Seeking Effective Power: Why Mayors Need Community Organizations

J. Phillip Thompson

To many, mayors are the most familiar elected officials. Unlike federal representatives, mayors often directly coordinate community services like trash removal, policing, and in some cases oversight of public schools. Despite the seeming transparency of mayoral duties, bottom-line judgments about mayors' performance are political, and, unlike profit margins in business, essentially aesthetic.[1] The public does not evaluate mayoral performance in accordance with "objective" or "rational" criteria; rather, its judgment has more do with values than "facts." In addition, mayors' performances, including their credibility and ability to implement agendas, has as much (if not more) to do with local politics as with their political orientation. I will address these two points in turn.

During the first year of David N. Dinkins's term as mayor of New York, the city was hit by a barrage of highly publicized crimes—innocent children killed in cross fires by warring drug dealers, a midday attack by a gang of youth on a woman jogging in Central Park, and the murder of a tourist from Utah helping his mother stave off attackers during a mugging. The *Daily News* and the *New York Post* competed to paint the grisliest possible picture of wanton violence in the city, and the mayor was put on the defensive. The media barrage was puzzling: Dinkins knew that the actual number of murders in the city had been trending downward in the months immediately following his election. But under heavy pressure from the media, governor, and city council speaker, and despite a severe budget crisis, Dinkins felt compelled to hire more than five thousand additional police officers.

To fund the hiring of additional police the mayor sought assistance from the state legislature. The assembly responded positively to the city's funding request, but mandated, over the objection of the police commissioner, that officers carry semiautomatic pistols. Although the commissioner believed that these weapons would not deter crime and posed a safety risk, legislators were eager for clear symbols of their tough stance on crime during an election year. While to the mayor and police commissioner, the legislators' micromanagement of the police was irritating and a poor use of resources, the legislators were attempting to manage the *fear* of crime in their districts, not crime itself. The *appearance* of controlling crime was at least as important to them as reducing the crime rate. In Dinkins's case, the aesthetic of crime control was ultimately more decisive than his management of actual violent crime. When Dinkins stood for reelection, despite a massive increase in police hiring and a steady reduction of violent crime during his administration, he was defeated by a conservative opponent, Rudolph Giuliani, who depicted him as soft on crime.[2]

Many of us in the Dinkins administration strongly suspected that his "soft on crime" image was not a technical management issue, but a political problem centered on race. Polls taken during the crime scare showed that white voters were losing confidence in Dinkins, but blacks were not. The latter were more likely to live in communities where violent crimes were most prevalent.[3] We also knew that other black mayors, including Tom Bradley of Los Angeles, a veteran police officer with a strong crime-fighting record, had also been previously tagged as soft on crime.[4] While this kind of subtle racial bias is difficult to prove, many observers, including President Bill Clinton, suggested at the time that white racism underlay Dinkins's image problems.[5]

In fact, New York City's deep racial divide led to vast differences in perspective between blacks and whites with respect to their expectations of elected leaders and almost every aspect of their interaction with government.[6] One of the clearest examples was the racial gap on views of the police department. Many whites, fearing urban crime and violence, saw the majority white police force as the "thin blue line" protecting them from the mayhem of the streets. Many blacks, on the other hand, viewed

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the police department less sympathetically—particularly blacks residing in poor neighborhoods, who often were targeted under draconian drug laws and experienced police insensitivity or brutality close-up. For them, the police were more like a hostile occupying force than the protectors they so desperately needed. Dinkins tried to reassure his white constituents that they were safe, while reassuring his black (and Latino) constituents that they would be safe from both crime and police excesses. Blacks' and Latinos' fear of such excesses made the adoption of semiautomatic weapons, for example, a racially sensitive issue. Given these two vastly different perspectives, any approach to policing was more than a technical issue of how to "rationally" reduce crime. Managing this and other racial divides became Dinkins's greatest challenge, fundamentally shaping his oversight of city agencies.

How does a mayor objectively manage when measures favored by the majority to increase security make certain minorities feel less safe? Politicians wanting to appear tough on crime have frequently resorted to popular anti-crime legislation that has created or exacerbated social problems, including excessive incarceration for nonviolent crimes, broken families, and felon reentry difficulties—especially in poor black and Latino communities. Such legislation persists despite its ineffectiveness in reducing violent crime.[7] City workers, no less than a fearful public, can easily be aroused by misguided prejudices or a desire for punishment of "public enemies," leading to targeting of innocent people, failure to identify or address actual risks, and a loss of security for all. Only courageous and progressive mayors can buck the tide of public opinion—and possibly the beliefs of their own staffs. Such mayors must carefully balance giving free rein to agency workers with providing ongoing monitoring and strong, though sometimes unpopular, guidelines to city agencies. I doubt that many mayors choose virtue over popularity in order to challenge public prejudices in ways that jeopardize their reelections. Thus keeping progressive mayors in office requires more than the political grit of individuals; there must be virtuous political coalitions in place to convince—and continually remind—a majority of the public that politically expedient solutions are not in their best interest.

Mayors and Coalitions

In order to implement progressive platforms or to reduce conflict in racially polarized cities, mayors must build—or be supported by—strong civic coalitions that can sway public opinion and mobilize supportive voters during public controversies. Thus mayors' political roles as coalition builders are just as important as their managerial roles. Most mayors understand coalition building because that is how they won city hall in the first place. However, policy coalitions are quite different from electoral coalitions. In fact, the latter usually dissipate after elections. To gain the resources and votes needed to win office, black mayors in particular have tended to rely on support from downtown businesses and middle-class and upper-middle-class white liberals. Downtown businesses tend to be fiscally conservative, while middle- and upper-class white liberals have tended to oppose sweeping policy reforms strongly favored in black communities, such as racial integration of public schools or the relocation of public housing units to middle-class white neighborhoods.[8]

Winning elections with such coalition partners leads many black mayors to downplay popular black perspectives, which they know to be legitimate. From the start,

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black mayors often find themselves in difficult positions, expected by their low-income black supporters to be understanding racial representatives who will improve neighborhood conditions and widen opportunities, by their business supporters to contain costs and minimize taxes, and by their white liberal supporters to oppose disruptive policy changes.[9]

The coalitions that elect black mayors are unlike the progressive interracial class coalitions imagined by the 1960s civil rights movement to be capable of redirecting public resources and eradicating sustained unemployment, low wages, and poverty in urban areas.[10] Contemporary electoral coalitions are marriages of convenience, not manifestations of a larger strategy to effect sweeping political or policy change. Constrained by the limitations of their electoral coalitions, black mayors have failed to meet the demands of poor blacks for measurable improvement in their lives, thus alienating many from politics.[11] Nor have black mayors organized the multiracial poor to make substantive demands on the wealthy in cities and suburbs, for example, by supporting regionalist advocates' efforts to establish regional cost- and revenue-sharing governments. Forming such a movement would jeopardize existing electoral coalitions; yet the current practice of focusing on winning elections without a substantive program that has cross-racial grassroots appeal leads to zero-sum racial competition between blacks, Latinos, Asians, and whites.[12] These conflicts particularly threaten black office holders as the Latino population in cities rapidly rises.[13]

Prioritizing the short-term electoral interests of a mayoral candidate of any race over strategic efforts to build multiracial class-oriented coalitions pushes candidates to exploit, rather than overcome, civic divisions, as the last mayoral elections in the nation's two largest cities demonstrated. In each election, the Latino candidates with strong labor and community ties—Antonio Villaraigosa in Los Angeles, and Fernando Ferrer in New York—appealed explicitly to Latinos, blacks, and working-class whites in an effort to build broad multiracial, progressive, and class-oriented coalitions. Their principle opponents, James K. Hahn in Los Angeles and Mark Green in New York, were white Democrats with strong antiracist credentials, though at the end of the campaigns both resorted to racist appeals to win white votes. Hahn released a sequence of gritty television ads with a crack pipe, lines of white powder, grainy footage of Villaraigosa, and the message, "He can't be trusted."[14] Green's campaign issued ads questioning Ferrer's leadership skills, and Green supporters were linked to phone calls in white neighborhoods encouraging voters to "go to the polls" and saying "vote against Ferrer and Al Sharpton. We all know Al Sharpton is behind the Ferrer campaign."[15]

Mayoral candidates who are focused on winning elections at any cost are highly unlikely to criticize their supporters' strongly felt racial or ethnic prejudices. Instead they seek to solidify voter support with messages that confirm popular racial prejudices. Yet something deeper than the candidates' ambition was at work in the Los Angeles and New York elections; both Hahn and Green were attempting to navigate deeply divided racial communities, and when neither could bridge the divisions, they succumbed to them. The deeper problem was the lack of an ongoing civic discourse about racial problems and an absence of cross-racial civic political coalitions in the two cities that would make playing the "race card" politically unthinkable.

The conflicts dividing blacks, whites, and Latinos in cities are too onerous to be transcended in the brief time of an election campaign, which makes longer-term civic (or movement) politics important. Latinos, for example, are clustered at the bottom of the labor market with few benefits or opportunity for advancement. Poor African Americans compete with Latinos for low-wage jobs, with sizable numbers excluded from the labor market altogether. In majority-minority cities like New York and Los Angeles, black workers and midlevel managers fiercely defend their niches in city government against incursion from other minority groups (or vice versa). Whites seek to protect themselves from higher taxes and minority invasion of their neighborhoods.[16] Public resources to address these concerns are scarce; there are no New Deal public works programs for the unemployed, and Great Society programs have been reduced.[17] For some, these challenges suggest the need for a new class-centered political movement with sufficient political power to remake urban policies. Class advocates often argue that coalitions should focus on common issues of substance (declining wages, lack of health care, failing schools), but avoid or modulate divisive issues of race.[18]

Is there an approach to racial advocacy and interracial coalition building that can dissolve the tension among racial groups? I think so, but unlike those who advocate "deracialized" approaches, I believe that successful efforts must begin by explicitly and directly confronting complex urban racial issues. Many of the barriers to building cross-racial coalitions—for example, the different racial group experiences of policing in New York City—cannot be overcome without understanding and addressing the central role of race. In the absence of principled civic engagement on racial problems, race can easily be exploited by unscrupulous leaders for political advantage. And in the absence of robust, inclusive civic organizations that can channel racial conflict, the danger of violent confrontation is ever present. The crisis in Brooklyn's Crown Heights neighborhood during David Dinkins's mayoralty taught us these painful lessons.

When Dinkins was elected in 1990, Brooklyn was a racial tinderbox. The Crown Heights community in central Brooklyn was deeply polarized, with scarce housing at the center of conflict between a rapidly growing and largely

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Caribbean immigrant black population and a smaller, low-income Hasidic Jewish population. The Hasidim tended to have large families and, required by religious custom to walk to synagogue on the Sabbath, needed housing in the neighborhood.[19] The two groups vied for affordable housing and clashed over issues of security and police protection. The Hasidim were victims of street crime by unemployed black youth; blacks were subjected to harassment (and sometimes beatings) by Hasidic security patrols.[20] While the Hasidim worked closely with the police, many blacks considered the police a hostile presence. (Over the years, several blacks, including a well-respected West Indian businessman, had been killed in the area by police.)[21] The local black community developed several protest movements in the early 1980s, appealing to the mayor and governor for jobs and requesting formal investigations of police misconduct. They also conducted several short-lived dialogues with Hasidic groups. None of these actions led to significant changes, and neighborhood black youth became increasingly alienated, not only from city government and Hasidic neighbors, but also from recognized black civic organizations and protest leaders like Al Sharpton. Without a local civic leadership effectively addressing racial conflicts, any dispute with the police or with Hasidic residents could become an inflammatory provocation.

In one day, long-simmering tensions erupted. A young black boy was struck and killed by a car driven by an Hasidic man; three hours later a Jewish rabbinical student was stabbed by someone in a crowd of angry black youths, and later died. The city plunged into racial turmoil for one tense week as thousands of police, and many mayoral staff and top-level aides, were deployed to contain the black youth, prevent violent clashes with Hasidim, and promote peace and understanding. The violence quickly raised Jewish fears of an anti-Semitic riot. Black leaders and the black press were nearly unanimous in concluding that Crown Heights had been a manifestation of the pent-up frustration of young blacks against government and social conditions, not simply an anti-Hasidic riot. Notably, of the 90 people or so arrested during the week, two-thirds gave no place of employment.[22] A prominent black activist minister said, "These young people didn't belong to anybody's anything. I have criticized Black leadership, myself included, for allowing such a large segment of our community to be unattached. We did not start [the disturbance], and we could not stop it."[23]

The lack of civic capacity to address racial conflict in Crown Heights was deeply rooted. Nowhere in the community did community leaders, politicians, and religious and civic groups gather regularly to discuss and resolve explosive racial tensions in communities. Differences in understandings of the history and conditions in Crown Heights (and other communities with deep racial tensions) were enormous; and debate about Crown Heights was sharply racially polarized. The black men charged with the murder were acquitted a year later largely as a result of inconsistent police testimony and faulty police procedures. An angry Hasidic community blamed Mayor Dinkins's handling of the situation, some charging that his actions were motivated by anti-Semitism.[24] At the time of the Crown Heights disturbance Dinkins had been widely praised in the mainstream press and by Jewish leaders for skill and courage in averting massive violence,[25] but during and after the trial he came under heavy pressure to apologize for his poor handling of the situation. Dinkins conceded that he should have used more aggressive police tactics to control rowdy black youth demonstrators. However, many of Dinkins's black constituents, looking for responsiveness to their concerns about government failure, police harassment, and jobs, felt betrayed by the concession. Crown Heights became the defining moment of the Dinkins mayoralty, and like Hahn and Green after him, Dinkins faced a deep racial divide. When he tried to please both racial sides, he angered them both instead, leading to his defeat in the next election.

Dinkins's inability to mediate racial tensions did not stem from his failure to understand their central role in New York City politics. Addressing racial conflict takes more than the will of the mayor; it takes civic capacity on all sides of conflict. A critical source of Dinkins's problem in Crown Heights was a debilitating lack of civic capacity within the black community. Although he wanted to play the role of peacemaker, Dinkins found few civic organizations connected to alienated youth at the center of the conflict through whom he could work. The men who took to the streets in Crown Heights, including large numbers of West Indian immigrants, were not known to the civic organizations that local officials had worked with, including churches, civil rights groups, and community-based black nationalist groups. There were only a few community leaders with connections and respect among the alienated youth who might have served as channels for positive discourse. In the absence of more such channels, and because there had been little prior effort to include unemployed young men in civic affairs or to have their voices meaningfully considered within a neighborhood civic structure, there was no way to rapidly construct meaningful exchanges between blacks and Jews during the Crown Heights crisis, or between blacks and the police department. Without a more inclusive and capacious black civic politics, Dinkins had no way to systematically interpret or effectively respond to the youths' concerns; he could not be accountable to them, even though he wanted to be.

The lack of civic capacity and democratic inclusion in Crown Heights's black community was emblematic of the broader problem we faced in communities throughout the city during the Dinkins administration. Civic organizations in many poor black and Latino communities were resource-poor and noninclusive; neither they nor local

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politicians represented the diversity of their communities.[26] In order to prepare for any meaningful civic effort—increasing voter registration, building cross-racial ties in neighborhoods, or mediating conflicts between neighborhoods and city agencies—we first had to strengthen the capacity of local civic organizations to extend participation. We also had to encourage open deliberative internal practices. I was directly involved, for example, in a democracy campaign within the New York Public Housing Authority to eliminate a $2.00 voting charge imposed in some developments—a literal "poll tax" for local elections of the public housing residents' political council. We undertook this effort because we understood that any barriers to participation would hinder the council's ability to develop broad reform initiatives in cooperation with public housing residents.

Dinkins's administration faced a daunting conundrum: there is precious little a mayor can do to resolve community tensions or even to improve the physical condition of neighborhoods without engaged civic partners at the local level. Yet even mayors elected by multiracial coalitions cannot build lasting interracial coalitions from city hall. Genuine civic coalitions require painstaking efforts by local civic actors to work through local conflicts and to establish mutual understanding and confidence in coalition partners.[27] We in the administration did, however, learn an important lesson: mayors can play a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of local civic organizations by relocating control of city resources from agency headquarters to local communities, designing city-funded programs to encourage local civic organizations to work across neighborhood lines, and monitoring compliance with mayoral social change objectives at the neighborhood level.[28] Unfortunately for Dinkins's reelection effort, the fruits of this insight—for example, after-school programs and community-run housing initiatives—came after Dinkins left office.

Civic coalitions can support progressive mayors best by systematically promoting civic participation and empowerment rather than by focusing on election campaigns. Putting civic empowerment first can strengthen the positions of progressive mayors trying to implement change. However, civic empowerment can also threaten mayors' power. For example, the struggle to establish regional government has had few supporters among black mayors, whose power could be limited by a white-dominated regional electorate. This is unfortunate, since poor black communities may stand to gain from an increase in resources resulting from regional cost and revenue sharing.[29] Black mayors have little political incentive to support regionalism on behalf of the inner-city poor, who do not vote heavily, do not pressure elected officials to act regionally, and, because of their low voting levels, do little to influence regional politics. More productive partners for regional coalitions might be community organizations in poor black neighborhoods that are frustrated with mayors' limited ability to tackle deteriorating conditions. Strengthening the civic and political capacity of such groups could create strong vehicles for holding black mayors accountable to their large-scale agendas. However, it is difficult for regionalists to establish trust with black community groups if they avoid issues such as under-funding and exclusion of "lumpen" groups from civic organizations, racial profiling by the police, employer discrimination against blacks, white suburbanites' fears of racial integration, and other such racially charged issues.[30]

This brings us back to where I started: for multiracial coalitions to develop, racial differences need to be understood. This does not mean only that whites must respond to black demands. In fact, there is no simple "black" demand. The term black is shorthand for diverse and internally conflicted communities in which important subgroups such as public housing residents, ex-felons, teenaged single mothers, gays and lesbians, and immigrants all tend to lack voice and power—but may disagree when they get it.[31] For us in the Dinkins administration, "black mobilization" in New York included mediating serious tensions between, for example, African Americans and West Indians, unemployed youth and local businesses, and middle-class black homeowners and city-supported poor people sharing neighborhoods. Similarly, in "Latino" communities, serious tensions exist among Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Central Americans, and between established citizens and disenfranchised recent immigrants. Class, language, and cultural differences among "Asians" are greater than among "Latinos." Developing stronger and more effective racial advocacy thus does not necessarily promote narrow or insular racial or ethnic identities at the expense of broader class or transracial identities.[32] In fact, as Dinkins's problems in Crown Heights illustrate, an inclusive participatory racial organization requires diverse representation and participation *within* the black community, and nurturance of skills in problem solving and negotiation that are crucial to bridging interracial group conflicts as well. In other words, activists must foster an appreciation of difference, inclusive participation, and pluralistic practices *within* black communities in order to add power to the communities' voices in broader negotiations with other racial and ethnic groups.[33] There is no inherent contradiction, except in analytic abstraction, between racial empowerment and cross-racial coalition building.

A core issue hindering resolution of racial problems, as well as intragroup conflicts, is the lack of value pluralism among the strongest groups and factions—whites in particular—which leads to a silencing of weaker voices. Listening to understand how another person (or group) thinks and feels makes it easier to explain norms, rules, or political positions to new or marginalized groups. Yet a mayor who seeks only to persuade others of the correctness and universal applicability of his own point of view has "tin ears." Well-intentioned white leaders routinely

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flaunt their tin ears when they espouse the standard American creed, illustrating it with heartfelt stories of Ellis Island and hard-working immigrant grandparents who toiled their way into the middle class—that narrative fails to acknowledge the radically different histories of minority groups who faced Jim Crow segregation, exclusion, abuse and deportation during white immigrants' government-subsidized rise in status during the twentieth century.[34] Some advocates of interracial coalitions are similarly tin-eared when they insist that political coalitions avoid divisive racial issues; such decisions should be up to a broad range of civic actors themselves, including weaker minority actors.

Listening also implies attention to particularity, group difference, and healthy self-doubt. Building trust among deeply conflicted groups in cities and regions and creating a sense of fairness and political consistency is only possible when mayors (and other powerful leaders) recognize that some groups have radically different standards from others for judging the fairness and effectiveness of rules, political decisions, and political platforms. Mayors should acknowledge these different perspectives in order to shape rules and make political decisions that are equally acceptable to both powerful and weak groups. This democratic approach—clearly more difficult than simply playing to majority norms—can be pursued in one of two ways: by enacting rules and policies that every group finds fully compatible with their own principles and priorities or by pragmatically negotiating compromises on rules and policies that each group finds acceptable, if not ideal. The compromise approach is more practicable. But the pragmatic search for compromise carries its own significant risks, not the least of which is that stronger groups will use their power to pressure weaker groups to agree to their demands.

I am convinced that Mayor Dinkins was committed to being a fair-minded mayor with special concern for representing the powerless. As he said in his inaugural address, "We will set our priorities to strengthen the weak, to help those who have been hurt." But his own desire for political survival led him, time after time, to defer to the will of more powerful political forces. His acquiescence to arming police with semiautomatic weapons was one example, his apology for mishandling Crown Heights another. There is rarely an immediate political pay-off for mayors who listen to or support groups that are feared as societal threats, such as ex-felons and Muslim immigrants, or groups that are populous but largely prohibited from voting, such as Latino and West Indian immigrants. Yet, the exigency of power should not be allowed to silence the voices of the weak; the long-term consequences of marginalizing the weak are not good for cities or for social peace and stability. Ideally, mayors would listen to weaker voices and urge those with greater power and influence to do the same. The result could well be policies that heal sharp divides and strengthen cities. But mayors probably won't reach this ideal without strong democratic and deeply pluralist civic coalitions that not only elect them but hold them accountable to broad strategies for social change. After all, we cannot expect mayors to be better than their publics.

Notes

1 See Ankersmit 1996.
2 Reports of murders dropped by 10.9 percent from between 1991 and 1992, serious crimes dropped 15 percent overall between 1991 and 1993 (Craig Wolff, *New York Times,* July 29, 1992). Rudolph Giuliani nonetheless charged in 1993 that Dinkins "might as well have held a ceremony in which he turned the neighborhoods over to the drug dealers" (Alan Ferguson, *Toronto Star,* October 28, 1993).
3 A poll conducted by the Gallup Organization reported by William Murphy in *Newsday* (July 9, 1990) showed a 20 percent drop in Dinkins's support among whites, while he maintained level support among African Americans.
4 Tom Bradley was a fiscal conservative and political moderate. Nonetheless, during Bradley's first campaign for mayor of Los Angeles, he was defeated by an opponent who charged that Bradley's campaign was being backed by black radicals and communists who wanted to "take over" City Hall (Payne and Ratzan 1986). Carl Stokes, the nation's first big-city black mayor, elected in Cleveland in 1967, was a former prosecutor who was also was accused of being soft on crime. Stokes (1973) wrote, "This had clearly been a fear all along, that a black mayor would interfere with the police function of protecting the white community against the black peril" (p. 216).
5 Alison Mitchell, *New York Times,* October 6, 1993.
6 In pre- and postelection polls, black and white opinion tended to move in opposite directions. Political scientist Jennifer Hochschild found, for example, that, "From 1988 to 1993 the proportion of African American New Yorkers who said race relations in their city were good increased from 19 percent to 34 percent. The corresponding proportion of white New Yorkers declined from 28 to 22 percent" (Hochschild 1995, 61).
7 The proportion of serious violent crimes committed by blacks remained level after the mid-1970s despite disproportionate punishment of blacks and significant increases in incarceration of blacks for nonviolent crime. See Herring and Hawkins 2000.
8 For example, see Parker 2001 and Sonenshein 1993.
9 The location of public housing units, drug rehabilitation clinics, homeless shelters, and other "nuisances" are also contested by many middle-class black communities. See Gregory 1998 and Moore 2002.

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10 In 1965 Rev. Martin L. King reiterated his long-standing vision of a grand political alliance of the poor that could transform public policy: "We must develop a federal program of public works, retraining and jobs for all—so that none, white or black, will have cause to feel threatened . . . the unemployed, poverty-stricken white man must be made to realize that he is in the very same boat with the Negro. Together, they could exert massive pressure on the government to get jobs for all. Together, they could form a grand alliance" (King 1986).
11 Gilliam and Kaufman 1998.
12 Rogers and Hochschild 2000.
13 According to the U.S. 2000 census, the Latino population in Los Angeles (46.5 percent) is four times larger than the black population. The Latino population in New York City (27 percent) surpassed the city's black population (26 percent). The black population in Houston is 25.3 percent compared to a 37.4 Latino population, while Latinos in Chicago (26 percent) are catching up in size to blacks (36.8 percent). U.S. Bureau of the Census 2003.
14 Julie Mason, *Houston Chronicle,* June 4, 2001.
15 Dave Saltonstall, *Daily News,* October 12, 2001.
16 See Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001. See also Charles 2003.
17 Caraley 1996.
18 Wilson 1999.
19 Bob Liff, *Newsday,* July 23, 1987.
20 Peter Kihss reported in the *New York Times* (June 21, 1978) police claims of many incidents in Crown Heights in which, "members of the Hasidic patrols, who refuse to join the precinct's patrol program, have become involved in altercations with black residents." It was not until 1987 that blacks and Hasidim reached a (short-lived) agreement to go on joint safety patrols in the neighborhood (Robert Fleming and Paul La Rosa, *Daily News,* June 29, 1987).
21 In 1976 a police officer shot and killed a 15-year-old boy, Randolph Evans, outside of his home on Thanksgiving Day. The officer, who claimed to have suffered from "psychomotor epilepsy," was acquitted of all charges and briefly placed in a mental institution (William R. Greer, *New York Times,* April 21, 1985). In 1978, following the choking death of a local businessman, Arthur Miller, at the hands of the police, the state conference of the NAACP, led by Hazel Dukes, called for a Justice Department investigation of the "denial of civil rights" for black victims of violence in Crown Heights (Selwyn Raab, *New York Times,* June 23, 1978). The request for an investigation was denied. In 1987 a 33-year-old mugging suspect died while being questioned by police at the 71st Precinct in Crown Heights (Metropolitan Desk, *New York Times,* May 3, 1987). In 1989 a police officer shot and killed 59-year-old Stephen Kelly after Kelly had honked at a police car (*New York Times,* January 29, 1989).
22 Daughtry 1997.
23 Ibid.
24 Former Mayor Ed Koch and mayoral candidate Rudolph Giuliani accused Dinkins of tolerating a "pogrom." See Joyce Purnick, "Crown Heights Was Not Iasi; And Negligence Is Not a Pogrom," *New York Times,* June 3, 1993, A22.
25 Editorialists for the *New York Post* (August 23, 1991) wrote at the end of the week of disturbances that Mayor Dinkins had "displayed both physical courage and civic wisdom in speaking before an angry crowd and working to dispel mendacious rumors. The mayor made a clear commitment to restore peace to the multiethnic, highly integrated neighborhood. His bravery was hard not to admire. . . . In our view, the mayor's actions throughout the crisis have been right on target."
26 Cathy Cohen and Michael Dawson (1993) found similar low levels of city organization in very low-income black neighborhoods in Detroit.
27 Osterman 2002.
28 For a close study of similar initiatives in Chicago, see Fung 2004.
29 David Rusk (1999) has written that the formation of regional governments encompassing cities and suburbs could generate greater resources to address the needs of poor inner-city residents. Others emphasize that as the minority populations of inner-ring suburbs grow, there could be substantial power in cross-racial coalitions between cities and inner-ring suburbs that could force regional governments to address core economic, educational, and social problems. See, for example, Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001.
30 Black civic organizations' distrust of cooperating with white suburbanites is discussed in Orr 1999.
31 Cohen 2004.
32 In making the opposite case, Susan Fainstein (1999) wrote: "In American cities, practical strategies for the development of a more just and tolerant system require the dampening of sentiments based on group identity, greater commitment to common ends, and identification of institutions and policies that offer broadly appealing benefits. The most effective approach uses cross-cutting group identities to bolster unity. . . . Movement toward a normative vision of the city requires the development of counterinstitutions capable of reframing issues in broad terms and of mobilizing organizational and financial resources to fight for their aims. . . . The inherently divisive character of identity politics cuts against the

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building of such institutions and, therefore, can only be self-defeating" (p. 267).

33 The benefits of this approach in the Southern civil rights movement are discussed in Ransby 2003. Similar findings in the urban North are found in studies of community organizing in Baltimore. See Fine 2003; McDougall 1993.

34 For an opposing view, see Fainstein 1999.

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