organizational structure in the late 1980s raises potential problems of comparability in my historical data across years. Among other issues, one of Michelson's largest businesses produced different products and had a strong, rapidly growing hold in international markets. My analysis of photos in the annual reports shows a sharp rise in percentage of male consumers and consumers living outside the U.S. after Michelson acquired Starr. (Throughout this 45-year period, whether Starr was its own business or a subsidiary, its products largely remained in the same consumer products industry.) Michelson also faced more problems with legal and public relations, so as part of broader public relations campaigns to put a face on the company, company leaders made employees the central theme of the annual reports in 1991 and 1999. This employee theme may be confounded with the company's emphasis on diversity, which began in 1992 and became prominent again in the late 1990s.

I rely on internal Starr documents about diversity programs from the 1980s and, especially, the 1990s to triangulate my findings from the annual reports. These internal documents provide more detail about programs that were specific to Starr but not necessarily used throughout Michelson Companies.

A related issue that I encountered involved historical sources. Media reporting on Starr provides little information about the details of past (or present) human resource programs. The company's corporate archives released a few documents to me but it does not make most original internal documents available to the public. In interviews with employees, they often used glossy platitudes to describe the company. I took their historical accounts of events with a large grain of salt. Furthermore, although Starr managers and executives often work for the company for long periods of time, individuals frequently change positions, transfer to different areas of the

company, and move to different regions of the country and, increasingly, the world, so their sustained knowledge about a particular department or unit may be limited.

By far the most time-consuming and emotionally trying aspect of this study was gaining initial access to a company. I began to contact potential companies for study in August 2004, while I was still collecting data about Michigan. Wary of Robert Jackall's experience trying to access a companies for ethnographic study—36 companies refused to give him permission—I carefully crafted a research proposal that looked somewhat like a business plan. Printed on paper with Northwestern insignia, the proposal was full of bullets, a chart, and text that, as much as possible, sounded to me like "corporate language." I tailored the text to specific companies, proposed various "deliverables," and detailed my credentials on the last page. I packaged it in a glossy purple Northwestern folder, along with a cover letter, a letter from my dissertation chair, and my Northwestern business card. I initially submitted the proposal to two companies that ranked high on corporate diversity rankings. I met with representative from each, but they ultimately refused to participate in the study.

I sent the proposal to two other companies in January 2005, including Starr, and both companies agreed. I decided only to study Starr. The Legal Department, the Diversity Department, and I spent a number of months negotiating a letter of agreement that outlined the terms of my study, which included a final report, and setting up a research plan. I later learned that the Diversity Department was supposed to do an internal review of its programs around this same time, and the director of diversity planned to use my final report for this purpose. One participant in my study joked to me that I was "free labor."

Unlike my data collection in the neighborhood or the university, the company had greater control over whom I could speak to and what events I could attend. I had a primary contact person in the Diversity Department. I identified interviewees in conjunction with him, and he was present at most of the events I attended but not at the interviews. At the same time, as I note in Chapter Seven, I enjoyed the benefits of a parking pass, a company visitors' ID, a cubicle with a desk and ergonomic chair, a company phone number and email address, and an ID I could use to access the company's intranet and calendar system for setting up interview appointments.

I use pseudonyms to protect the identity of the company and all research participants in this case study, in accordance with my agreement with the company. I also do not provide some specific details about the company to protect its anonymity. When I quote company documents, I check to ensure that these are not searchable on google.com. Perhaps some day, publicly available search technology will be able to do things I cannot even imagine. For now, I am confident these quotes cannot be traced specifically to the company I call Starr.

In the final two months of the study, I gave numerous presentations of my final report to company managers. I consider these presentations and the feedback I received to be data and analyze them as such. They provided a useful check on some of my basic observations about diversity management at Starr; I was told by many people that my report accurately reflected the strengths and weaknesses of the company's programs. The director of diversity even told me that she wanted me to present the report to the CEO and his executive team. Diversity managers' responses during my presentation also helped me understand which issues they felt that they could control and which were, essentially, futile. At the end of my study, the people holding a

number of key positions in human resource and diversity management changed. My understanding is that my report was too controversial for the new leadership, and they buried it.

Ethnographers often recount turning points in their fieldwork when local members began to accept them. My turning point at Starr was defined by my gender and familial status. A few months into my fieldwork, I announced that I was three months pregnant. Before that, my casual interactions with most research participants were a bit awkward. They were not used to strangers "hanging around," and the ongoing audit by consultants (which eventually led to the Business Simplification Initiative) made employees that much more wary of outsiders. With my announcement, suddenly I had fodder for water cooler talk and a basis for bonding. I went shopping for maternity clothes with one woman who was also pregnant, and I talked about baseball and summer camp with other parents. I also felt more comfortable and less self-conscious of small things, like driving my little, dented Honda through a parking lot of fancy SUVs. I had the experience, like so many pregnant women do, of watching people's faces light up when they saw my growing belly. I also got a small glimpse into the socially conformist pressures of the company and the difficulties that many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees encountered in the face of those pressures.

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EMPLOYMENT

2008 (August)   Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo, SUNY

EDUCATION

2008 (expected)   Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University.

1996   A.B. Brown University, Environmental Studies, with Honors.

AREAS OF INTEREST

Race/Ethnicity, Urban Sociology, Law & Society, Culture, Inequality, Qualitative Methods

JOURNAL ARTICLES & REVIEWS

Nelson, Robert, Ellen C. Berrey, and Laura Beth Nielsen. forthcoming. "Divergent Paths: Conflicting Conceptions of Employment Discrimination in Law and the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Law & Social Science.*

Berrey, Ellen C. and Laura Beth Nielsen. 2007. "*Rights of Inclusion:* Reintegrating Identity at the Bottom of the Dispute Pyramid." *Law & Social Inquiry* 32(1): 233-260.

Berrey, Ellen C. 2005. "Divided over Diversity: Political Discourse in a Chicago Neighborhood." *City & Community.* 4(2): 143-170.
    2004 Student Paper Award Honorable Mention, ASA Community and Urban Sociology Section

Berrey, Ellen C. 2002. Book review of *America's Johannesburg: Industrialization and Racial Transformation in Birmingham,* by Bobby Wilson, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies.* 25(3).

PAPERS UNDER REVIEW & IN PROGRESS

Berrey, Ellen C. "The Ideology of Diversity and Organizational Resource Distribution: Evidence from Three U.S. Field Sites." Revise and Resubmit. *American Journal of Sociology.*
    2007 James E. Blackwell Distinguished Graduate Student Paper Award, ASA Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities

Berrey, Ellen C. "*Gratz, Grutter,* and the Diversity Debates at the University of Michigan: The Political Culture of Law and Race on Campus." Invited submission to *Critical Sociology*, special issue on Critical Studies of Diversity in the Post-Civil Rights Era.

Berrey, Ellen C. "Diversity Discourse and the Politics of Social Inequality." Invited submission to *Sociology Compass*.

Berrey, Ellen C. "Taking 'Diversity' to the City: Racial Discourse and College Recruitment."

OTHER SOCIOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS & SELECTED POLICY REPORTS

Berrey, Ellen C. 2008. "*Heat Wave:* A Sociological Drama Hits Center Stage." *Footnotes.* Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association.

Berrey, Ellen C. 2008 (forthcoming). "Pluralism," *Encyclopedia of Social Problems,* ed. Vince Parrillo. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Berrey, Ellen C. 2007. "Conversation with Walter Benn Michaels: The Trouble with Diversity." *Contexts.* Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association. 6(2):13-14.

Berrey, Ellen C. 2004. "Field Note: The Drive for Diversity." *Contexts.* Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association. 3(1): 60-61.

Berrey, Ellen C. 2002. *Report on the Rogers Park Neighborhood and the Reception of Public Housing Residents.* Northwestern University Institute for Policy Research, Project on Community Reception of Public Housing. 1-32.

Blum, Barbara B. and Ellen C. Berrey. 1999. *Welfare Research Perspectives: Past, Present, and Future.* National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), Columbia University: 1-34.

Berrey, Ellen C. 1999. "Mapping Welfare Research—1999 and Beyond." *the forum.* 2(1). NCCP, Columbia University.

Berrey, Ellen C. 1998. "Financial Incentives Can Be Key to Moving Families off Welfare and Raising Income, Research Reveals." *the forum.* 1(3). NCCP, Columbia University.

Berrey, Ellen C. 1998. "Evaluating Welfare Reform: What Do We Know? How Can We Learn More?" *the forum.* 1(2). NCCP, Columbia University.

Zarcadoolas, Chris, Mercedes Blanco, and Ellen Berrey. 1997. "Decision-Making Support Systems for Minority and Underserved Workers and their Families: Choosing a Health Plan." Final report, submitted to Dept. of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Health, Agency for Health Care and Policy Research. The Abacus Group. Cranston, RI.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- *James E. Blackwell Distinguished Graduate Student Paper Award*, Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities, American Sociological Association, 2007.
- *Karpf Peace Award*, Northwestern Dept. of Sociology, 2007.
- *Participant*, Graduate Student Workshop, Law & Society Association, 2005 (competitive).
- *Student Paper Award (Honorable Mention)*, Community and Urban Sociology Section, American Sociological Association, 2004.
- *Winch Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Lecturer*, Northwestern Dept. of Sociology, 2004.
- *Winch Award for Outstanding Published or Presented Paper*, Northwestern Dept. of Sociology, 2003.

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

- *Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship*, American Bar Foundation, 2007-08.
- *Dissertation Year Fellowship*, Northwestern University, 2006-07.
- *Dissertation Research Grant*, Law & Social Science Program, National Science Foundation Grant, 2004-06 ($9,900).
- *Research Grant*, Northwestern University Graduate School 2004 ($1,500).
- *MacArthur Research Grants*, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University, 2003-05 ($2,300).
- *Research Grant*, Center for Legal Studies, Northwestern University, 2003 ($1,000).
- *Graduate Student Fellow*, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, 2001-02.
- *Graduate Student Fellow*, Joint Center for Poverty Research, Northwestern University/University of Chicago, 2000-01.
- *University Fellowships*, Northwestern University, 1999-2000, 2004-06.
- *Conference Travel Grant*, Center for Legal Studies, Northwestern University, 2005. ($400).
- *Conference Travel Grant*, Diversity Conference 2003 at the University of Hawaii.
- *Conference Travel Grants*, Graduate School, Northwestern University, 2003-07 (appx. $2,600).

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- *Project Manager/Research Assistant*. Employment Discrimination Litigation Project, American Bar Foundation (Profs. Robert Nelson & Laura Beth Nielsen), 2004-2007.
- *Field Researcher*. Community Reception of Public Housing, Northwestern University (Profs. Mary Pattillo & Dan Lewis), 2000-02.

- *Research Assistant*. Manuscript preparation and research for *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*, Northwestern University (Prof. Eric Klinenberg), 2001-02.
- *Field Researcher*. Ethnographic data collection for *Black on the Block: The Politics of Race and Class in the City* (Prof. Mary Pattillo), 2000.
- *Program Coordinator*, Research Forum on Children, Families and the New Federalism; National Center for Children in Poverty; Columbia University, 1997-99.
- *Field Researcher*. Decision-Making Support Systems for Minority and Underserved Workers Choosing a Health Plan. The Abacus Group, Cranston, RI, 1995-97.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

"The Ideology of Diversity and the Changing Terms of Institutional Inclusion"
- o Law & Society Association annual conference, 2008.

"How Diversity Transforms the Project of Racial Equality"
- o American Bar Foundation, 2008.
- o Visiting Student Colloquium, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University. 2008.

"Diversity and the Changing Terms of Institutional Inclusion"
- o American Sociological Association annual conference, 2007.

"Political Opportunities and Hurdles in the Diversity Era,"
- o Dilemmas of Blackness: Challenges and Continuities of the 21st Century, Department of African- American Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2007.

"Workplace Challenges for Young Employees of Color."
- o Internship Seminar, Northwestern Business Institutions Program. 2005.

"Divided over Diversity: Political Discourse in a Chicago Neighborhood."
- o Visiting Student Colloquium, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University. 2005.
- o University of Chicago Urban Workshop. 2004.

"Studying Political Economy from the Ground Up: The View from Rogers Park."
- o Dept. of Anthropology, Northwestern University. 2005.

"Affirmative Action and Admissions at University of Michigan,"
- o Power Moves (Detroit radio program on current events). 2004.

"The Drive for Diversity."
- o Buffalo State College Terra-iz-ing Conference. 2004.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

"Behind the Security Gate: Diversity Rhetoric & Programs in a Multinational Corporation."
- o Northwestern University Ethnography Workshop. 2007.

"The Power of Diversity: Organizational Discourses and Practices in a Neighborhood, a University and a Corporation."
- o American Sociological Association annual conference, 2006.
- o Culture Workshop, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University. 2006.

"Diversity Talk: Building Generalizations from Three Unlikely Field Sites."
- o Ethnography Workshop, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University. 2005.

"The Diversity Debates at University of Michigan: The New Language of Equality"
- o Culture Workshop, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University. Winter 2006.
- o American Sociological Association annual conference, 2005.
- o Law & Society Association annual conference, 2005.

"The Politics of Diversity and Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan."
- o Chicago Ethnography Conference, 2005.
- o American Sociological Association annual conference. 2004.
- o Law & Society Association annual conference. 2004.
- o Law and Society Workshop, Northwestern University. 2004.

"Debating Diversity: The Politics of a Cultural Icon."
- o The Color Lines Conference, The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University. 2003.

"The Diverse Community: A Model for Urban Living or an Illusion for Selling Real Estate?".
- o International Conference on Diversity in Organisations, Nations, and Communities, University of Hawai'i. 2003.

"Divided over Diversity: Symbolic Conflict and Neighborhood Redevelopment."
- o Graduate Student Urban Studies Conference, Northwestern University. 2002.
- o American Sociological Association annual conference. 2001.
- o Chicago Ethnography Conference, 2001.
- o Joint Center for Policy Research, Northwestern University/University of Chicago, Fellows Workshop, 2001.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, Northwestern University
- Social Basis for Environmental Change (School for Continuing Studies)
- Introduction to the Discipline (The Graduate School)

Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University
- Social Inequality
- The City
- Introduction to Sociology
- The Mafia

Teaching Assistant, Brown University
- Public Perceptions of the Environment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Manuscript Reviewer
- *American Journal of Sociology*
- *City & Community*
- *Contexts*
- *Ethnography*
- *Law & Social Inquiry*
- *Urban Studies*

Northwestern University
- *Graduate Student Representative,* Sociology Faculty Recruitment Committee, 2003-04.
- *Conference Organizer*. Graduate Student Urban Studies Conference, 2002.
- *Urban Workshop Coordinator*, Dept. of Sociology, 2000-02.
- *Graduate Student Colloquia Coordinator*, Dept. of Sociology, 2002-03.
- *Graduate Student Association Coordinator*, Dept. of Sociology, 2000-01.

Community Service
Advisor, Rogers Park Section 8 Tenants Council, 2007-2008.

Professional Affiliations
American Sociological Association, Law & Society Association, Society for the Study of Social Problems