IT'S OUR SCHOOL TOO: YOUTH ACTIVISM AS EDUCATIONAL REFORM, 1951–1979

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ABSTRACT

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Activism has the potential for reform (Howard, 1976). Unlike previous studies on high school activism this study places a primary focus on underground newspapers and argues that underground newspapers allowed high school students to function as activists as well as educational reformers. In order to make this argument, this study examined over 150 underground newspapers and other primary source publications. The goals and tactics of high school activists evolved from the 1950s to the 1970s. During this time there were some shifts in ideologies, strategies, and priorities that were influenced by both an ever increasing student frustration with school leaders and by outside historical events. Underground newspapers captured the shift that occurred in the objectives and tactics of student activists. As a result, the contents of underground newspapers were the primary focus of this study.

My study reveals that there were three types of student activists: "incidental" activists who simply wanted to change individual school policies, "intentional" activists who wanted high school students to have greater authority and autonomy in schools, and lastly, "radical" activists who desired an end to oppression of people based on race, class, sex, and age. The evidence overwhelmingly indicates that for the most part incidental, intentional, and radical student activists were all working towards improving their high schools. This common goal was pivotal

in the development of a Youth Empowerment social movement, which would be born out of the actions of all three types of high school activists. . Incidental activists were the focal point of attention for school administrators in the 1950s, however; intentional and radical activists would take center stage by the late 1960s. Throughout the 1970s intentional and radical activists would overshadow incidental activists and dominate the high school activism scene.

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Certainly this life experience, this dissertation, this degree is a testament to the saying "it takes a village to raise a child." I dedicate this work to the village of family members who were the positive forces around me.

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A better tomorrow starts with today.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Two Historical Case Studies: Barbara Johns and Advocating Rights for Mexican American Students (ARMAS)

In 1951, 16-year old Barbara Johns was a young activist who fought for educational reform. Johns was a student of Moton High School, a segregated school in Farmville, Virginia, that held twice the number of recommended students and was so overcrowded that parents made pleas to the school board for a new school. Instead, the board responded with tarpaper shacks and school buses as "suitable" spaces for learning (Wormser, 2003). Unwilling to accept the neglect, Johns took action and spearheaded a plan in which the school principal was sent on a "wild goose chase" downtown while Johns and her fellow students met in the auditorium to discuss a student- led strike. Johns's actions reflected those of what I call an intentional activist because she was working not just as activist but as an educational reformer. Johns and her peers wanted to see large-scale change in how their school operated. Johns galvanized her fellow students into doing a walk-out, and even convinced the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to join their fight. The NAACP incorporated their legal suit into the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case, one of the landmark school reforms. Barbara Johns' early activism in Moton High School helped to pave the way for, the 1954 *Brown* decision (Jossey-Bass, 2001; Wormser, 2003; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006).

The dramatic social changes of the 1950s through the 1970s, as demonstrated by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision as well as by the heightened attention paid to the Civil Rights movement, set the stage for structural changes in America's high schools (Sewall, 1983; Angus & Mirel, 1999; Cutler, 2000; Dougherty, 2004; Rury, 2005). For instance, in the 1968-1969 school year junior and senior high school students in Houston, Texas, formed the group

Advocating Rights for Mexican American Students (ARMAS) (San Miguel Jr., 2001). This group of intentional activists focused on bringing "about school changes that would increase the achievement of Mexican American students" (San Miguel Jr., 2001). In an effort to attract attention to their cause, the group organized a walk-out of at least 500 secondary school students in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) on September 16, 1969 (San Miguel Jr., 2001). The students' demands to end discriminatory practices within the school (along with requests for a more culturally relevant curriculum) and their challenge of the authority of school officials represented their effort to have a significant role in school decisions. These were some of the actions that young people utilized in their effort to produce systemic change in their schools.

Activism and Educational Reform Defined

From the 1950s through the 1970s national events such as the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War influenced high school students across America and motivated many of them to engage in activism (Heathman, 1970; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006; Mintz, 2006). My dissertation defines activism as actions that challenge social norms (e.g. local laws, or obeying authority) for the purposes of altering the status quo (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Anderson, Herr & Sage eReference, 2007). Activism means taking part in confrontational actions, using methods that are often not popular, with the intention of producing change (Shaw, 1996; Ginwright, 2009). In this study the term activism was used to characterize the actions of high school students who decided not to adhere to school policies because they believed that students were being unjustly treated by school leaders. It is important to note that this study does not make the argument that high school activism began in the 1950s; rather, this study emphasizes the shift over time that occurred in high school activism from the 1950s to the 1970s. Several works

discuss how high school students, in spite of the social and legal limits that governed their world, demonstrated their ability to be activists. (Wormser, 2003; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Graham, 2006).

However, a significant aspect of history that is often overlooked is the efforts of high school students who focused their activism on creating educational reform.[1] The term educational reformer refers to an individual who puts forth policies and practices with the objective of producing fundamental changes in the structure and policies that govern schools (Henig, 1999; Ravitch, 2000; Howell, 2005; Strobel, Osberg & McLaughlin, 2006; Mitra, 2008). This study examines how high school students engaged in activism by publishing underground newspapers and then utilized underground newspapers to propose their own educational reforms.

Social Construction of Youth

Serving as the background for the emergence of high school activism was the creation of the concept of "teenager." Within youth culture literature there is tremendous agreement that *youth*, *teenager* and *adolescence* are socially and culturally constructed categories (Howard, 1974; Bucholtz, 2002; Mintz, 2004; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Dolby & Rizvi, 2008). In fact, the term adolescence was coined in 1904 by a psychologist G. Stanley Hall who categorized adolescence as a period for tremendous biological and psychological development (Griffin, 1993; Mintz, 2004). Unlike adults, "teenagers" (individuals aged 13 to 19) were defined as incomplete, or not fully physically and cognitively developed (Howard, 1974; Griffin, 1993; Bucholtz, 2002; Mintz, 2004). Youth was seen as a time of innocent and absent-minded fun; young people were seen as incapable of making serious decisions and in need of a strong adult presence (Howard, 1974; Griffin, 1993; Mintz, 2004).

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[1] The discussion of educational reform in this study will be limited to the high school setting.

Furthermore, the social construction of youth was facilitated by changes in labor practices. During the late 19th century labor laws were passed that defined young people as non-wage earners, and states across the U.S. were enacting compulsory school attendance laws (Mintz, 2004). Later on in 1938, the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed, which tightened legal limits on child labor; this was part of the economic climate in which legal restrictions were placed that created divisions between adults and young people (Mintz, 2004). Young people who previously were able to attend school and earn wages for their families were forced out of the wage-labor market (it should be noted that in spite of the laws prohibiting it child labor was still practiced by some employers) and relegated to the status of dependents (Mintz, 2004). Boundaries were placed around youth along social, cultural, economic, biological and political lines. In the early and mid 20th century, social norms stated that the only ways an individual could formally leave the status of youth was either through permanent employment (economic self sufficiency), full church membership, or parentally approved marriage (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004).

By the 1950s, youth culture was continually regulated by adults and located outside of the labor market inside of the home and within school walls. The direct impact of compulsory education laws was that it kept young people in schools longer (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004). Over a short period of time, this practice fixed youth within the institution of school (Mintz, 2004). In the 1940s and 1950s, to be a high school youth meant to spend almost eight hours of day under the supervision and control of the adults who worked in the school. High school leaders (administrators, teachers, school board members and superintendents) used the various policies and rules that existed within schools to reinforce the status of youth as subordinate.

Historical Argument

Starting in the late 1950s some high school students began to engage in actions that challenged the authority of school leaders. In contrast to other historical works (Heathman, 1970; Sherkat & Blocker, 1994; Graham, 2006), this study contends that some high school students, specifically those from late in the 1950s through the 1970s, engaged not just in activism but in educational reform. An examination of high school student activism in this period reveals three types of high school activists; incidental, intentional, and radical activists. The development of each type of activist was shaped by a struggle for civil and human rights that dominated America in the 1950s through the 1970s. Incidental activists were high school students that directed their activism towards changing specific school rules and policies (Heathman, 1970; Howard, 1974; Sherkat & Blocker, 1994; Graham, 2006). Incidental activism took the form of collective behaviors; individual students formed a group to fight a specific school rule (Smelser, 1963; Turner & Killian, 1987). Students focused their attention on abolishing smoking rules, challenging dress codes, or protesting grooming regulations that prohibited boys from having long hair (Heathman, 1970; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006).

However, the emergence of the Civil Rights movement prompted a shift in high school activism. As a result, by the late 1950s high school activism had shifted from incidental activism which focused on individual policies to intentional activism, which was characterized by a push for broad structural changes in schools. Starting in the late 1950s, many high school students began to advocate increased legal rights for students in schools, as well as challenge the authority of school officials to make decisions without consulting them. Many student activists' isolated collective behaviors developed into a national youth empowerment social movement, which argued that young people should have greater agency and legal rights (Gorton, 1970; Libarle &

Seligson 1970; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Graham, 2006). The term "youth empowerment social movement" refers to the activist efforts by young people that took place from the 1950s through the 1970s.[2] The term social movement is defined as a group of individuals with a common ideology who collaborate to achieve a political goal by challenging the status quo (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Tarrow, 1998; Goodwin & Jasper, 2003). In this youth empowerment social movement, intentional student activists began to view many of the rules they challenged as part of a larger fight against illegitimate authority granted to school officials.

By the late 1960s, high school student activism underwent another change. This shift was spurred by the growth of the anti-Vietnam war movement, along with increased calls for the extension of basic human rights (i.e. freedom of expression and personal freedoms) to all individuals. Radical activists began to call attention to the oppressive nature of high schools and connect their struggle with national and global efforts for human rights (Birmingham 1970; Libarle & Seligson, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972b; Graham, 2006). This is not to say that radical activists were not interested in fighting for educational reform. They were, but they believed that challenging global oppression was a greater priority.

Distinguishing the Three Types of Student Activists

Steven Mintz, in his work *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood*, writes that "eras of reform and social upheaval do not conform to neat chronological divisions" (2004, p.334). This statement certainly held true in my study of high school activism. Incidental, intentional, and radical activists were not relegated to the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s respectively.

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[2] There is ample evidence to suggest that what I term the "youth empowerment social movement" has continued well past the 1970s. Several researchers have captured the modern day efforts of young people working to empower, educate, and improve the social reality of their peers (Crosby, et al., 2006; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Philadelphia Public School Notebook, 2007).

For instance, in the early 1950s there were some reported cases of student activists challenging the authority of school officials (Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006). Furthermore, the issues that characterized many of these stages, for example, dress codes, are cumulative. That is to say, in the late 1960s some student activists were still protesting their schools grooming policies and at the same time challenging large scale issues such as suspension policies .

The tactics employed by incidental activism differed greatly from those of intentional and radical activists, whereas intentional and radical activists shared the same tactics. Incidental activists did not engage in any mass protests or utilize underground newspapers to challenge school administrators. Intentional and radical activists relied on resource mobilization; that is, they attempted to gather people, money, and equipment needed to accomplish their objectives (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Turner, & Killian, 1987; Marx & McAdam, 1994). In addition, both groups engaged in contentious politics by directly challenging the authority of school leaders.

In terms of their strategy for achieving educational reform there exist two main distinctions between radical and intentional activists. First, whereas intentional activists were mainly concerned with gaining rights for students by reforming school policies, radical activists utilized the Constitution to argue that high school students were entitled to legal protections that applied inside and outside of school walls. Second, radical activists attempted to change high schools by fighting their battles in the court room and not just within the school system. This approach developed because they were deeply frustrated by the inability of school leaders (administrators, school board members, and teachers) to adopt the reforms proposed by intentional activists. Radical activists believed that their educational proposals would impact more than just school policies but empower young people and aid in ending global oppression. School officials initially viewed high school activism as transient; however, as high school

protest continued, this response shifted. By the 1960s, administrators developed two main responses to student activism. One group of administrators wanted to redirect the effort and focus of activists to school-supported programs such as student council, whereas the other group wanted to punish student activists through suspension or expulsion.

It is important to note that the objectives of these three types of activists were not mutually exclusive. It was not possible in all events described in this dissertation to distinguish one type of activism completely from another. Incidental activists had a narrow set of objectives (e.g., to abolish dress codes). Intentional activists represented students who adopted a broader set of objectives, and radical activists incorporated even larger goals. As a result, the narrow set of objectives established by incidental activists could be (and in many instances *would be*) shared by intentional activists and even radical activists[3].

With reference to only intentional and radical activism there is space for overlapping of identity. Since these two types of activist utilized the same tactic for achieving their goals it is possible for an individual to be both an intentional activist and a radical activist. This occurred whenever a high school student expressed viewpoints that aligned with radical activism (i.e. students are oppressed beings) as well intentional activism (i.e. students should have more rights that protect us from teachers). To address this problematic issue I refer to individuals based on their most advanced characteristic that is described. For instance, if a student expresses a viewpoint that aligns with radical activism and intentional activism I will identify them as a radical activist. Another reason this decision was justified is because intentional activists did not wholeheartedly disagree with the educational reforms proposed by their radical activists peers (and vice-versa).Once again what would distinguish intentional activists from radical activists

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[3] However, the reverse was not true. A radical activist might have an objective that would not be held by an intentional or incidental activists.

was that the former did not connect their actions to the same broader objectives of the latter. The distinction between the two was over what to do first. Intentional activists wanted to first focus on using resource mobilization and contentious politics to achieve reform within schools. Whereas, radical activists wanted to first address the inequality that existed outside of schools and then shift to educational policies.

Theoretical Framework

The terms "activism" or "social activism" are often used interchangeably but are never plainly defined. For the sake of clarification, in this study activism refers to actions that are compelled by shared ideology and attempt to improve social conditions (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Howard, 1974; Shaw, 1996; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Goodwin & Jasper, 2003). Scholars who utilize the term display a shared agreement about the essential elements of activism. As described by Randy Shaw in his work *The Activists Handbook: A Primer for the 1990s and Beyond*, "central to all social change activism is the need to engage in proactive strategic and tactical planning. Activists must develop an agenda and then focus their resources on realizing it" (1996, p.2). Shaw's description accurately reflects four cornerstones of activism: first, a shared commitment to challenging the inequalities that exist in the status quo; second, a willingness to organize individuals and ideas and the ability to do so; third, the capacity to obtain resources (this extends beyond finances and includes time and people); and lastly, a willingness to transform ideology into physical action.

At this stage it is important to distinguish activism from educational reform. Both activism and educational reform scholars express *change* as a common objective. However, educational reform focuses exclusively on improving the conditions of schools (Henig, 1999; Ravitch, 2000; Strobel, Osberg & McLaughlin, 2006; Mitra, 2008). In contrast, activism has a

much broader focus in that it can address issues beyond education (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Howard, 1974; Shaw, 1996; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Goodwin & Jasper, 2003; Willie, Ridini & Willard, 2008). I contend that high school activists were educational reformers when they focused on producing systemic change in schools.

Activism is often understood to involve challenging social norms and procedures (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Howard, 1974; Shaw, 1996; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Goodwin & Jasper, 2003). I argue that high school students who contributed to underground newspapers in the 1960s and 1970s were both activists and educational reformers. These students engaged in activism through their use of underground newspapers to bypass traditional means of student-administration communication. However, they functioned as educational reformers in that they advocated changes to the culture and policies of schooling.

My theoretical framework for examining youth activism in high schools from the 1950s through the 1970s focuses on three concepts: *structural strain* (Smelser, 1963; Turner, & Killian, 1987), *resource mobilization* (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Turner & Killian, 1987; Marx & McAdam, 1994) and *contentious politics* (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Tarrow 1998). Structural strain and resource mobilization developed out of collective behavior literature, whereas contentious politics originated from the social movement field. According to structural strain theorists, the behavior of individuals and institutions can be influenced by the social context (Smelser, 1963; Turner & Killian, 1987). Structural strain refers to social conditions and events that threaten the physical or psychological safety of an individual and that motivate the individual to take action by joining a group (Turner & Killian, 1987; Marx & McAdam, 1994). Once this group has been formed the term resource mobilization refers to its ability to obtain the support (people, equipment, etc.) needed to accomplish its goals (McCarthy & Zald, 1973;

Turner & Killian, 1987; Marx & McAdam, 1994). Lastly, contentious politics alludes to the methods used to vie for power (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Tarrow, 1998).

Structural strain, resource mobilization, and contentious politics provide effective tools for examining the interaction between high school student activists and school administrators and teachers. Youth activists such as Barbara Johns and the student members of Advocating Rights for Mexican American Students (ARMAS) were able to engage in resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Turner & Killian, 1987; Marx & McAdam, 1994). They advocated students' rights, attracting other students and challenging the authority of school officials (San Miguel Jr., 2001; Wormser, 2003; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Graham, 2006). Their use of contentious politics (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Tarrow, 1998) was characteristic of the youth empowerment social movement (San Miguel Jr., 2001; Wormser, 2003; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006). Yet their efforts to transform the practices and structure of the educational institutions they attended were dismissed by most school officials, who regarded what they did as disruptive behavior (Libarle & Seligson, 1970; Howard, 1974; San Miguel Jr., 2001; Graham, 2006).

Methodology

Historical research

My study utilized a historical methodology for the purpose of understanding the role that high school students in the 1960s and 70s played in influencing educational change. My research relied heavily on publications of high school students, school officials, and other individuals that were produced from the 1950s through the 1970s. This research positions high schools as the primary locale of interest, meaning that the documents utilized were analyzed for clues regarding high school student activism.

There were four major research questions that guided this study:

1. What factors motivated high school students to become involved in activism and educational reform?

2. What educational reforms did high school students advocate?

3. What did high school activists do to call attention to the educational policies and practices to which they objected?

4. What were the responses by secondary school officials to high school students' involvement in educational reform?

Underground newspapers, student publications, and primary source documents were utilized to answer research questions one, two, and three. School administration journals were used to answer research question four.

Youth Liberation Archives

The student newspapers used in this research were obtained from the Youth Liberation Archives (located on the main campus of Temple University). This archive contains hundreds of original documents, mostly in the form of student newspapers, that were produced, distributed, and consumed by young students in the 1960s and 1970s (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). These documents were originally gathered by a youth-led organization, the Cooperative High School Independent Press Syndicate (CHIPS); members of CHIPS were high school students from across the United States and abroad (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). The focus of writings within the Youth Liberation Archives varied from information regarding "the nature and structure of CHIPS, or notes concerning practical problems with the production, mailing and distribution of papers" to items discussing "youth liberation . . . and the repressive policies of their particular schools" (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). Student newspapers and other

student-generated publications are significant to this study because they present an insight into the actions and concerns of high school activists.

In the conduction of this research, the process for selecting which items to include was critical. In order to produce a study capable of generalizable findings, I incorporated from the Youth Liberation Archives documents from all across the nation. The states represented in my research were California, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New +York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia. California, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Texas, and New York were selected because they contain cities that were hotbeds for high school activism such as Berkeley, Detroit, Philadelphia, Houston, and New York City. This sampling process was also beneficial because it offset the low number of underground newspapers and letters available from the southern region of the United States. Hence, documents from states such as Louisiana, North Carolina, and Virginia were pooled to produce a sizable sample representing the geographic south. In total, I worked with over 150 newspapers and letters from the Youth Liberation Archives. Documents were selected from the collection based on their ability to inform my understanding of the role young people played in fostering activism on high school sites and facilitating educational reform.

A similar methodology was used in terms of the school administration journal publications used in this study. This study relied on primary source journal articles in order to gain a deeper understanding of how school officials responded to youth activism. Publications such as *Nation's Schools*, *Journal of Secondary Education*, *School Management*, and *The High School Journal* were important because each revealed the various opinions of school teachers, principals, and administrators. Also, these publications were selected because of their frequent use within the

secondary source literature (Spender, 1969; Heathman, 1970; Sherkat & Blocker, 1994; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). The journal articles compiled for my research were limited to the years between 1950 and 1979. This represents a period of high interest in high school student activism (marked by the frequency of published articles) among school officials. Documents were selected based on their relevancy to the topic of youth activism. This study examined at least one hundred journal articles. In addition, primary source books were utilized that represent the works of individuals ranging from community members to interested researchers. The information described in these texts assisted me in verifying the accuracy of the numerous documents that I came across.

CHAPTER TWO: INCIDENTAL ACTIVISTS

Bonnie Morris's work, *The High School Scene in the Fifties: Voices from West L.A.*, uses oral history to examine the lives of several high school students in the 1950s. In Los Angeles High, during the early 1950s, the dress code for the girls required matching skirts and sweaters (Morris, 1997). One student, Pat, described her experience with the dress codes by saying, "we did get a talk about how to dress and how to behave like young ladies. And it was a lot about rules: your skirt had to be so many inches from the floor; what kinds of socks you had to wear" (Morris, p.47). For many high school students in the 1950s school dress codes and policies on grooming challenged their autonomy.

According to Pat, "I began, at some point in my junior year, to be aware of having a functioning mind. And it began to work. And I thought that the activities and the rules and the dress code shit were limiting and twitty and inconsequential and unimportant. It was one of the things at the time I rebelled against" (Morris, p.47). Morris's descriptions of student life in Fairfax High and Los Angeles High school typifies what other researchers have found regarding the impact of school dress and grooming policies in the 1950s (Heathman, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). High school students in the 1950s were challenging administrators' dress and grooming codes. However, student disdain for such policies did not spur mass protest; rather, activism in the early mid-1950s took the form of isolated incidents led by incidental activists.

High Schools during the 1950s

The 20th century witnessed the institutional separation of young people from adults, and the American high school became the most significant institution for this change. From the 1930s to

the 1950s there was an explosive increase in the number of high school-aged youth who began attending schools (Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). In the 1950s, many educators began to advocate that high schools "play a crucial role in forming students into "'well-adjusted' adults" (Graham, 2006, p.18). Postwar America experienced what Graham refers to as the "juvenile delinquency scare" (2006, p.19), and many adults were concerned about rising crime rates among young people (Gilbert, 1986; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). As a result of this concern, 1950s' high schools adopted educational policies and practices that attempted to tightly regulate student behavior (Howard, 1974; Gilbert, 1986; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). For instance, in the early 1950s, many high schools began enforcing dress and grooming codes that prohibited long hair on boys as well as restricted the wearing of short skirts by girls (Heathman, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Furthermore, high school students encountered strict limits on bathroom and hall passes as well as increased use of suspension as a disciplinary method (Heathman, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006).

The strict regulation of high school students in the 1950s created the structural strain needed for the emergence of incidental activists. Young people entered high school in the 1950s with a cultural identity that embraced a different set of clothes, songs, and lifestyle than their adults (Hendrick & Jones, 1972; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Much of this shift began in the 1940s but took center stage in the 1950s. During this time period America would witness an increase in disposable income for many high school youth, the birth of Rock and Roll, and an explosion of magazines such as *Seventeen* (1944) and *Mad* (1952), all of which helped to further develop a niche and distinct lifestyle for high school youth (Owram, 1997; Mintz, 2004). The term "teenager" was developed to identify this new culture of youth (Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). However, the ability of teenagers to express their lifestyles was severely limited in high schools.

For some high school students, the attempt by school officials to regulate their lives with such rigidity was a prompt for activism (Heathman, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972; Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). In many parts of the nation in the early 1950s, high school student activism was characterized by incidental activists (often working individually) challenging specific school policies such as the ban on long hair for boys.

Dress and Grooming Codes

In 1954, several students in La Follette High School, located in Madison, Wisconsin, started a petition asking for a more lenient boy's dress code (Birmingham, 1970). During the 1950s, the typical dress code restrictions for boys often included a ban on: long hair, sweat shirts, form-fitting pants, and boots. Grooming regulations prohibited unshaven faces and unkempt hair. The girls' dress and grooming codes in many high schools included prohibitions on low-cut dresses, tight-fitting sweaters and blouses, excessively short dresses, heavy makeup, sandals and culottes (Garber, 1966; Morris, 1997; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). The argument presented by school administrators justifying their dress and grooming codes revolved around securing the health and well-being of students (Grieder & Grider, 1968; Heussenstamm, 1972b; Hoffmann, 1972). The petition effort by the students in La Follette High School did not gain large support among the student population, and the effort faded out a month later (Birmingham, 1970). Incidental activists, such as the students of La Follette High, disagreed with the logic of school administrators and were unable to mobilize their peers into a unified protest.

For many school administrators the regulation of student appearance was taken very seriously. In the early 1950s, administrators in Los Angeles High created a student group, the Girls' League; its function was to police female apparel (Morris, 1997). According to Pat, "the

Girls' League was this sort of bunch of smart girls. It was a service club. And the best that I could figure out was that they were like cops" (Morris, 1997, p.47). The Girls League was an attempt by school administrators to regulate dress codes by recruiting students into the process of policing apparel. Pat engaged in several defiant actions, such as intentionally violating school dress codes and allowing herself to be disciplined by the Girls League (Morris, 1997). Her actions were characteristic of incidental activists because her acts of defiance occurred on an individual level and were directed specifically at the school dress codes. According to Morris, Pat never organized a mass-protest by her peers nor did she attempt to engage in resource mobilization and develop a larger network of like-minded peers (1997).

Incidental activists at times publicly questioned their school's dress and grooming codes but rarely engaged in further protests. Jennifer, another student of LA High in the early 1950s, reflected on her high school experience by saying, "I think of school, in general, as having been very painful. And I was in conformity-land, and I conformed, but I wasn't happy" (Morris, 1997, p.58). Jennifer recalls watching peers receive citations for violating LA High's dress code; according to her, the situation upset almost all students. Yet, there were no reported protests that took place in LA High in the early 1950s (Morris, 1997). Morris in her interviews provides evidence of dress codes limiting students and school policies being questioned on a personal level by some students. But, of her six interview subjects only one, Pat, acknowledged publicly protesting by violating the dress and grooming codes intentionally and repeatedly (Morris, 1997).

Incidental activists of the 1950s did not think to question the larger school structure, in part because they operated during an era of conformity. Many adults in postwar Americans placed a tremendous value on fitting in. According to Mintz, "in an age of conformity, postwar mothers were not overly ambitious about academic progress for their children. Rather than wanting their

children to be outstanding, they wanted their children to be normal and average" (2004; p.281).

Pat's individual protest of the Girls League in Los Angeles High targeted the school's enforcement of the dress code. Similarly, the students of La Follette high issued a petition against their school's dress code while leaving unchallenged the authority of school administrators to create such policies. Part of the reason many students, in the 1950s, did not push the bar in terms of protest was that they faced immense pressure to conform and fit in. During the 1950s many books, TV shows, magazines and even toys "sought to socialize boys and girls into proper gender roles" (Mintz, 2004, p.277). Schools enforced dress and grooming codes in an effort to maintain control over the lives of youth (Owram, 1997; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Many students were at a critical crossroad, facing pressure from adults and peers to adhere to expectations regarding dress, grooming and behavior, while yearning to embrace a different lifestyle of "youth" that was on the horizon.

Smoking

Only a few underground newspapers dedicated space to arguing for the right for students to smoke cigarettes (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). But, according to one report, a 1968 national survey of almost 2000 school principals revealed that 82 percent observed protests against school regulations (Trump and Hunt, 1969). Furthermore, the most popular target for student protest after the dress code was the school's smoking prohibition (Trump and Hunt, 1969). In the 1950s, cigarette smoking was characterized as a deviant behavior that was often utilized by high school students as a way to lash back at the school system (Markle and Troyer, 1979). It should be noted that throughout a large majority of underground newspapers there were a plethora of visual references to smoking marijuana, either in the form of drawn images of the marijuana leaf or rolled marijuana joints. Yet, the argument that is made by incidental activists

for smoking rights usually advocated for the right to smoke cigarettes (Heussenstamm, 1972b; *The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b; *Little Red Schoolhouse*, 1970).

Some incidental activists and administrators were aware of a contradiction that existed in the battle over smoking rights for high school students. A high school senior could engage in the act of smoking in his walk to school and be within his legal rights. However, upon stepping on school grounds that act would become illegal and punishable by suspension or even expulsion. As stated by Dr. Kenneth Erickson, "there is something phony about students being able to smoke everywhere else but on school grounds" (Erickson, et.al., 1969, p.0). Some school administrators were aware of this inconsistency; in fact the battle over smoking rights was viewed as analogous to the Vietnam war in that "school staff members are engaged in this war, but wish they weren't" (Erickson, et.al., 1969, p.10). Yet some incidental activists were eager to force a battle over this specific policy. In fact, this fight against the smoking policy in high schools would take place over the three decades examined in this study.

Throughout much of the 1950s and 1960s cigarette smoking by high school students was for the most part overlooked by school administrators (Heubach, 1964). Researchers believe that cigarette smoking by high school youth was vastly under reported in the 1950s and 1960s (Heubach, 1964; Markle and Troyer, 1979). By the 1970s, smoking by high school students was better documented and the data revealed that an alarming number of students were "regular smokers" (Heussenstamm, 1972b; Markle and Troyer, 1979). It is during this time that some high school activists would begin to demand the building of smoking lounges for students on school grounds as well as the abolition of smoking restrictions on high school seniors (Heussenstamm, 1972b). As would be the case with many other issues discussed in this study,

high school administrators were hesitant to respond to the concerns expressed by student activists.

An interesting case study in the battle over smoking rights took place in Whitehalls High School (Bethlehem, PA). In 1975, students at Whitehalls created their own underground newspaper, *The Bathroom Bomber*. The editor of the paper, John Potak, a junior at Whitehalls, explained the rationale for creating the underground newspaper: "we realize that the student government as it now stands is only good for getting us assemblies and dances more often. We also believe that student government should not be a puppet of the administration and should be able to work independently of [Principal] Northup and the school board" (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975a, p.1). In their second issue, the writers for *The Bathroom Bomber* pushed the creation of a smoking area or lounge as a major issue for students at Whitehalls High School (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b). According to the editors of *The Bathroom Bomber,* "students in other schools have already have given smoking lounges or smoking areas and nothing has changed, except suspensions, they have cut in half and so has the vandalism in the laws." (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b, p.2). Eventually the local school board held a vote and decided to authorize the creation of smoking zones for permitted students. *The Bathroom Bomber* credits school superintendent, William A. Shine, for devising the new process "students will be required to carry cards at all times verifying their parents' permission and show the cards to faculty members on request" (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b, p.5).

Some student activists viewed smoking rights as part of the same fight to abolish dress codes. Many high school students argued that school regulations on smoking were as excessive as the limits on dress and grooming (Heussenstamm, 1972b; *The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b; Issue,

circa 1970). The fight for smoking rights represented another example of how incidental activists focused on changing individual policies in their schools. Furthermore, there is no evidence to indicate that the student activists favoring the creation of smoking lounges engaged in resource mobilization to bring attention to their cause. No data suggest that high school activists organized any type of mass protest in support of smoking rights for students.

It is plausible that the issue of smoking rights simply did not appeal to a large enough population of high school students. However, my explanation for this pattern is connected to the difference between incidental activists and intentional and radical activists. Incidental activists focused on single policies and did not utilize resource mobilization to achieve their goals. In contrast, intentional activists were committed to utilizing resource mobilization as a component of their activism. Furthermore, intentional activists distinguished themselves from their incidental activist peers because they broadened their objectives beyond individual policies and towards large scale educational reform.

The High School Curriculum

As high school students sought to address the school policies that were limiting their cultural expression, another area of high school was undergoing a transformation. In the 1950s, a shift occurred with regard to the high school curriculum. The launching of Sputnik, a 184-pound satellite, in 1957 by the Soviet Union caused a shockwave in American society (Zinn, 1999; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Media markets, such as *Life* magazine, added fuel to this fire by comparing the event to "the first shots of Lexington and Concord" (Mintz, 2004, p.287).

For the American high school student, this analogy was apt in that Sputnik signaled the start of a war over what they should learn. Schools in the 1940s emphasized not just traditional

academics, but also included courses geared to educate students on how to make appropriate

lifestyle decisions regarding marriage, family, and health (Angus & Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2004).

However, in response to Sputnik, a shift occurred in education. The curriculum in American high

schools began to emphasize math and science over all other subjects and efforts were made to

intensify the overall rigor of schooling (Angus & Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2004). In 1958, Congress

enacted the National Defense Education Act which provided $1 billion to "raise the standards of

science, mathematics, and foreign-language instruction" (Mintz, 2004, p.287). Financial aid was

also invested in schools by organizations such as the National Science Foundation, which

directed that $100 million be used to develop the "New Math" curriculum (Mintz, 2004, p.290).

For educators in the 1950s, the Sputnik satellite sparked an intense national debate regarding

the curriculum and structure of high schools. Even though these debates directly impacted the

lives of high school students, they were not included in deciding these educational reforms.

Instead, educational experts such as James B. Conant spearheaded educational reforms in high

schools (Angus & Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2004). Conant, a former president of Harvard, in response

to growing demands to abandon comprehensive high schools, argued that "no radical alteration

in the basic pattern of American education is necessary in order to improve our public high

schools" (1959, p.40). Instead, Conant proposed the consolidation of smaller high schools into

larger institutions and advocated the increased use of homerooms in schools (Conant, 1959;

Angus & Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2004). Both practices were promoted as part of an attempt to make

schools more democratic and more rigorous. Over time, school districts all across the nation

adopted Conant's recommendations (Angus & Mirel, 1999). However, in the 1950s, incidental

activists were not focused on the large scale changes in curriculum that were occurring

(Heathman, 1970). By the mid 1960s, America's attention would shift from the debate over comprehensive schools and curriculum to the Civil Rights movement.

CHAPTER THREE: THE EMERGENCE OF INTENTIONAL AND RADICAL ACTIVISTS

In the mid 1950s, in high schools across the nation, some high school activists shifted from challenging single school policies to advocating systemic educational reforms. These students were intentional activists and they represented a shift in objectives and tactics from their incidental peers. It is at this time that many high school students would become both activists and educational reformers. Incidental activists were not interested in educational reform and did not engage in resource mobilization (attempts to gather people, equipment, or money needed to accomplish a group's goals) or contentious politics (efforts to challenge the ideologies or policies of the group in power). In contrast, intentional activists were committed to activism and educational reform. However, it would be the use of resource mobilization by intentional activists, specifically the use of underground newspapers, which unified the actions of many high school activists into a national Youth Empowerment social movement. My analysis of underground newspapers and other primary source documents revealed that almost all intentional activists favored three educational reforms: changes in the curriculum; an end to the abusive use of suspension and expulsion by administrators; and the extension of voting power to students regarding school related decisions. As the 1950s continued many intentional activists argued that issues such as dress codes and smoking rights, which were important to incidental activists, were secondary to the larger goal of achieving reform in the school curriculum and gaining greater voting power for students (Birmingham, 1970; Libarle & Seligson, 1970; *FPS*, 1973a). This shift in objectives demonstrated that student activists were now focused on educational reform as well as activism.

Intentional activists were unified in their efforts to engage in resource mobilization and contentious politics. High school administrators during this time period experienced an explosion of mass protests on their campuses (Erickson, et al., 1969; Thompson, 1969; Pucker, 1970; Herr, 1972). By the late 1960s it was estimated that about 60 percent of high schools in America had experienced some form of student led protest (Herr, 1972). In comparing the activism of high school students in the early 1950s to the activism of the '60s and early '70s, Herr (1972) presents three points: "1) Today's problems involve groups of youth rather than individuals, 2) problems today often result from an activity calculated to disrupt or immobilize the educational process, and 3) many of the demonstrations of student activism are executed with carefully manipulated techniques of collective protest" (p.221). Herr's findings support my analysis of the transition that occurred from incidental to intentional activism. Unlike their predecessors intentional activists were committed to recruiting other high school students (resource mobilization) and focused on challenging the authority of school administrators (contentious politics). This chapter will explore how the Civil Rights movement provided the structural strain needed to shift high school activism from incidental to intentional activism. Next, my discussion shifts to examining several of the common themes that emerged during the leadership of intentional activists, starting with the protest against school segregation that emerged in the south during the mid 1950s.

The Civil Rights Movement's Influence on High School Activists

The Civil Rights movement refers to the period in American history from 1954 to 1968, in which African Americans mobilized a national campaign for improved legal rights and sought an end to racial discrimination (Carson, Garrow, Gill, et al. 1999; Riches, 2004). The Civil Rights movement challenged the legitimacy of the laws and authorities that supported racial discrimination (Rustin, 1966; Carson et al., 1999; Riches, 2004), and galvanized many college

students into activism (Kerr, 1970; Altbach, 1972; Lipset, 1993). However, the influence of the movement did not stop with college-aged students. Friedenberg argues that high school activists shared with their college aged peers "a declining willingness to ascribe legitimacy to . . . governing authorities" (1971, p.267). Some high school students were motivated to become activists because they agreed with the ideology of legal and social equality for all citizens (Libarle & Seligson, 1970; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006). Many of the same high school activists were eager to become educational reformers because they believed that high school officials were denying students their legal rights (Birmingham, 1970; Libarle & Seligson, 1970; Friedenberg, 1971; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006). High school activists borrowed from the Civil Rights movement strategies and tactics for protest such as the use of sit-ins, walk-outs, and boycotts (Heathman, 1970; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006).

The 1954 Brown Decision and the Challenge to Authority

The 1954 Brown decision had a profound impact on the lives of high school students. The Warren court's unanimous decision that segregation was unconstitutional provided impetus for social change (Rustin, 1966; Riches, 2004), although the process of desegregation was slow and fiercely contested in many parts of the country (Rustin, 1966; Riches, 2004; Graham, 2006). The decision and the varied reactions to it awakened the minds and hearts of many college and high school students (Kerr, 1970; Altbach, 1972; Lipset, 1993; Graham, 2006). Television broadcasts in the mid-1950s allowed students regardless of their own experience and locale to witness the struggle to desegregate schools. One such struggle occurred in 1957 in Little Rock, Arkansas, (Carson, et al., 1999; Riches, 2004). High schools students across America watched as whites defied the authority of the Supreme Court and resisted the attempts by nine African American students to legally integrate Central High School. The actions of individuals such as Arkansas'

governor, Orval Faubus, to challenge the legitimacy of the Supreme Court sparked many college and high school students to question their obedience to those with authority (Kerr, 1970; Altbach, 1972; Lipset, 1993; Graham, 2006). Hence, the 1954 Brown decision served as a catalyst for the emergence of intentional activists. By the late 1950s, high school student activists openly critiqued and challenged the authority of school officials (Friedenberg, 1971; Altbach, 1972; Graham, 2006).

The Civil Rights movement provided the structural strain needed to move some high school student activists from incidental activism, which focused on single school rules to intentional activism, challenging the authority of school leaders. Intentional activists formed organized groups and were motivated by a shared ideology (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Unlike incidental activists, intentional activists embraced the role of educational reformer because they were the students who desired to engage school officials about large scale educational issues. Intentional activists developed underground newspapers to articulate their ideas and proposals regarding the school curriculum, hiring practices, as well as discipline policies.

High school activism from the mid 1950s to the late 1960s was characterized by the emergence of intentional activists. Many intentional activists were motivated by the ideology of youth empowerment, which argued that young people were entitled to greater authority over all areas of their lives (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Graham, 2006). Intentional activists were deeply committed to convincing their peers to protest (Birmingham, 1970; Libarle & Seligson, 1970). Therefore, by the late 1950s, high school

protests often incorporated large masses of students (Birmingham, 1970; Heathman, 1970; Libarle & Seligson, 1970; Friedenberg, 1971; Graham, 2006).

Early Intentional Activism in the South

In the geographic south the shift from incidental to intentional activism started in the 1950s. In the early 1950s, the issue of desegregation consumed the minds of many high school leaders and black students in the South (Smyth, 1991; Carson, et al., 1999). For many black students in the South the desegregation debate pushed them towards activism. Charleston, South Carolina, during the early 1950s, had only one public high school, Burke High School. In reflecting on the schooling conditions for blacks in Charleston, one former student, Leonard Taylor, stated, " I think we got all second-handed everything back then . . . second-handed schools, second-handed [sic] books and whatever, and I think black people for some reason or other really got shortchanged" (Smyth, 1991, p.106). The Burke High School building, which was constructed in 1910, was so dilapidated that in 1952 it was razed to the ground (Smyth, 1991). In an attempt to avoid integration, the state constructed a state-of-the-art Burke High School (Smyth, 1991). However, soon after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, funding for supplies to the new Burke and many other black schools was all but eliminated (Smyth, 1991). This decision by the South Carolina state legislature angered black South Carolina, parents, teachers, and especially students.

In response to this structural strain some black students at Burke High School became intentional activists and begin to mobilize a broad network of peers focused on producing educational reform in the Charleston school district. Burke students Harvey Gantt, James Blake, and Minerva Brown recruited several of their high school peers to join the NAACP Youth Council (Smyth, 1991). These students frequently held after-school meetings where students and

interested adults could learn about their legal rights and political steps that were available (Smyth, 1991). It is important to note that five years later these students engaged in radical activism. James Blake and Minerva Brown expanded their activism to focus on challenging oppression that existed outside of the walls of the high school. On Friday, April 1, 1960, Blake and Brown would lead a group of two dozen Burke students in a lunch counter demonstration at S.H. Kress Co. (Smyth, 1991). The Kress demonstration, as it was later referred to (Smyth, 1991), symbolized the ability of high school students to be activists by challenging the social norms and procedures.

High school activists like James Blake and Minerva Brown qualify as intentional activists because of their actions to build a social network of student activists using the NAACP Youth Council. These Charleston high school students were interested in bringing attention to the inequality of school segregation that impacted their life (Smyth, 1991). As intentional activists, Blake and Brown engaged in both resource mobilization and contentious politics by organizing their peers in a protest against the condition of their school and the quality of their education. Similarly, high school students Barbara Johns and John Stokes worked tirelessly to unite their peers at Moton High School (Stokes, 2008). The goal of resource mobilization was paramount for Barbara Johns. In her auditorium speech to her peers she proclaimed "nothing would change unless we joined together and demanded a new school facility" (Stokes, 2008, p.65). Johns and Stokes organized their student strike with the intent of not just changing a few school rules. These intentional activists were keenly focused on getting a brand new school. The inequality that existed in black schools in the South under Jim Crow coupled with the dilapidated conditions of black high schools provided tremendous structural strain. Yet, it was the leadership of intentional activist high school students such as James Blake, Minerva Brown, Barbara Johns

and John Stokes that would galvanize high school students and challenge the status quo of schooling.

Intentional Activists Continued Challenging School Structure

Intentional activists believed high school students were capable of engaging in educational reform. John Mann, in his work, *High School Student Protest and the New Curriculum Worker: A Radical Alliance* (1973), argued that student protest was fostered by some students' belief that "the school environment is not humanistic nor can it be until a fundamental change occurs" (p.154).Similar to incidental activists, intentional activists were not content with the climate and structure of their schools. However, intentional activists, unlike their peers from the early 1950s, wanted a large scale shift in educational practice and policy present in high schools. As a result, they decided to engage in contentious politics by challenging not just the authority of school administrators but that of school boards and superintendents. Throughout the 1960s, intentional activists engaged in contentious politics and used resource mobilization as a pathway toward educational reform (Wittes, 1970; Friedenberg, 1972; Mann, 1973; San Miguel Jr., 2001; Graham, 2006). Intentional activists used underground newspapers as a key tool for promoting their educational reforms. This chapter will examine three of these proposed large scale reforms: efforts to revamp the curriculum, the continued struggle to revise suspension policies as well as efforts to greatly enhance the rights and responsibilities of student councils. In addition, this chapter will highlight some of the more controversial educational reforms that were expressed in underground newspapers. These individual events must be examined as part of a larger national movement, the Youth Empowerment social movement.

History of *CHIPS* and *FPS*

Perhaps the best example of resource mobilization by intentional activists was the existence of the Co-operative High School Independent Press Service (*CHIPS*) and *FPS*. According to Graham (2006), the acronym *CHIPS* originally stood for Chicago-Area High School Independent Press Syndicate. Throughout its existence, from the late 1960s and into the 1970s, *CHIPS* was headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). *CHIPS* operated as a nationwide service of exchanging underground high school newspapers (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981; Graham, 2006). *CHIPS* was also responsible for publishing a monthly youth liberation news service known as *FPS*. According to *FPS* literature, the letters *FPS* did not officially stand for anything; however, the editors often declared that unofficially it represented "Fuck Public Skool" (*FPS*, 1970a). *FPS* published on a monthly basis; *FPS: A Magazine of Young People's Liberation*, which contained student generated letters, articles, reports focused on informing youth activists across the nation about any events in their youth empowerment social movement (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). Individuals could subscribe to *FPS* and *CHIPS* and receive information about the efforts of youth activists all across the nation as well as across the globe (*FPS*, 1970a; Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). As a member of *CHIPS*, an underground newspaper would send several copies of their own newspaper and in return receive copies of other underground newspapers that were members of *CHIPS* (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). The Youth Liberation Archives, currently housed in Temple University's Contemporary Culture Collection Department, contains the complete *CHIPS* archive (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981).

CHIPS attempted to acquire some basic data regarding each newspaper that subscribed as a member organization. Every newspaper organization that joined *CHIPS* completed a form that

asked for the name(s) and contact information for editor(s) and key staff members; name of affiliated school, frequency of publication along with number of copies printed per issue. The data collected also included questions that explored the distribution experience of each paper. These questions include, "Can you distribute it [newspaper] in school?___ Do you?___" (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981), and "Do you expect the paper to continue during the next school year?_____". Not every newspaper collection included in the Youth Liberation Archives contained a copy of the data sheet and not all the questions were answered. However, the information did help to provide background regarding such matters as the size of many newspapers as well as the extent of their distribution. For instance, according to *The Rag,* their viewership, which included at least two high schools, required 1000 printed copies, whereas the majority of other papers reported that they served one school and printed only about 300 copies (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981).

Another critical component of the Youth Liberation Archives was the letters, leaflets, and other primary source correspondences that were included with some newspaper collections. It was quite common for editors of underground newspapers to write a letter addressed to *FPS* or to John Schaller (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). Schaller was the founder of *CHIPS*, which started in Chicago, and is credited with being the founder of the *Alternative*, an underground newspaper in Napperville, Illinois (*Alternative*, 1969a; Graham, 2006). He received many letters from editors of underground newspapers seeking advice about responding to pressure from administrators, or expanding their readership, and some of his correspondents updated him on the status of their own underground newspapers (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). The tone in many of the letters demonstrated a sense of trust and camaraderie between Schaller and the writers, though many had never met him. Through these letters, editors of underground

newspapers were able to receive personal updates regarding the direction of *FPS* and the Youth

Empowerment social movement as it took place in other states. Many writers engaged in

dialogue with Schaller about the direction of the nation, the status of the Vietnam War as well

the political conditions that faced students in other schools (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981).

During this period, it was common to find articles originally printed in one underground

newspaper being reprinted in another paper. *FPS* served as a primary vehicle for allowing

articles, images, and reports to be republished for a larger and more national viewership.

However, not every article submitted to *FPS* was republished, even though the average size of an

FPS magazine was over 25 pages, and so some underground newspapers took it upon themselves

to publish articles deemed particularly relevant to members of the student empowerment social

movement.

According to the Youth Liberation Archives, *CHIPS* members frequently worked for *FPS*

(Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). Sharing staff was perhaps a logical decision because both

organizations were strongly focused on resource mobilization and were committed equally to the

ideology of youth empowerment (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981). Members of *FPS* and

CHIPS also were able to establish Youth Liberation Press (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981;

FPS, 1974d). Through this publication agency, student activists published several pamphlets on

issues pertaining to high school youth and student activists. Some of these works include

"Student and Youth Organizing," their most popular publication (*FPS*, 1974d), "Unfair to Young

People: How the Public Schools Got the Way They Are," "High School Women's Liberation,"

and "Growing up Gay," (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981; *FPS*, 1974e). The dates of

publication for pamphlets in the *CHIPS* collection ranged from 1968 to 1979 (Youth Liberation Archives, 1981).

Purpose/Function of Student Newspapers

Some intentional and radical activists recognized that underground student newspapers could serve as a communication tool among parents and other adults as well as with peers. According to high school student Steve Knapp, "the majority of parents know little, if any, information about Washington's problem which may be attributed to the way the Philadelphia newspapers have greatly understated the problem" (*Individual*, 1970, p.5). Several underground newspapers actively distributed their product to parents in an effort to disseminate their message, as well as to counter the information being released by school administrators about the intentions of student activists (*The RAG*, 1969b; *Individual*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971c; *Rebels' Voice*, 1972; *The Midnight Special*, 1972).

Critique of Student Councils/Student Government

In many high schools, the intended purpose of student government was to provide a space for students to voice their concerns about the direction of their schools and offer any productive suggestions for improving their school. School administrators believed an "effectively created student council would give administrators a direct line of sight into student opinions and concerns" (Erickson, et al., 1969, p.27). Student government members were voted into positions by their peers and were expected to voice the desires and frustrations of their peers. Many administrators argued any student seeking to challenge a school policy should first gain the support of their student council members and then have the council formally present the idea to

an administrator (Herr, 1972; Thorum, 1977). As a result, in the eyes of many administrators, student council served as the official voice of the student population.

However, by the late 1960s, many high school activists had lost faith in the power of student councils to represent the opinions of students and fight for school reform. Many intentional activists viewed student governments as an obstacle to the advancement of their activist agenda (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970a; *Altogether*, 1973a). Eric M. Berg, in a letter to *CHIPS* on December 8, 1970, critiqued the student government at Beverly Hills High School for their inability to represent student opinions (*Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970, p.2). Berg, editor of *Local Rocks*, argued the dissent felt by many students at Beverly High was "ignored and never voiced by our 'friends' on the student government" (*Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970, p.2). According to the staff of the underground newspaper *Altogether*, in describing their student council, "everyone knows that student council is equivalent to being a puppet lackey of the administration" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.1). Darryl Rains, a senior at Pascagoula High in Mississippi, argued for the underground newspaper, *Altogether,* saying that "unlike student council, we represent students! We are students . . . we recognize the right to protest; we defend the 1st[t] amendment and resist forces that silence these guaranteed freedoms. Hence we are altogether" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.1).

For many students, the structure of student council was problematic. Intentional activists argued that high school student councils operated like puppet governments, in which administrators were able to influence the actions and decisions of elected student leaders (*The Vast Minority*, 1969c; *Little Red School House*, 1970a; *Do It*, 1973; *Altogether*, 1973a). Intentional activists attending Pascagoula High, in Mississippi, joined their student council but many left their posts eventually out of frustration. Linda Wunderman, a former student council

executive at Pascagoula, expressed her own frustration by stating, "even when the student government has members who want to invoke change, it proves inadequate. That is because of the structure of student council" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.1). Across the United States, during the 1960s and 1970s, high school administrators attempted to maintain a tight control over the actions of students and used the student council as one method to regulate student actions. Eric Berg, editor for *Local Rocks*, believed the school administrators at Beverly High structured student government intentionally to ensure that many of the students' major issues were suppressed (*Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970, p.2). According to Berg, "the fucking administration assigns a sitter to watch and 'review the meetings for decency and appropriateness' . . . if the teacher doesn't approve an issue student government doesn't push it" (*Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970, p.2). Similarly, student councils in other schools were not allowed to present proposals in school board meetings or to the general student public without first submitting it to a designated faculty or administrator (*Local Rocks*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; 1971c; *Altogether*, 1973a; *Screwdriver*, 1974).

In Detroit, intentional activists at Cass Technical High School were agitated over the by-laws of their student council, which allowed adults to delay and even dictate the agenda of the council (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a). Students used their underground newspaper, *Rebels' Voice,* to critique the structure of their student government. Intentional activists writing for *Rebels' Voice* believed administrators used stall tactics to delay and deter the progress of the student council (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; 1971b). According to *Rebels' Voice,* "our minds are kept busy so that the administration can pull more and more repressive acts and tricks on us. Dances, clubs, field trips, and sporting events are just the bosses' tools to keep our minds busy, occupied and pacified" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.2). As a result, these intentional activists argued that "the student

government in Cass (and other schools in our area) should stop being manipulated by the administration. They force our student leaders to fight over field trip money rather than work on getting better teachers or eliminating racist textbooks and better funding for all organizations. . . . ” (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.2). Many intentional student activists viewed their student council as an organization that served the administration and not the students (*The Vast Minority*, 1969c; *Little Red School House*, 1970a; *Do It*, 1973; *Altogether*, 1973a).

Some intentional activists argued student government members often settled for compromises rather than real change. As stated in *Local Rocks*, “the main problem with student government is that any sign of disapproval from our 'supportive' principal means it is time to give up the fight” (*Local Rocks*, 1971b, p.14). Intentional activists in Mt. Vernon High School, in New York, described their student government by saying “15 members all effective saying one thing to us but kissing the ass of teachers and the vice principal” (*Renegade*, 1972, p.3). One group of students even went so far as to label their student council “Team Compromise,” because according to the writers at *Do It*, “every proposal that is passed by that student council starts with the words, 'we have agreed to the following compromise with administration'” (*Do It*, 1972, p.3). The frustration expressed over compromising was rooted in the lack of power held by student governments. As discussed in *Thoughts*, “what good is a council if the principal can simply throw the 'passed' amendment into the trash and continue as if students opinion didn't matter” (*Thoughts*, circa 1970s, p.3).

Intentional activists questioned the effectiveness of having a student council if it lacked the power to enact any educational reform policies. For some intentional activists, the challenge of reforming high schools would be assisted by having a student government that had the power to

enact lasting change, by passing proposals that could directly impact the curriculum or discipline

policies (*Daily Planet, 1970a; Screwdriver*, 1974). Yet, underground newspapers argued such

powers were denied to student councils and as result the organization was simply "a dummy site

. . . designed for 'practice' of democracy without ever granting true democracy" (FUGE Times,

1971, p.9). According to Jordan Plitteris, high school student and coeditor of *Daily Planet*,

"exactly what is the purpose of going to SG [student government] with a list of demands if the

only thing they can do is make 'suggestions' that are always ignored and then forgotten" (*Daily

Planet* letter to *CHIPS*, circa 1960s, p.2). In the late 1960s, the treatment of student governments

by their school administrators was a major concern for intentional activists seeking pathways to

promote and implement their educational reforms.

This poor treatment of student councils by administrators became such a significant issue that

students writing for the *Pack Rat* included a resolution to address it in their proposed educational

reform goals (*Pack Rat*, 1969a). Resolution number 7 (out of eleven) as stated in the *Pack Rat*

stated that,

We will end administrative control of student activities. The administration has no business in
either trying to control or influence student elections and student government. We will return
student elections and student government to the students. We have the right to control the
destinies of our own lives. We have the right to develop our own politics and organizations
regardless of administrative opinion and approval. We are determined to use this right. (*Pack
Rat*, 1969a, p.15)
Intentional activists wanted a viable option for transforming their educational reforms from

proposal to actual policy. Yet, after first trying to utilize their student councils many became

frustrated by the lack of power given to their student governments. As a result, some intentional

activists included revamping the structure of student council as part of their educational agendas

(*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970b; FUGE Times, 1971; *Altogether*, 1973a).

By the early 1970s, many underground newspapers were united in the belief that student councils were ineffective in their present structure, but student activists were divided over how to reform these organizations (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks,* 1970a; *The Word*, 1972; *Altogether*, 1973a; *Screwdriver*, 1974). Intentional activists argued that more power should be given to student councils, whereas, radical activists wanted students to form their own student-run organizations. In Abington, Pennsylvania, intentional activists at Abington High worked during the 1974 school year through their school council to address student grievances regarding dress codes and smoking policies (*Screwdriver*, 1974). In contrast, in 1969, students in El Paso created an organization, Alliance, "as an *Alternative* to the powerless student councils and committees" (*The Word*, 1970c, p.2). The mission of Alliance combined the strategies of resource mobilization, building a network of students, and contentious politics, challenging the authority of school administrators. As described in *The Word*, "the Alliance's future rests in your hands; as a student you can take part in a large scale effort to promote social change in the schools" (*The Word*, 1970c, p.2). Overall, my examination of underground newspapers revealed that during the 1960s and early 1970s for the most part intentional activists were more willing to reform student council organizations in their schools than support the plan proposed by radical activists to launch independent student organizations. Intentional activists were not ready to abandon student councils because they believed that educational reform could be achieved from within the school walls.

Intentional activists in their schools attempted to reshape student councils so that the organization would be more effective in representing students and achieving desired reforms. Students attending George Washington High in Philadelphia pushed for a new student constitution that expanded the duties of the Student Association (*Individual*, 1970a). According to Sue Specter, a writer for the *Individual*, "the new rules ensure that the Student Association works for the best interest of students"; furthermore she states, students at Washington can expect the Student Association to be their ally but work productively with the school administration" (*Individual*, 1970b, p.5). By the early 1970s, restructuring student government so that students had greater autonomy and power became a common theme in several other schools, according to their underground newspapers (*The Paper*, 1969a; *The Rag* 1969b; *Individual*, 1970b; *The Word*, 1970b; *Free Press*, 1971; *Altogether*, 1973a). Therefore many underground newspapers made the reform of student council a part of their editorial policy.

My research indicates that for the most part intentional activists shared a common vision about what reforms should be made regarding the structure of student governments (*Daily Planet,* 1970a; FUGE Times, 1971; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Do It*, 1972). In reviewing the proposals discussed in various underground newspapers I found four common demands. The most common demand, which appeared in six out of the thirteen newspapers that dedicated an article to the issue of student government, was to expand student council so that it served a larger purpose than overseeing social events in the school (*Daily Planet, 1970a; Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Altogether*, 1973a). These student activists argued that their concerns were not just limited to "how late prom should last . . . or other trivial issues such as cafeteria food quality. . . ." (*Local Rocks*, 1970b, p.2). Intentional activists sought an expanded set of responsibilities for their student council. According to

Altogether, "this council would be responsible for all administrative decisions, except for finances and personnel" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.3). Intentional activists envisioned such a reform as possible because they desired a student council that consisted of more than just students.

Student activists argued that the "council should be composed of a small number of teachers and administrators and an equal number of students" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.3). This desire to expand the size of student council by including teachers, administrators, and more students was the second most common proposal (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Altogether*, 1973a). Intentional activists desired to augment the size of student council and include teachers and administrators because it was believed doing so would help to justify giving the council greater powers.

The next two proposals were not as popular but still garnered the attention of enough student activists to make their way into multiple articles and discussions. Some intentional activists desired changes to the eligibility requirements for becoming a member of student government (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Altogether*, 1973a). For instance intentional activists wanted to end requirements that were based on academic performance, citizenship grades, or prior approval by administrators. In addition, members of the *Pack Rat* favored restructuring the voting procedure so that any proposal would only require "a petition signed by one hundred students to be placed on the primary" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.13). Furthermore, intentional activists favored abolishing eligibility requirements for joining student council. Pat Daly, a senior at Pascagoula High, voiced a similar desire, "they [administrators] try to use their hand-picked students to keep us out . . . all students should be members of council not just the ones Milstead [the school principal] approves" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.2). Underground newspapers aided

students like Pat Daly, who believed school administrators were co-opting student organizations and indirectly (or sometimes even directly) limiting the ability of students to vocalize their dissent. Intentional activists used their underground newspapers as a site for discussion of student council candidates (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Local Rocks*1970a; *FUGE Times, 1971*; *Altogether*, 1973a; *Screwdriver*, 1974). Intentional activists wanted to ensure that their peers were aware of the candidates running and their opinions on issues that were important to students.

A few underground newspapers lobbied to grant student councils oversight jurisdiction over student suspensions and expulsions (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Altogether*, 1973a). Intentional activists argued that "the fate of 'deviant' students is too important of an issue . . . suspensions should require the voice of students" *(Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.5). Activists at Pascagoula High proposed that a school principal suspension order could be "overridden by a two-thirds vote of the council" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.3). Writers at *Altogether* advocated that giving the student council authority over suspensions was an issue of democracy. They said that students should be "judged" by a panel of their peers (*Altogether*, 1973a). Intentional activists at Pascagoula High such as Daly demanded that their school administrators consult student council before formally suspending a student (*Altogether*, 1973a). Intentional activists were dissatisfied with student governments being relegated to deciding only issues such as fundraisers and school prom locations.

Intentional activists used underground newspapers to vocalize their anger and frustration over the practice of school administrators interfering with the elections and agenda of student council. Intentional activists at Pascagoula High used *Altogether* to articulate their position against administrative interference in council affairs (*Altogether*, 1973a). According to

Altogether, "don't get us wrong, we're not anarchist; we see the need for government. In fact, we support democracy. That's why we are bothered when we realize that society picks its own leaders out of its midst, but then turns around and doesn't allow students to rule themselves in a democratic fashion" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.1). Intentional activists argued the present structure of student governments was a model of hypocrisy (*The Paper*, 1969a; *The Rag* 1969b; *The Word*, 1970b; *Altogether*, 1973a). As stated by students at *Altogether*, "if school is to teach us to live in society, why not give us a little practice beforehand, so next time around things don't get screwed up" (*Altogether*, 1973a, p.1). High school activists in the 1960s and 1970s thought that administrators were denying students an opportunity to develop fully their leadership and "unify as oppressed students" (*Pack Rat*. 1970b, p.6).

Intentional activists' efforts to reform the structure and scope of authority of student councils demonstrates that some activists were willing to work within the school walls to achieve educational reform. The intentional activists that ran for student government positions were clear about their desire to change and improve their schools without engaging in protests or going underground to publish their views. However, some intentional activists were students who were willing initially to work within the system but went underground after discovering that school administrators were opposed to empowering students. This was the case with Linda Wunderman, who decided to join the local underground newspaper, *Altogether,* and leave her position as a sitting member of her student council after becoming deeply frustrated with school policy.

However, Linda Wunderman's experience also reflects the difficulty many intentional activists experienced in trying to reform their schools (*Altogether*, 1973a). During the 1960s and 1970s, many school administrators were reluctant if not altogether opposed to accepting the

educational reform proposals that student activists were advocating (Birmingham 1970; Libarle & Seligson 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972b; Graham, 2006). Student activists who wanted to see "real changes" made to school policies related to dress codes or curriculum or "issues that impact our life and learning in the hallways and classrooms" found that student council was not an effective vehicle for enacting reform (*FPS*, 1969b, p.9). The desire of intentional activists to be content with reforming the structure of student government, that existed for the most part from the late 1960s to early 1970s, eventually gave way to demands by radical activists to create and endorse wholeheartedly the use of student organizations outside the school walls.

Resource Mobilization

A common objective for intentional and radical activists was using their underground newspapers to mobilize their resources and to develop a network of high school activists. For these student activists the most important resource was student participation. Resource mobilization focused on, but was not limited to, the efforts of student activists to recruit their students to join activist organizations and protests. Dana Wicks, a high school student in Shreveport, Louisiana, contended that "no matter who you are, if you believe in establishing open communication between people . . . and developing our voice as students then this paper is for you" (*Thoughts*, circa 1970s, p.2).

Intentional and radical activists were also interested in mobilizing other resources such as money, equipment, and space for creating underground newspapers. In fact underground newspapers were themselves resources. Both intentional and radical activists used underground newspapers as a critical tool for unifying students and promoting the ideology of youth empowerment. According to the September 1975 issue of *FPS*, "the sole purpose of *FPS* and all

our collective efforts with our newspapers is to show that we are unified students (US) . . . we are making changes already in our society and we could do so much more" (*FPS*, 1975d, p.5). In contrast, incidental activists did not attempt to form their own student organizations, outside of control by high school regulations, and as a result these student activists were not interested in resource mobilization. This section will examine how intentional and radical activists united for the purpose of developing strong, well-organized student groups focused on activism as well as how both intentional and radical activists used underground newspapers to promote the ideology of youth empowerment.

In the 1960s, school administrators were not prepared for handling intentional activists. In analyzing the response by administrators to student activism Erickson et. al (1969) wrote "The new activism presents an entirely different challenge. One major difference between today's disruptive unrest and the discipline challenges of the past is that today's problems involve *groups* of youth rather than individuals" (p.10). School administrators in the 1960s and 1970s engaged in numerous forums dedicated to "developing proper response plans to the wave of adolescent student dissent that has overrun schools across the nation" (Caliguri, 1968, p.2). Underground newspapers allowed intentional activists to engage effectively in resource mobilization. Hence no longer was student activism a case of an isolated student trying to get attention for a cause. Erickson went on to state that "problems today often result from an activity calculated to disrupt the school and immobilize the educational process" (Erickson, et.al. p.10). Underground newspapers were pivotal in providing students space to rally supporters and gain additional students for their cause. Underground newspapers in their very organization represented the collective efforts of groups of students. Underground newspapers such as *The Rag* allowed intentional activists to mobilize and ". . . move as a unified group. United in one direction. . . ."

(*The Rag*, 1973c, p.1). This transition from isolated protests led by incidental activists and involving a small number of students to public disruptions organized by intentional and radical activists, carefully planned and involving masses of students, caught many administrators by surprise (Caliguri, 1968; Herr, 1972; Thorum, 1977).

Intentional and radical activists' major strategy for resource mobilization was to recruit more students into activism. These activists wanted to increase the number of students who participated in events such as reading and subscribing to underground newspapers, attending activist group meetings, as well as joining protests such as walk-outs, sit-ins, marches, and rallies. They recognized that the task of achieving educational reform on a national or even district level was daunting and impossible to accomplish if they could not recruit many like-minded students. However, to recruit them, intentional and radical activists recognized that a higher level consciousness was needed. Toward this end, intentional and radical activists attempted to use underground newspapers to "expose the inconsistencies, hypocrisy, and outright lies that keep students from using our power . . . as well as working together to improve the world that will be left in our hands" (*Red Army*, 1971d, p.2).

The goal of resource mobilization was shared in almost all underground newspapers from across the United States. Students in Covington, Kentucky, stated, "we wanted to make as many students aware of the problems in their environment and the things that they share" (*The Chronicle of Current Events* letter to *CHIPS*, 1975b, p.2). Likewise, students in Western High School, located in Macomb, Illinois, argued, "if we can get just half of the students to participate in our meetings and stay united we can end the oppression of students (*Logos*, 1973b, p.1). Intentional activists in Wilcox High School, located in Santa Clara, California, pushed for "a

mass uprising of students . . . united by our love of freedom and working towards liberation of

our schools. . . . Join our student movement, they cannot stop us ALL" (*The Undergrind*, 1969,

p.5). Lastly, students in Mt. Vernon High School, in New York, used the second issue of

Renegade to challenge their peers to "prove that you are not apathetic or mindless, join us, read

every issue of *Renegade*, bring a friend to our bi-weekly meetings, get involved . . . when you

have unity, you have power . . . let us as students unify (*Renegade*, 1971b, p.2).

Intentional activists and radical activists recognized that the social climate that characterized

the 1960s and 1970s provided a rare opportunity for engaging in social activism. This time

period, as characterized by scholars, was unique, filled with movements representing a number

of disadvantaged groups striving not only to create social, political, educational, and economic

change but also seeking to shift the traditional dynamics of power and privilege (Howard, 1974;

Carson, Garrow, Gill, et al. 1999; Riches, 2004). The Civil Rights movement created a sense of

urgency and excitement among social activists. (Howard, 1974; Riches, 2004). This sense of

urgency was shared by both intentional and radical activists. In a plea for resource mobilization

among their high school peers, the contributors to the underground newspaper *Ball and Chain*

wrote, "the time has come to change. Our time, <u>our</u> change. The purpose of this news service is

for the betterment of our future. Its function is to inform, alert and unite" (*Ball and Chain*, 1971,

p.1). The writers asked for participation from their high school peers at El Paso High School and

invited other high school students to write articles expressing their viewpoints. In another article,

a further attempt to build support quickly among students was made, by high school senior

Monica Thompson. In an article titled "Seize our time," she wrote "Now is the time for us to act

and seize the rights that belong to us . . . the world is rapidly changing; we can change it or have

it change us" (*The Rag*, 1972a, p.3). Some intentional and radical activists were keenly aware of

the structural strain and wave of social reform that the Civil Rights movement produced (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973a; *The Red Tide*, 1976a). As a result, many high school activists engaged in resource mobilization in an effort to take full advantage of the climate of social upheaval and push forward their own educational reforms.

The sense of urgency that existed among intentional and radical activists required both groups to be flexible in terms of what was acceptable participation. Intentional and radical activists decided that in order to engage in effective resource mobilization, they would have to encourage students to take part in any form of activism the students felt comfortable doing. For instance, students at Berkeley High School stated, "Come to our weekly student union meetings, even if you disagree with us, think we are doing things the wrong way, come and tell us. Or write to the *Pack Rat*, let us know . . . we need each other, we cannot achieve anything unless we all are involved" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.7). Furthermore, in underground newspapers it was common for writers such as Robert Chavez of the *The Word*, to express sentiments such as "If it's impossible to boycott classes, wear an armband or start discussion in your class—the Supreme Court has said it's o.k.—please do so" (*The Word*, 1970d, p.6). Chavez's comments reflect two critical points about intentional and radical activists. First, these student activists did not judge their peers based on their level of support, as stated by N. Roland Crowley in *Local Rocks:* "not everyone can march . . . do what you can to support the movement" (*Local Rocks*, 1971a, p.10). Secondly, student activists were aware of the legal opinions handed down by the court system (i.e., the Supreme Court verdict in *Tinker v. Des Moines*, 1969). Underground newspapers often published any success story or achieved educational reform as another way to attract new student supporters. Resource mobilization was best served if information was distributed and shared, and

knowing this to be the case, intentional and radical activists reached out passionately to all of their peers.

In the 1960s intentional activists, in a sharp contrast to incidental activists, employed underground newspapers to rally peer support and build solidarity among high school students. This quotation from student activists writing for *The Word* reflects the unified mentality of intentional activists involved in resource mobilization: "THEY CAN'T TAKE US ONE BY ONE BECAUSE WE'RE NOT GOING ONE BY ONE!!!" (*The Word*, 1970b; p.7). According to the *Pack Rat*, "PEOPLE MUST TAKE BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND UNITED ACTION SIMULTANEOUSLY" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.12). By the late 1960s, many high school activists believed their strength resided not just in numbers but in uniting and cooperating with each other. Intentional and later radical youth activists strived to recruit high school students to take part in activism and support their movement, or at the least read their underground newspapers (*Pack Rat*, 1969b ; *FPS*, 1970a; *We're Not Gonna Take It,* 1971*; Quack*, 1971a).

Unlike incidental activists, high school activists of the 1960s and 1970s focused on empowering students and gaining voting powers in educational decisions. Burt Cohen, in his article "High School Action," attempted to convey this message to incidental activists as well as other students:

I feel that people who decide that they must devote themselves to changing the system, particularly high schools, must realize the basis of this effort is their self-determination as a means to living, rather than the style of clothes one wears or one's hair length. These things are part of the way the problem is manifested; however, it is not the whole problem, and until high school students are given an equal part in the decision making process, the problem is not resolved. (*The Minor's Lamp*, 1968, p.4)
Cohen's comments reflect the ideological difference that existed between incidental activists and their peers in the 1960s and 1970s. The later activists believed youth empowerment, or the idea

that high school students should be provided power to influence the direction, policies, and curriculum of their high schools. Furthermore, activists of the 1960s and 1970s believed students had rights in school that should not be taken away by any school policy or administrator.

As a result, intentional activists and radical activists, unlike incidental activists, were willing to challenge directly the authority of school administrators in order to gain rights for students. Some student activists believed that the presence of underground newspapers had an immediate impact in their schools (*The Minor's Lamp*, 1968; *FPS*, 1970d; *The Word*, 1970c; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a). Student activists at Beverly Hills High School believed as soon the first of copy of *The Local Rocks* reached the principal's desk it signified that the school administrators were losing the battle to control and regulate students (*Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, p. 1971, p.2). Similarly student activists at Bronx High School of Science felt that use of suspensions was on the rise and that school administrators "were afraid they were losing the school" because their underground newspapers united a large contingent of students (B.L.A.D.A.U.N, 1970, p.3). In one article a student argued the presence of the *Pack Rat* and the growing number of students reading it "left many once tough administrators scared of what the students were going to do next" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.14). The author went on to state that "the bureaucrats who THINK that they control the school are beginning to realize that the students are no longer the unquestioning robots of yester-year" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.14). Furthermore intentional activists stated that, "they know that we aren't going to take the same old crap from them anymore, and the worst thing (for them) is that we don't accept their authority over us anymore at all" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.14). Intentional and radical activists were aware that some administrators feared the possibility of a massive uprising of students (Hoffman, 1972; Herr, 1972; Thorum, 1977). As a result, these student activists were

eager to engage in resource mobilization to mobilize the student masses for the purpose of engaging in contentious politics against school administrators (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *B.L.A.D.A.U.N*, 1970; *Local Rocks*, 1971b; *Quack*, 1971b).

Student Activist Organizations

In examining the Youth Liberation Archives as well as primary and secondary sources a plethora of student activist organizations were uncovered. Almost all organizations discussed in this section were started by high school students. The vast majority of organizations, such as the New York City High School Coalition, Young People's Liberation and Organization for Student Rights, incorporated only high school students (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *The Rag* 1971; *The Word*, 1970a). A few organizations such as Save Our Schools (SOS) and the School-Community Council recruited parents, teachers, and concerned citizens into their organization (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971; *The Midnight Special*, 1971c). In contrast to what some scholars have written (Kerr, 1970; Herr, 1972), none of the student organizations found in my study were directly connected to a college activist organization. Furthermore, there was no available evidence that supported the claims made by some school administrators (Grieder and Grieder, 1968; Hoffman, 1972) that "outsiders" or non-high school students made up the leadership of these student activist organizations. In fact, based on information available, it appears all organizations were run by students who were attending high school at the time. All student activists' organizations discussed in this section reflect the efforts of intentional and/or radical activists to engage in resource mobilization and contentious politics.

Some intentional activists were quite adept at using their resources to build student organizations. Students in Beverly Hills, California, used the underground newspaper *Strawberry Fields* to get students to join their organization, SOS (Save Our Schools) (*Strawberry Fields*,

1971). Like similar organizations the presence of an underground newspaper was vital to the ability of SOS to communicate with students in the local area (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971; *The Midnight Special* 1971c, *FPS*, 1972c). However, SOS was special in that it was made up of students, parents, and teachers who shared a common objective to reform and enhance public education (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971). In my analyses of underground newspapers, only two other papers outside California, *The Midnight Special,* and *FUGE Times,* promoted similar organizations, the Mobilized Citizens Coalition and the School-Community Council respectively (*FUGE Times, 1971*a; *The Midnight Special* 1971c). These student organizations sought support from adults as well as high school students in their effort to engage in contentious politics and reform school policies.

Intentional activists in the Beverly Hills School District used their underground newspapers and their student organization, SOS, to achieve several educational reforms. In 1971, intentional activists fought against the city's newspaper, *The Register*, by using their underground newspaper to attract public support for their cause. Eventually these high school activists won the passage of a tax package that provided financial support to the school district's projects (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971). However, writing in *Strawberry Fields,* some intentional activists were concerned about how the school board would allocate the newly acquired funds. According to writers in *Strawberry Fields*, "the questions which confront students now are will the money be used to help us, or hurt us? Will we be able to order and read textbooks which tell the truth - rather than paint pretty pictures?" (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971, p.3). Even when intentional activists were able to achieve victories that impacted their schools positively, they were still hesitant to celebrate. They were frustrated with the lack of representation and voting power that existed for high school students on school boards. As a result, student writers at

Strawberry Fields and other newspapers continued to be aggressive in their effort to reform schools.

In 1970, Young People's Liberation was formed by intentional activists in the Bay Area of San Francisco, California (*The Rag*, 1971). Intentional activists at Berkeley High School used their underground newspaper, *The Rag*, to "set up communications with other high schools and junior high schools around the bay and youth liberation groups around the country" (*The Rag*, 1971, p.3). Young People's Liberation allowed mobilized students to participate in "weekly consciousness raising groups" (*The Rag*, 1971, p.3). Overtime Young People's Liberation used *The Rag* to post meeting minutes, advertise future meetings and print student articles centered on "realizing the oppression of youth and dealing with it in its many forms" (*The Rag*, 1973, p.2). *Young People's Liberation* as an organization for student activists was welcoming to any high school student interested in advancing student rights, and organization leaders welcomed students who held ideas that were uncommon. This sense of cooperation would be prevalent among student activist organizations and perhaps factored into the growth of other organizations (*FPS*, 1971e; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *Philos*, 1975d).

Student activists at Berkeley High also were busy supporting two other organizations, the Student-Teacher Union as well as S.P.F.A.C. (the Student Parent Faculty Administrative Council) (*The Rag*, 1974, p.1). The agendas of both organizations were very similar in that participating members were focused on improving the quality of education at BHS and recognized the importance of open communication among key stakeholders. However, unlike the SOS, neither organization was created solely by high school students. Still student activists strived to ensure that the agenda of the Student-Teacher Union and S.P.F.A.C aided the cause of high school activists (*Strawberry Fields*, 1971; *The Rag*, 1974). *The Rag* recruited student

support and active participation in each group by asserting "we have learned through many people's struggles, that together, people have power; that together, people can learn, raise consciousness, share ideas and ideals and that together, people will become more conscious of other struggles and perhaps these struggles are not so separate in their goals" (*The Rag*, 1974, p.1). Activist organizations that focused on advancing both students' and teachers' agendas were rarely mentioned in other underground newspapers. Perhaps the best explanation for this lies in the fact that, for many student activists, teachers were part of the problem. Some students argued teachers were no different than administrators (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *FPS*, 1971e; *The Red Tide*, 1974c; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974c; *Philos*, 1975d). Nonetheless, this makes the existence of the Student-Teacher Union and S.P.F.A.C. note-worthy because it demonstrates that in certain cases students and teachers did unite and strive towards a shared goal.

One critical factor that determined the effectiveness of these student-teacher activist organizations was student participation. According to *The Rag*, the Student-Teacher Union "truly worked on student and teacher needs" because of the high representation of students at the meetings (*The Rag* 1974, p.2). However, it is important to note that lower student turnout to S.P.F.A.C. meetings was a major criticism of S.P.F.A.C. *The Rag* writer, Jeff Raz, stated that, "if SPFAC does not have a majority of students . . . no real student power will be gained by it" (*The Rag*, 1974, p.1). Raz goes on to attempt to mobilize his peers by declaring that "the only way real student power will be gained is if students are a majority of the S.P.F.A.C. council. Keep Fighting for a Student Majority and REAL STUDENT POWER" (*The Rag*, 1974, p.1). Raz's comments reveals that student activists were unhappy with the number of representatives allocated to students for S.P.F.A.C. and possibly this interfered with activists' ability to shape the agenda of the organization. While it is unclear why students gravitated more towards the

Student-Teacher Union, the inability of students to drive the agenda of S.P.F.A.C. offers a plausible theory. This issue of student activists being frustrated with a minority representation would not appear in the other student organizations examined in this study.

The High School Student Union (HSSU)

After examining underground newspapers I have concluded that the largest student activist organization was the High School Student Union (HSSU). The HSSU was not a national organization with multiple regional chapters that reported back to the parent institution; rather evidence suggests that it was a collection of independent organizations that shared the same name, ideology, and formal values as the founding chapter (*Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS* 1971b; 1973b).The first reported chapter of the HSSU was located in Berkeley High school and was founded in 1969 (*Pack Rat*, 1969a). By 1971 HSSU had chapters in schools located in California, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New York, and Pennsylvania (*Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS* 1971b; 1973b). These organizations were welcoming to both intentional and radical activists. In schools across the nation, high school student unions pushed the agenda of intentional activists by supporting protest that challenged the authority of administrators to confiscate underground newspapers and suspend students for distributing such papers (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS* 1971b; 1973b). In addition, radical activists used their respective high school student unions to galvanize their peers to fight racism and oppression both on local and global level (*FPS* 1971b; 1973b).

The Berkeley High School Student Union Program published eleven goals that became the agenda of all other high school student unions (*Pack Rat*, 1969a). Members of the Berkeley HSSU argued that "the HSSU has a program which we feel relates to the needs of all students.

We think that people should form chapters of the HSSU in every school so that when we move on issues which affect all of us, we'll be together" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15). This message was echoed in *FPS* as part of the newspapers' campaign to develop a national social movement of high school activists (*FPS*, 1970b; 1971a; 1974c). The first goal of the Berkeley HSSU was to establish a high school student union for the Bay Area (*Pack Rat*, 1969a). According to the intentional and radical activists who worked together to form the organization, "we must recognize our relationship as students to a bad system. We must then realize our need to move together to fight it" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15). This emphasis on resource mobilization was also expressed in goal number 3, "WE WILL HAVE A JOYOUS MOVEMENT…as students we will celebrate together" and goal number 11, "WE WILL UNITE WITH OTHER MOVEMENTS. We will unite with other movements throughout the country to attain our mutual liberation and equal rights…" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.3). The reiteration of this goal of resource mobilization by members of the Berkeley HSSU reflects their overall commitment to developing a national movement of high school student activists.

The remaining goals of the Berkeley HSSU demonstrate the spirit of cooperation that existed between intentional and radical activists. Student activists in the Berkeley HSSU were focused on fighting racism within school walls (fourth goal) and in society, ending courses that oppressed students (fifth and sixth goal), as well as ending abusive rule both by principals (goals seven, eight, nine and ten) and police (goals nine and ten) (*Pack Rat*, 1969a). Intentional activists focused primarily on achieving changes within school walls, whereas radical activists wanted to direct their efforts first at reforming the world that existed outside the school. Hence, the Berkeley HSSU's balance of attention to the actions of school principals and police officers,

among other examples, reflects the cooperation that existed between intentional and radical activists.

The Berkeley HSSU also discussed in their goals their plan for how they would achieve their goals. The first step according to student activists was to exercise the constitutional rights "granted to all citizens of the U.S." (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15). As stated in their second goal, members of the Berkeley HSSU believed that "the only way that students can gain power over their own lives is to organize. All students have the right to get themselves together for their own needs" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15). These student activists advocated that their peers utilize "our rights of free speech, our right to leaflet, our right to have independent newspapers (like *Pack Rat*), and our right to take political action in our own interests in the schools without censorship, restriction, or penalty" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15). In addition, members of the Berkeley HSSU were committed to taking action that included "taking over the offices of administrators who have ignored us," attending school board meetings and staging massive rallies to push for their grievances to be addressed (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.15).

In examining the collection of underground newspapers that discussed the actions of high school student unions evidence suggests that for the most part intentional and radical activists worked cooperatively in the student unions. There were a few cases where an ideological tug-of-war occurred between intentional and radical activists. Some of these debates will be discussed later. Yet, as members of high school student unions most student activists believed that addressing one group's goal, eliminating the use of suspensions, supported the other group's goal of ending illegal arrests by police officers (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS* 1971b; 1973b). Student activists saw both causes as part of their fight to improve their world by

liberating oppressed people. However, in order to address both agendas, it was common for high

school student unions to contain several committees of students working on different projects

(*Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS*, 1973b). During the 1960s and 1970s committees would hold their own

rally and afterward urge participants to march with another rally as a sign of student solidarity

(*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *Pack Rat*, 1971b; *FPS* 1971b; 1973b). According to Ruth Edwards,

the union consists of our people, we're guys and girls, greasers and hippies, Black, White,
Chicano, and Oriental . . . we are all working to end this system of oppression. . . we got lots of
different ideas about how to do this, but we are all marching in the same direction. Come join us!
Join our fight. Bring your ideas to our meetings, you will find someone ready to work with you.
(*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.3).
Intentional and radical activists operated their high school student unions under a spirit of

cooperation rather than competition.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the High School Student Union (HSSU) chapters

that were located in the Berkeley/Bay Area of California were incredibly active in mobilizing

students and promoting educational reform. Members of the high school student union chapters

located in northern California were also writers for *The Rag* and *Pack Rat.* As a result, the high

school student union often used these underground newspapers to disseminate their content

(*Pack Rat*, 1969a; 1969b; *The Rag*, 1972a;1972b). By the second issue of the *Pack Rat*, the

Berkeley HSSU members had decided to use the underground newspaper as its official voice but

still published articles in other local underground papers (letter to *CHIPS* from the Berkeley

HSSU, 12/19/1969). The Berkeley HSSU even maintained a section in the *Pack Rat* titled "Other

Schools" where other HSSU chapters could publish letters discussing any issue they felt was

relevant. By December of 1969, there were at least seven different high school student union

chapters in the Bay Area region and they had established a central office in San Francisco (letter

to *CHIPS* from the Berkeley HSSU, 12/19/1969). In the underground newspapers these

collection of chapters were often referenced as Bay Area HSSU. As a result this study will follow the same pattern.

The HSSU chapters in the Bay Area used underground newspapers to mobilize student support and challenge the authority of school administrators. One of the first hurdles student activists involved in the Bay Area HSSU chapters had to overcome was racial division. It existed in many local high schools. These high school student unions believed recruiting students from all racial groups would bolster the ability of high school student unions to gather support for rallies, walk-outs, and other protests (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; 1970a; *The Rag*, 1974b). According to one intentional activist a critical goal of the high school student union was to "form a strong alliance and to work together to combat any racial tensions" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.16). An example of this occurred in November of 1969 when student activists, mobilizing through the use of the local high school student union and *Pack Rat,* organized a walk-out at Tamalpais High School to protest racism in the local schools (*Pack Rat*, 1969b).

This walk-out was evidence of the cooperation that existed between intentional and radical activists. Radical activists used organizations such as the Bay Area HSSU to protest racism not just in schools but also global racism. As stated in the *Pack Rat*, "students must join with their BROTHERS and SISTERS across the global and protest their oppression" (*Pack Rat*, 1969, p.3). After organizing a walk-out at Tamalpais High School, radical activists convinced students to leave the school grounds and join with anti-war groups for a mass march through the neighborhood of Mill Valley (*Pack Rat*, 1969b). As student activists they agreed that issues such as textbooks that ignore the contributions of people of color were connected to the United States war efforts in Vietnam and Southeast Asia in that both were examples of oppression (*Pack Rat*,

1969b). Over time, intentional and radical activists in the Bay Area HSSUs used the organization to mobilize student walkouts against racism in the following high schools: Berkeley, Gunn, Tamalpais, and Palo Alto (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; 1970; 1970b).

On November 14, 1970, the Bay Area HSSU was able to stage a multi-school protest that once again reflected its ability to balance the agendas of intentional and radical activists. The Bay Area HSSU was also able to mobilize students successfully from Logan High School to join their peers from Tennyson in walking out of classes (*Pack Rat*, 1970a). The student activists gathered over 300 students to attend an already formed rally where students were "protesting the Vietnam war, the [high school] tracking system and our rights to free speech in high school" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.9) According to Emma Goldman, a member of the Hayward HSSU, "the rally grew to over 500 students, as students from Sunset and Hayward high schools, as well as other local schools joined the rally" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.9).

Rallies such as the one that started at Tamalpais High School occurred throughout California in the late 1960s and 1970s. Intentional activists vocalized their desires and connected them directly to the reforms proposed by radical activists. As stated by one student, describing a rally that occurred in the Beverly Hills area, " we are pushing for changes to the school system that would allow any student the ability to learn about not just their own neighborhood but also their world . . . we want to study the problems in Beverly Hills, Chicago, Laos, and Africa" (*FPS*, 1971b, p.23). In fact, many intentional and radical activists saw their struggle as inextricably linked. These activists proclaimed "we are all students facing the same struggle, the same oppression. In the school they detain us and violate our rights, in the streets they detain us again and claim we have no rights . . . our goal as students are the same" (*FPS*, 1971b, p.23).

High school student unions played a tremendous role in recruiting students towards activism in

California. The ability of the Bay Area HSSU to organize rallies that involved multiple schools

and utilized underground newspapers to spread word of their events was critical in ensuring that

high school activism spread throughout the Bay Area, California and the nation.

Notable Events of the California HSSUs
The high school student unions located in California used underground newspapers as a

vehicle to exchange ideas for engaging in contentious politics. For instance, the San Francisco

HSSU used their underground newspaper, *Seize The Time*, to challenge the power of school

administrators and school boards to suspend students and censor student work (*Pack Rat*,

1970b). According to the *Pack Rat*, students from the San Francisco HSSU argued that "they

cannot continue to violate our rights. The school board is cowardly in allowing administrators to

treat us like this" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). In a show of support, the members of the *Pack Rat* used

their newspaper to bring attention to the plight of their San Francisco peers; they recognized that

as members of the high school student union they were part of the same struggle. One writer for

the *Pack Rat* advised students at *Seize The Time,* "and any of our other Brothers and Sisters

facing these illegal tactics by bullshit administrators," that they should seek the counsel of the

local ACLU or even a free lawyer to contest the actions of the school administrators (*Pack Rat*,

1970b, p.4).

The Radical Student Union
The existence of high school student unions in California did not prevent radical activists

from creating their own organization, the Radical Student Union (RSU). The RSU was never

affiliated with any particular high school; however, according to *The Rag* and *Pack Rat*,

Berkeley High and Palo Alto High were often targeted as sites for protest (*Pack Rat*, 1970b;

1970c; *The Rag*, 1972a). Data was not available on membership numbers or structure of leadership for the RSU. However, the *Pack Rat* contained a variety of articles describing the protest and rally events involving the RSU (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; 1970c). As posted in the *Pack Rat*, the Radical Student Union "represents an organization of students who believe that that system must be brought down to its knees . . . we must re-educate our peers and allies so that they can fight for their own true liberation" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.9). The belief that the "system" should be "brought down to its knees" would certainly strike many as radical rhetoric. However, there is no evidence that proves that the RSU engaged in any actual activities that were different from the HSSU or any other student organization run by intentional activists.

In comparison to their peers at HSSU a student organization like the RSU was *radical* in prioritizing global issues over reforming school policies. Student activists in the RSU wanted to "start the next world revolution, where we as Brothers and Sisters end the abuse of our people" (*FPS*, 1970b, p.17). Radical activists focused on resource mobilization as a way to connect young people in places like California with young people in New York, South America, Asia, and Europe. However, the RSU was also committed to changing the educational structure here in the United States (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; 1970c; *The Rag*, 1972). Radical activists desired a strong organization to mobilize support but agreed with their peers in the high school student unions that "education is vital to the success of the STRUGGLE against oppression" (*FPS*, 1970b, p.17). Hence, even though the RSU made worldwide oppression its primary concern, the organization and, for the most part, radical activists across the board worked with intentional activists on producing school reform.

A shared belief in resource mobilization and contentious politics led to several joint ventures in the Berkeley area between the HSSU and the RSU (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *FPS*, 1970b). Both organizations spearheaded the running of a community school that offered courses not offered in the local schools that would be made available to all students (*Pack Rat*, 1970a). In the community school, the RSU started a "Revolutionary Education course" that attracted students from local high schools as well as several high school dropouts, also referred to as "brothers and sisters who have left the bullshit system and accepted the responsibility of self-education and self-empowerment" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.9). The Revolutionary Education course was one of several courses that the RSU and local high school student union chapters would offer to help students. Other courses included a "Women's Liberation course" and "Youth Liberation Training," as well as "Brown People's History course" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.14). The course was entirely free for any high school student or local youth.

In another instance of cooperation, in the fall of 1970 Bay Area HSSU and RSU members challenged school administrators by showing a film, "Columbia," to interested students. According to the *Pack Rat*, "the administration refused permission for the Radical Student Union, an HSSU chapter, to show the film . . . administrators cited the movie as being 'too radical and provocative'" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.3). In spite of the negative response from the school leadership, intentional and radical activists argued the administration was attempting to bully the students and quickly decided to "show the film on campus regardless of administration harassment" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.3). This experience reflects the common enemy mentality that united intentional and radical activists. Student activists were focused on proving to school administrators that high school students would not be easily divided and were committed to defending their rights.

The Bay Area HSSU and the RSU also were active in protecting student rights outside of school. According to reports printed in underground newspapers, on several occasions intentional and radical activists mobilized to challenge policies that discriminated against high school youth (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *The Rag*, 1972). In Palo Alto, HSSU members protested several local shops because of their "extremely unfair business policies towards students" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.3). The Palo Alto HSSU was able to achieve small victories in some of these battles and convinced store owners to revise their policies towards students (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). HSSU and RSU were vital to the student activist community in California; however, they were not the only organizations that gained prominence in underground newspapers.

The Chicano Student Union (C.S.U.)

The Chicano Student Union (CSU) recognized that it shared the same struggle as the Bay Area HSSU; however, they argued there also were unique problems that confronted Chicano students necessitating the existence of a CSU. According to Mario Ortiz, a sophomore from Fremont High School, "the CSU is a school organization based on educating administrators and students on the needs of the Chicano in the schools" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.13). According to Ortiz the Chicano Student Union was established by high school activists who were aware of the problems that faced Chicano students in the educational system (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Some of the problems included a high number of Chicano students being placed into the lowest academic track, unfair treatment from teachers and administrators, and being forced to accept worn and outdated textbooks in classrooms (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). The Freemont Chicano Student Union, like the Berkeley CSU, desired to mobilize students to join in their fight and force school administrators to adopt educational reforms (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). As Ortiz said, "the Chicano Student Unions all over have begun to realize that the Chicano doesn't drop out of school, that he

gets pushed out because we don't accept their racist bullshit" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.13). The Freemont and Berkeley Chicano Student Unions welcomed intentional activists along with radical activists in their struggle to curtail the suffering of Chicano students in what they considered a racist school system (*Pack Rat*, 1970b).

Other Student Organizations

Texas-Activist Student Organizations

Student organizations formed by intentional activists, radical activists, or sometimes by both, were established in other locations besides California. In the winter of 1971, editors for *The Word* mobilized with local high school youth in El Paso, Texas, to create the Organization for Student Rights (OSR) (*The Word,* 1970b). The OSR focused on gaining equal protection for the constitutional rights of young people in the El Paso Public School System (*The Word,* 1970b). As stated by the writers at *The Word*, "OSR is a grass roots organization, whose purpose was to further basic civil, individual, and human rights in the schools, with particular emphasis on the rights of free speech, free press, peaceful assembly, due process, and equal protection of the law" (*The Word,* 1970b, p.3). OSR challenged students to attend school board meetings and advocate for three specific requests: 1. an end to dress codes, 2. ceasing suppression of student expression by allowing newspapers and leaflets to be distributed on school grounds regardless of political viewpoint and 3. allowing a review of all teachers and firing of individuals found to have racist views (*The Word,* 1970b). The OSR was popular among students because the school administration prohibited the student council from discussing certain issues (i.e. dress codes, grooming policy). Student activists rallied behind the OSR in part because it represented an unfiltered organizational voice about student concerns.

Kentucky-Activists Student Organizations

During the early 1970s, the underground newspaper *The Chronicle of Current Events* (CCE) was used as the voice for the "Student Strike Committee" (SSC). SSC was a student organization established by high school students in Covington, Kentucky. The SSC was mainly composed of students from Holmes High School, but included students from the greater Covington Public School System (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1974b; 1975c). As was the case with other intentional activist organizations, the SCC's main mission was to promote and obtain student rights in high schools. According to *The Chronicle of Current Events,* intentional activists in the SCC were engaged in contentious politics and resource mobilization on multiple occasions, organizing rallies in which activists advocated that students be included in the decision-making process, especially choosing the next superintendent for the Covington School District (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975c).

During the 1974–1975 school year, SCC members became engaged in year-long campaign to remove the incumbent superintendent, Bret Bennett; towards this cause the SCC even staged a walkout to foster support for their objective (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1974b). The writers at *The Chronicle of Current Events* argued Mr. Bennett lacked the proper qualities needed to move the Covington School District from the 1950s to the era of cultural understanding and sophisticated thinking that was emerging in the 1970s (1975c). In an article, "9 Reasons to Drop Out of High School," intentional activists attempted to mobilize students to attend school board meetings by stating that "an asinine superintendent . . . ultra-conservative board" were factors that would not change without student activism (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a, 4). In January of 1975 the unpopular superintendent, Bret Bennett, was voted out his position in a 3-2 decision by the Covington Board of Education (*The Chronicle of Current*

Events, 1975a). The staff at *The Chronicle of Current Events* was elated by this conclusion to their lengthy struggle to remove a school leader. The Student Strike Committee and *The Chronicle of Current Events* demonstrate how student activists were effective in utilizing resource mobilization and contentious politics to spur changes in their school district.

Baltimore-Activists Student Organizations

Activist organizations provided a space for students to come into the fold and find support in their convictions that change was needed. For many organizations the task of recruitment was made easier by abrasive responses from school administrators in dealing with students (*FPS*, 1971e; *The Word,* 1970b; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a). In the winter of 1970, students at Eastern Technical High School, in Baltimore, broke out into sporadic protest after several black high school students engaged in a verbal altercation with teachers. Students contended that they "demanded an end to the use of racist teachers in classrooms" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). Several students were suspended and eight students were arrested "on charges of disorderly conduct" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). In response, students in Baltimore used their HSSU chapters to engage in contentious politics by challenging the authority of school administrators and the local school board. On February 13, 1970, news of the arrest spurred several hundreds of students from City High School to walk out and march on the police station (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4).

Intentional activists viewed the incident as an ideal opportunity to draw attention to the various grievances they had spent the past several years voicing. The high school student union in the area "attempted to mobilize our Baltimore peers as quickly as possible"; the result was a fury of walk-outs and sit-ins in several Baltimore schools (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). Later, on February 17, "several hundred students picketed City Hall around the issues of amnesty for the

eight and an end to racist teachers in the schools" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). As the protest

continued, other schools found their students taking the opportunity to challenge their school

administrators. For instance, in Polytechnic High School, black students organized a sit-in and

barricaded themselves in the cafeteria (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). The main demand made by these

students was an end to racist teachers (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Resource mobilization was made much

easier for student activists if there were protests already occurring and students for the most part

were aware of the demands that were being requested. As a result, the Baltimore HSSU remained

focused in trying to keep students involved and aware of the reason for protest.

The actions of the Baltimore HSSU extended the protest to almost two weeks and, as a

result, forced administrators in local schools to take serious steps to quell the mass protests.

Administrators at Polytechnic High responded to the protest like their colleagues at Eastern

High, by bringing in the Baltimore police. As a result, "eighty students were arrested on charges

of trespassing" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). Yet, it was reported that no effort was made by the

administration at Polytechnic to sit down with student leaders before or after the protest (*Pack

Rat*, 1970b). In an attempt to stop student activists, police officers rounded up students who were

engaged in sit-ins in local stores and blocked off streets to marchers (*Pack Rat*, 1970b).

However, the overwhelming uprising of student activism garnered the attention of

Superintendent of Schools, Thomas B. Sheldon. Mr. Sheldon in response to a recent outburst of

sit-ins, public rallies, and protest that had occurred in Baltimore schools, "announced tighter

security for city schools" and "called for a meeting of school and city officials and students to

discuss the matter at hand" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.3). It is not clear what role the local Baltimore

HSSU chapters played in the talks that occurred, but the power of these student organizations

was very clear in looking at the days of protests that occurred.

Student activist organizations were critical tools in contentious politics for intentional and radical activists. These organizations allowed student activists the potential to respond to perceived injustices, such as an abuse of power by a school administrator, with a massive number of student backers. The Baltimore HSSU chapters served as connection points for students in various high schools and pushed protesting students to advocate specific demands. Hence, the student organization allowed the protest and protesters to engage in contentious politics in a much more structured and disciplined fashion. Similar to the OSR in El Paso, the HSSU chapters in Baltimore drew in students who believed they did not have the attention of the school board or administrators (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *The Word,* 1970b). Student organizations, when provided with the right spark, engaged in contentious politics by spearheading walk-outs and sit-ins and then motivating participants in those protests to take part in rallies and marches. The combination of such actions, as witnessed in Baltimore, led to an even more massive and prolonged protest. All of which provided student activists with an important victory because such actions gained the almost undivided attention of school administrators and district leaders.

New York-Activist Student Organizations

Some student activist organizations, in their struggle to promote educational reform, attempted to enact their own policies (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1970b; *The Word,* 1970b). An excellent example of this was The New York City High School Coalition (NYCHSC), which was established in 1970 to represent approximately seventy-five high school student governments (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). The coalition emerged in response to growing concern by high school students about the inability of educators at the school board level to improve the educational conditions that existed in New York City schools. The members of the coalition were high school students who in their student government leadership positions

at their schools had engaged in various attempts to convince school administrators to adopt

policies that protected student rights (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). However,

according to student writer David Goldsmith, student activists were incredibly frustrated with

their efforts to force reforms at each of their schools (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Their shared frustration

spurred them to meet and begin drafting a students' bill of rights.

Members of the NYCHSC represented an organization composed primarily of intentional

activists because the group was focused on fostering change in high schools (*Daily Planet*,

1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). These student activists engaged in

contentious politics by crafting and disseminating a city-wide petition, advocating among other

things an end to the deterioration of local schools, increased money for teachers and student

organizations, as well as more lunch subsidies and transportation subsidies for students (*New

York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). Student activists in the coalition encouraged

their peers to continue at their individual schools whatever form of protest would foster resource

mobilization and give momentum to their cause (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*,

1970b).

In addition, looking to gain the full attention of the New York City Board of Education,

the NYCHSC organized mass student participation in Board of Education meetings as well as a

demonstration at City Hall (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Pack Rat*,

1970b). Such actions demonstrate that this student organization was very committed to engaging

in contentious politics and fighting for educational reform. These intentional activists, like their

peers in California, Texas, and Maryland, were integral components to the youth empowerment

social movement that was beginning to take shape. Student organizations like the New York City

High School Coalition were part of this social movement because it was engaged in resource mobilization and focused on contentious politics. Student activists created their various student organizations to mobilize the power of a unified student force that shared a passionate desire to gain greater student rights and prove that students were educational reformers.

On February 26th 1970, student activists demonstrated once again their commitment to educational reform by attending a Board of Education meeting with a document containing their proposed "Student Bill of Rights" (*Daily Planet*, 1970b; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). At the meeting, students demanded that the school board adopt a student bill of rights to ensure that "students' constitutional rights are protected from abusive and ignorant administrators, who are unaware of or fail to accept the fact that students do have constitutional protections" (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b, p.3). The Student Bill of Rights that was being promoted included the following major demands: "students shall be free from discrimination" and "students shall be free from the illegal use of police"; student activists demanded an end to the tracking system as well as the prohibition by the Board of Education of the use of automatic suspensions against high school students (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.5). It is important to note that all of the requested rights had roots in other efforts by student activists to produce change in their high schools. Many of these proposals had been printed in underground newspapers, presented to school administrators by their own students, as well as expressed to board members in previous Board of Education meetings (*Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). Student activists took very seriously their attempts to engage in educational reform and seemingly took every opportunity to push their proposals into the meeting rooms and planning committees of administrators and educational reformers.

By the 1970s, many student activists and their respective organizations had become very effective in their ability to mobilize their resources and attract a large number of supporters to their most important events. As a result, the February 26 board meeting drew the attention of over 500 people as well as the presence of a very large number of police officers stationed outside the building (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Perhaps overwhelmed by the number of high school students who attended the meeting seeking a turn to speak to the board, or, as some students suggested, "out of fear of being convinced to doing the right thing" the Board of Education decided to cut short the meeting (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.5). However, according to all reports the meeting and the discussion was never rescheduled by the board (*Daily Planet*, 1970c; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c).

This reaction by the Board of Education to refuse to discuss on record the educational reform proposals of students was par for the course, but it did not deter the conviction of student activists. To many student activist veterans, according to David Goldsmith, it was clear that, "the board had an entrenched and genuine opposition to the proposals for genuine freedom in the city's schools" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.5). The NYCHSC called a meeting a week after the board meeting to push forward with their student bill of rights by gaining the support of the public (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Student activists agreed that it was important to seize the moment and continue to lobby the board for educational reform. Many activists described themselves as "excited and overjoyed" about the possibility of achieving such reforms, as "the elimination of the general course of study" or "stopping administrators from censoring a student's right to express their opinion" (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c, p.3). As a student organization the NYCHSC demonstrated the ability of intentional activists to unite in their fight for educational reform and, as a collective, place immense pressure on school administrators and policy makers.

However, the student rights coalition that was mobilized in New York City in 1970 was not fully unified. The division that developed in this organization mirrored the rift that existed between intentional and radical activists. Both types of student activists agreed regarding the ideology of student rights and student empowerment. However, because of the difference in priorities, where intentional activists favored producing change in schools first and radical activists desired creating changes in society, a debate emerged in the NYCHSC regarding the direction of the organization. Intentional activists like Mike Wesiman, a member of the High School Student Mobilization Committee, argued "our aim is to deal with the Board of Ed on any level" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.6). Intentional activists wanted to change schools from the inside, through the adoption of certain rights and laws and the removal of other policies and administrative powers. However, radical activists like Larry Adelman, a member of the High School Student Union, argued, "principals don't want us to have rights" and therefore advocated that students seek to create their own academic institutions (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4). Radical activists wanted to seek educational reform by going outside the walls of the school and favored educational proposals that cut out dealing with school administrators and school board members. Many radical activists believed student activists should abandon traditional schools by building their own schools and creating their own educational courses (*Observer*, 1970a; 1970b; *Fusion*, circa 1970s; *The Probe*, 1971; *New Expression*, 1977).

The debate over direction of the New York City High School Coalition played out in underground newspapers. Intentional activists, like Mike Weisman, argued "if negotiations prove fruitless we'll use other means. At the same time we're negotiating, we'll be mobilizing in the schools for physical support to show just how powerful the school coalition is" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.6). Some radical activists believed efforts to create school policies that require approval

by local school boards was "liberal bullshit" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.4); some even argued that taking these actions was equivalent to a cooptation of the student movement (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). These radical activists argued school administrators and school policies could not be reformed unless there was a change in the way society, lawmakers, and adults in general viewed teens. Some radical activists wanted the NYCHSC to join the fight to end oppression of not just high school students, but all people (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c; *Pack Rat*, 1970b).

This division ultimately led to the New York City High School Coalition being dissolved; however, a delayed victory was achieved in their fight for a student's bill of rights. Seymour P. Lachman served as Commissioner of the New York City Board of Education during the battle for a student bill of rights (Lachman and Polner, 1970). Lachman took part in the school board meetings where members of the NYCHSC presented their proposal for students' rights, and eventually he became convinced by the arguments that were presented by this student organization (Lachman and Polner, 1970). Lachman, in *How Much Freedom For High School Students,* explained that the Board of Education was determined to create a proposal that "would permit peaceful protests, nonviolent dissent, and significant reform within the system" as well as offer support for administrators and educators so as to maintain balance in high schools (Lachman and Polner, 1970, p.170). As a result the board passed the document, *Rights and Responsibilities of Senior High School Students*, which outlined eight rights guaranteed high school students and spelled out two overarching responsibilities and expectations (Lachman and Polner, 1970).

Six of the eight rights outlined by the Board of Education document, *Rights and Responsibilities of Senior High School Students*, reflected educational proposals frequently articulated by intentional and radical activists (Lachman and Polner, 1970). For instance, Lachman and the Board of Education agreed with student activists by declaring that "#4. Students may exercise their constitutionally protected rights of free speech and assembly." The rights included permitting students "to distribute literature on school property at specified locations and times designated" (Lachman and Polner, 1970, p.173). In addition the Board of Education affirmed student desires to eliminate dress codes (#6), abolish censorship of school sponsored student created newspapers (#3 and 4), as well as provide a hearing for any student within five days of their suspension (Lachman and Polner, 1970). Even during its short existence the NYCHSC was able to effectively utilize contentious politics to push the Board of Education towards establishing a list of student's rights.

Limits of Student Organizations

Student organizations were not always successful in resource mobilization. Apathy was a major obstacle in the goal of recruitment of students as activists (*Pack Rat*, 1969; *Plain Brown Watermelon*, 1969; *Beverly Stash*, 1971; *FPS*, 1975d). According to Richard Estes and Dina Schrievek, student writers for *Do It*, "it seems our greatest opponent (as Shakespeare once noted) is ourselves. Our own apathy, students not caring, not interested in fighting to bring out change" (*Do It*, 1971, p.4). A similar sentiment was expressed by intentional activists writing in Baton Rouge, LA; Philadelphia, PA; New York City, NY; El Paso, TX among others (*Thoughts*, circa 1960s; *The Word*, 1970a; *Renegade*, 1972). Leaders for the Berkeley HSSU along with student activists in Texas, Michigan, and Illinois used their underground newspapers to express frustration with their peers who were reportedly too comfortable with compromises and minor

victories such as abolishing dress codes (*Pack Rat*, 1969; *Plain Brown Watermelon*, 1969; *Alternative*, 1970a; *Rebel's Voice*, 1971b). As high school activists were able to enact educational reforms, many would find it more difficult to get their peers to stay interested in future protests. In an ironic fashion, successes by student activists begot greater student apathy, which made resource mobilization an even more challenging task.

Student activists were aware of the deleterious impact that apathy had on their social movement but division existed over how best to counter it. For some activists, apathy from their peers was the result of ignorance; these activists believed some high school students simply were not aware of events that were occurring beyond their neighborhood (*We're Not Gonna Take It*, 1971c; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *FPS*, 1975c; *Philos*, 1975d). These activists suggested that greater efforts be made towards mass-distributing informational leaflet issues. This strategy was championed by *FPS* during the 1970s; but even this organization underwent a lengthy debate before deciding on this tactic (*FPS*, 1970a). Another approach for countering apathy was to organize larger and louder demonstrations and rallies so as to peak the curiosity of apathetic students (*The Word*, 1970c; *Rebel's Voice*, 1971c; *The Red Tide*, 1974b).

However, the Bay Area HSSU in 1969 tried to use this second approach unsuccessfully in an attempt to mobilize supporters for an anti-Vietnam war protest (*Pack Rat*, 1969b). Members of Bay Area HSSU were collaborating in an effort to increase student protests at Hayward High School. The data suggest student activists decided that they could get students from local schools to walk out as well as join with individuals participating in an anti-Vietnam war protest (*Pack Rat*, 1969b). It is not clear how many schools or students actually participated in the actual protests, but there is evidence that suggests that there was a low turnout from students at Hayward (*Pack Rat*, 1969b). Student activists expressed frustration in the *Pack Rat*

about recruitment in Hayward High School by stating that "the HSSU here has been attempting to gather student support for the Moratoriums, but due to the widespread apathy among the students, very few people walked out of school" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.16). Despite the coordinated attempts by multiple high school student unions, student activists were not able to attract a substantial number of Hayward high students. Student apathy was a tremendous challenge for many activists focused on resource mobilization, but it was not the only one that existed.

Interference by school administrators was another obstacle that impeded student activists' efforts at resource mobilization. Underground newspapers in Covington, Kentucky; Shreveport, Louisiana; Detroit, Michigan; and Bronxville, New York dedicated almost entire issues to discuss the plethora of ways school administrators impeded student activists' recruitment efforts (*Thoughts*, circa 1960s; *Renegade*, 1971a; *Student Voice*, 1971; *The Underground Railroad*, 1973c). These activists shared similar stories of school administrators conducting hall sweeps looking for anyone with a copy of an underground paper and either confiscating the paper or threatening the student with suspension for reading it or both (*Thoughts*, circa 1960s; *Renegade*, 1971a; *Student Voice*, 1971; *The Underground Railroad*, 1973c). Students at Mt. Vernon High, in New York, as well as their peers in Detroit and Shreveport, reported in their underground newspapers that some administrators would stand in front of meeting doors (if an information session meeting was held in school) and "greet" students (*Thoughts*, circa 1960s; *Renegade*, 1971a; *Student Voice*, 1971). It is clear that the objective of such actions was to deter students from learning more about student activism or the underground newspapers. One impact of such actions was that many student activists elected to conduct their meetings and recruitment sessions off-campus.

However, apathy and administrative interference did not stop student activists and high school student unions from moving forward with their efforts to form a national organization of high school student activists. In 1970 intentional activists in the Berkeley/Bay Area of California attempted to organize a June 20-27 "conference for a national high school student union" (letter to *CHIPS* from the Berkeley HSSU, 04/23/1970). The purpose of the conference was to "set up a national office and create a national organization of students for change" (letter to *CHIPS* from the Berkeley HSSU, 03/01/1970). The effort to organize this conference included intentional activists from New York City and Madison, Wisconsin, as well as local activists in the California region (letter to *CHIPS* from the Berkeley HSSU, 03/01/1970). According to Gary Wilson, a student activist at Bronx High School of Science in New York, "if we form a national organization of student activists we will have the power to directly attack state education codes and hit at the heart of the system" (*Daily Planet* letter to *CHIPS,* 4/23/1970). According to Eric Greg, an editor for the *Pat Rack*, the national high school conference "would prove that high school students could work cooperatively without adult guidance . . . we would prove that students are united and cannot be divided" (*Pat Rack* letter to *CHIPS*, 1971b, p.1).

High School Student Union National Conference

Intentional activists in the Bay Area HSSU used the *Pack Rat* along with *CHIPS* to promote the national conference (*FPS*; 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1970b; Letter to *CHIPS* from the HSSU, 04/23/1970). In the September issue of *FPS*, high school activists celebrated the news of their first national conference[4]. The 50 student activists that participated agreed that their activism should be based on achieving a broader reform that even extended beyond the school walls: "we simply cannot spend all our time hassling about length of sideburns while Black

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[4] No information was found that identified the specific date or the exact location of the conference.

Panthers are systematically shot down in the streets" (*FPS,* 1970d, p.9). In addition, student activists agreed that *FPS* would remain the main method for student activists, and their organizations to communicate with each other. Even though the activists turned down the opportunity to create a national student activists organization from fear that such a group would be bogged down with nothing but bureaucratic issues, they were able to demonstrate that high school students were organized, committed, and in many ways united. The fifty high school students present at the conference represented only a small portion of the larger movement of millions of youth. Even though the student activists present at this conference decided not to establish a formal national organization for high school activists, their meeting was evidence that in June, 1970, the Youth Empowerment social movement had fully emerged.

CHAPTER 4:RADICAL ACTIVISTS

Radical Activists: Goals and Means

Radical activists directly connected their own struggle as high school students with the larger struggle for freedom from oppression that was pervasive in the 1960s and 1970s. According to the writers of *The Word,* in a lengthy article titled "Learn Something: Boycott School," student activists proclaimed, "We all realize that schools have little to do with learning, but just knowing that isn't enough. While you're sliding through high school, doing only what it takes to get by, people all over the world are struggling to live" (*The Word,* 1970c, p.6). According to radical student activists, the fight for freedom in other countries impacted the high school struggle for liberation in America. As stated by writers in *The Word*, "their fight is yours. What happens in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa will affect everyone's future" (*The Word,* 1970c, p.6). Therefore this study contends that radical activists were high school students who argued that the primary objective of their activism was to impact positively the world that existed outside of the school walls. Furthermore, radical activists believed that addressing some global issues would spur the reforms to high schools that intentional activists wanted.

Regardless of geographical region, radical activists were focused on addressing three major *global* issues[5], 1-ending the war in Vietnam; 2-fighting against oppression of individuals by the government; 3-countering racism (and to a lesser extent sexism and ageism) (*The Midnight Special*, 1971c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Rag*, 1974c). Almost every newspaper examined in my study that was published during the 1970s invested time in

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[5] Since the focus of this dissertation is on understanding how high school students used activism to engage in educational reform it was important to minimize the discussion of topics such as the Vietnam War and Racism. My research focuses primarily on the second global issue because of how strongly radical activists connected the topic to their effort to produce educational reform.

connecting the Vietnam War, government oppression, and racism to the world of high school students. For instance, a radical high school activist in California argued, "as high school students, and as future workers, soldiers, artists, poets, and technicians of America, we are beginning to understand that our struggle to gain control of our educational destinies is not the only fight we have to engage in, nor is it a fight to be fought by high school students alone" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.3). Unlike their intentional activist peers, there was no evidence to suggest that geography (where students lived) influenced the issues that concerned radical students most.

The reasoning radical activists used to justify their interest in global events was that such issues resulted from a grand system of oppression. According to radical activists, the US political and economic system was built to uphold racism and classism; as a result, the American educational system was designed to indoctrinate high school students with racist and classist viewpoints so as to protect the political and economic system from any real critical examination (*The Midnight Special*, 1971c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Rag*, 1974c). Radical activists argued that educational reform could only be achieved by targeting the inequalities that existed in the political and economic structure of society. As stated by Michael Chusid, "Changing one school's racist curriculum does not hurt the racist police structure . . . or challenge the capitalist system that is benefited by slave-wage labor" (*The Midnight Special*, 1971d, p.6). For many radical activists, high schools were "just another site of oppression," and as such many believed that fighting for policy shifts in schools was "meaningless if the larger oppressive system stays intact" (*The Red Tide*, 1975b, p.2). The high school students who were radical activists wanted to reform the legal, military, political, and economic systems to prevent the further denial of rights to people based on age, sex, skin color, social status, or beliefs (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973a; *Probe*, 1974b; *FPS*, 1975a; *The Chronicle of*

Current Events, 1975a). After such reforms occurred, these activists believed that the impact of their fight would spur reforms in the educational system.

Radical activists viewed school administrators and high schools as just another site in the struggle of liberation. In the minds of many radical activists, contentious politics were needed in order to overcome the tools of oppression that had been passed down from federal law enforcement to school administrators (*The Midnight Special*, 1970b; *Red Army*, 1971d; *The Word*, 1970b; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Rag*, 1974c). The frustration radical activists felt towards school administrators was best summarized as follows: "The bosses [administrators] are making sure we have neither the time nor the energy to rise up and fight the real enemy. They realize that when students become hip to their tricks, we will organize ourselves, overthrow them, and they will lose their power. Schools will no longer be the breeding ground for a racist, sexist, money-hungry capitalist society! WE MUST REALIZE! WE MUST OVERTHROW!" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.1). However, what radical activists wanted to overthrow was more than just the educational system; it was the court system, the political-law making and law enforcement structure of government (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Rag*, 1974c).

Radical activists believed that there was no such thing as a "school problem"; all problems that were found in schools were problems that originated in society (*The Minor's Lamp*, 1969a; *Alternative*, 1970a; *The Midnight Special*, 1971d; *Quack* 1971a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a). Underground newspapers in the 1970s echoed the argument of radical activists as many papers attempted to convince high school students that they should no longer view their schools as independent from the rest of society. The problems in high schools

mirrored the problems in society; as a result, high school students, including African Americans, Mexican-Americans, and other oppressed peoples, were denied the power to act for themselves (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, *Individual,* 1970a; *Ball and Chain*, 1971; *Strawberry Fields*, 1971). Numerous articles published in underground newspapers reflected the fact that radical activists were aware of the social problems of racism, sexism, discrimination, and economic oppression (*Alternative*, 1970a; *The Midnight Special*, 1971d; *Red Army*, 1971c; *FPS*, 1975c). Many radical activists cited these social problems as evidence that the problems that existed in high schools were not unique to the academic institutions.

Radical activists engaged in this effort because they wanted to convince their intentional activist peers that addressing issues outside the school would spur the educational reforms they all desired. According to students at *The Chronicle of Current Events,* "Imprisonment of just people," corrupt and abusive leaders "all are found in schools and society" (*The Chronicle of Current Events,* 1974b, p.3). For some radical activists, it was absurd to fight for only educational reform (*The Minor's Lamp*, 1969b; *The Rag*, 1972b; *Logos*, 1973a; *FPS*, 1974a), for these radical activists you must "change society, fight for global struggle . . . if you want to change the schools" (*FPS*, 1975b, p.22). These radical activists argued that more reform in the school would not alter high schools; they conceded that it might influence the actions of a few administrators here and there but for the most part they remained convinced that revolutionary, radical change in the social structure was the best way to produce lasting and meaningful change in schools (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973a; *Probe*, 1974b; *FPS*, 1975a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a).

Yet, this does not mean that radical activists saw their battle as different from intentional activists. On the contrary, many radical activists believed that changing the minds of young people who would become global leaders went hand in hand with addressing global issues (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *The Word*, 1970a; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1974a; *The Rag*, 1974c). According to Bill Mitchell, a high school student at Oak Hill High School in Illinois, "We must fight for our opportunity to shape our future by educating ourselves. The stuff in our schools now are [sic] not designed to help us better know our Brothers and Sisters in other lands . . . our people are the only ones who can really shape a better tomorrow" (*The Midnight Special*, 1971g, p.3). These radical students demanded that students become better prepared for addressing global issues by taking pertinent courses (*Renegade*, 1971).

In defining radical activists it is important to recognize that even though they were focused on achieving reform on a global scale they were always willing to engage in local battles over student rights. In examining radical activist proposals for educational reform a common theme emerged; they wanted the inclusion of students in all policy decisions. Radical activists were committed unfailingly to developing a national Youth Empowerment Movement that was welcoming of all students. Radical activists in Detroit, Michigan, expressed a strong desire to work alongside their peers regardless of their differences as long as all members agreed that "oppression wherever it is must be fought . . . we as high school students must take part in combating unjust and abusive treatment of our brothers and sisters" (*FPS*, 1975b, p.24). In El Paso, Texas, radical student activists writing in *The Word* proclaimed "No longer are we able to accept blindly the dictates of a government which no longer sees any goal beyond its own preservation. We are America's youth. We are the new oppressed minority, white and black alike. We share the same fight against the same enemy" (*The Word, 1970a*, p.3). My

examination of underground newspapers reveals that despite certain differences in agenda between radical and intentional activists, the former was more than willing to aid in the efforts of the latter.

My analysis of underground newspapers suggests a difference in the ways in which intentional and radical activists prioritized their use of protest tactics. Graham (2006) argued that, in contrast to radical activists, some student activists favored attempting to meet and negotiate with school administrators before electing to engage in a walk-out, sit-in, or rally (2006). My study found that radical activists believed that direct confrontation, vis-à-vis mobilizing students into demonstrating their unity and willingness to take action, was the first and best way to challenge the authority of school leaders, government officials, and the police (*Little Red School House*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *FPS*, 1973a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a). While there was a difference in priority, by the 1970s intentional and radical activists often cooperated.

For example, protests that involved more radical tactics such as walking out were at times planned jointly by intentional and radical activists (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *FPS*, 1970c; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *The Midnight Special*, 1970d; *The Red Tide*, 1974a). Still, the shared use of tactics did not always imply a shared vision. Unlike their intentional activist peers, many radical activists did not believe that high schools operated by their present administrations could properly design or staff educational courses focused on inspiring revolution (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Renegade*, 1972c; *FPS*, 1973c; *High School Action*, 1974b). Therefore, radical activists demanded the opportunity to create new schools designed specifically for liberation education.

More information regarding this effort by radical activists to establish alternative schools will be presented later.

Youth Empowerment Social Movement

At the start of this project, I anticipated finding that high school student activists had developed their own social movement around the mid 1970s. However, my research reveals that high school activists had established the core element of a social movement—group of individuals who are challenging authority and driven by a shared ideology—sooner than I had thought. Even in the late 1960s, many high school activists were already using resource mobilization and contentious politics to draw attention to their newly developed youth empowerment social movement. An increase in the feeling of overwhelming frustration by many more high school students was the primary factor that spurred the movement, coupled with the escalation of concern by youth over the proliferation of war and oppression. Intentional activists, who were *willing* to negotiate with school administrators and *use* the structures for dissent that were available in schools (e.g., participating in student government or attending school board meetings), experienced road block after road block with this tactic. These challenges spurred some to begin seeking the advice of their peers in other schools, districts, cities, and even states and eventually to develop a network of student activists. These students were no longer interested in simply asking for permission to protest; they were committed to asserting their voice and mobilizing as many of their peers as possible.

From their effort, the 1970s witnessed the emergence of radical activists and the Youth Empowerment social movement. The single most important structural distinction between the activism of the 1960s and the Youth Empowerment social movement that took place in the 1970s was the existence of *CHIPS* and *FPS*. These two organizations were evidence of this social

movement having a structure in place to communicate and organize across the nation. *CHIPS* and *FPS* would allow student activists to read about the experiences (success and setbacks) of their peers, as well as examine the ideology and values of other activists as a way to develop or sharpen their own. The objective of this social movement was not to change policies in schools; the movement had a much grander, more radical objective. The Youth Empowerment social movement wanted to end the oppression of young people that existed in schools and society. It targeted not just school policies enforced by administrators but also laws and the police. Therefore, the Youth Empowerment social movement best embodied the ideology of radical activists because it represented high school activists concern with issues that occurred outside of as well as inside school walls.

Investigation of the Youth Liberation Archives revealed that the Youth Empowerment social movement shared many of the same characteristics as other social movements. Like most social movements, this youth movement used resource mobilization and contentious politics. Like other social movements, it was difficult to label the exact start date of this one. Social movement scholars argue that determining a starting point for social movements is difficult because almost all social movements start below the surface and often emerge in multiple locations (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Tarrow 1998). This theory aligns with the findings in my research. Almost all underground newspapers included in my study advocated youth empowerment in their inaugural issue; however, naming the exact moment at which the movement started is made difficult by the diversity of start dates that existed among underground newspapers. For instance, underground newspapers such *Pack Rat* began publishing in 1969, while those such as *Do It* did not publish their inaugural issue until 1972. Others began even

later, such as *Stoneroller,* which started in 1976. The earliest inaugural issue available in the Youth Liberation Archives is a 1968 edition of *Alternative.*

Student activists expressed at different times many of the core beliefs that unified and directed the movement. Students in Bechtelsville, PA, expressed in December 1969, with the publication of the first issue of *Minor's Lamp*, their desire to publish and distribute newspapers that were critical of the schools and government. Their desire would not be expressed by staff writers for *Red Army* until its third issue in March 1971 (*Minor's Lamp*, 1969a; *Red Army*, 1971c). The early rumblings of incidental activists, which for the most part were overlooked, gave way to the protests of intentional activists and eventually to the demands of radical activists. Therefore, what some school leaders and researchers saw as isolated protests by young people or "flashes of frustration followed by angry walkouts and incredulous demands" (*Vacca*, 1971, p.8), were actually the first signs of a vibrant and dynamic social movement of high school students. High school activism of the 1950s and 1960s had by the 1970s developed into a social movement that shared a common ideology (fighting oppression), common tactics (using sit-ins, walkouts, rallies etc) and used underground newspapers to engage in resource mobilization and contentious politics.

The Youth Empowerment social movement that came to fruition in the 1970s could be traced directly to the agenda and actions of the plethora of high school student unions that existed across the nation. Members of the Berkeley High School Student Union (HSSU) advocated the establishment of a national social movement of high school activists by stating, "It is to our mutual benefit and survival that we unite with other movements throughout the community and the country. Our struggle is theirs and their struggle is ours. We must be

prepared to support the struggles of high school students everywhere. If we support each other, we can win. The key to ultimate victory lies in our ability to unite in a common struggle for common goals." (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.3) The student writer went on to state that, "the HSSU recognizes that above all 'the important thing is to pull yourself up by your own hair; to turn yourself inside out and see the world with fresh eyes'" (*Pack Rat*, 1969a, p.16). For many student organizations committed to activism, underground newspapers were critical in encouraging high school students to reexamine the world around them. Student organizations such as the High School Student Union (HSSU), Radical Student Union (RSU), and Organization for Student Rights (OSR) directly attached themselves to an underground newspaper such as *The Rag*, *Pack Rat* and *The Word*, in order to widely disseminate the message of the youth empowerment social movement.

The tenets promoted by the Youth Empowerment social movement reflect an amalgamation of the ideas presented by various student organizations, and activists that were active at the time. The intentional and radical activists that led the Youth Empowerment social movement were unified in their opposition to oppression of young people (*Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973; Graham, 2006). In their underground newspapers, oppression manifested itself in many forms. However, student activists had specific goals that they believed would aid in fighting oppression. My examination of the *CHIPS* collection of underground newspapers identified three goals that were commonly expressed in an overwhelming number of student papers. The Youth Empowerment social movement strived to: 1. end the use of abuse of authority by school administrators and police officers; 2. guarantee the constitutional rights of young people; 3. gain greater autonomy (i.e., effort by student activists to create their own schools or organizations). Each goal will be discussed in greater length in the remaining pages of

this chapter. But it is important to examine how the Youth Empowerment social movement compares with some of the other large-scale social change movements that took place during the 1960s and 1970s.

Youth Empowerment Social Movement: In the Shadow with a Glowing Candle.

The Youth Empowerment social movement shared two political goals with the Civil Rights movement, a focus on constitutional rights and a desire to end the abuse of power by local authorities. A cornerstone objective of the Civil Rights movement was the struggle to achieve greater legal protection for the voting rights of African-Americans (Carson, et al., 1999; Riches, 2004). The Civil Rights movement pushed to the forefront a national discourse about ensuring that all American citizens were guaranteed their constitutional rights (Howard, 1974, Carson, et al., 1999; Riches, 2004). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and The Voting Rights Act of 1965 served as examples of the ways in which social movements could achieve tangible and substantial success in the struggle for legal rights. These victories achieved national recognition and galvanized other movements with similar agendas to press forward with their struggles (Kerr, 1970; Altbach, 1972; Lipset, 1993; Carson, et al., 1999). In the 1970s, student activists in the Youth Empowerment social movement hoped to achieve similar legal success as they waged their own battle for constitutional rights.

An overwhelming desire that was expressed during the Youth Empowerment social movement was the protection of students' First Amendment rights. The concept of youth empowerment is grounded in the belief that young people have constitutional rights and that schools cannot deny them such rights (Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006). These constitutional rights included guarantee of students' freedom of speech and press, which allowed

students to publish their underground newspapers. Just as Civil Rights activists had relied on the 14th Amendment to argue for their protection of voting rights on the local level (Lipset, 1993; Carson, et al., 1999; Riches, 2004; Hall, 2005), radical high school activists argued that the 14th Amendment guaranteed all of their constitutional rights both in and out of schools (*The Rag*, 1971; Howard, 1974; *FPS*, 1975b; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975b). The writers for *Minor's Lamp* identified some of the rights the social movement was focused on by asserting "we demand that students do have the right to organize political groups, hold assemblies and demonstrations, wear buttons and armbands" (*The Minor's Lamp*, 1968a, p.8). High school activists in their fight for youth empowerment, taking note from the struggle and success of the Civil Rights movement, correctly interpreted the 14th Amendment as a law that had the potential to protect the constitutional rights of citizens from abuse by any local authority (Schneider, 1970; Hall, 2005).

Local authorities, whether it was school boards, mayors or governors, draft-boards or the police, were seen often as ruling without the consent of the governed not only by activists in the Civil Rights movement and the anti-war movements but also by activists in the Youth Empowerment social movement (Lipset, 1993; Hall, 2005). Civil rights activists in their various protests challenged the authority of established government and political leaders who supported the policies of Jim Crow and segregation (Lewis, 1998; Riches 2004). The practice of contentious politics towards local authorities remained as civil rights groups such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) began to adopt ever widening agendas in the 1960s and 1970s (Kerr, 1970; Howard 1974; Carson, et al. 1999; Hall, 2005). In the case of the anti-war movement, in addition to condemning the national policy of war in Vietnam, protesters attacked symbols of the military

that existed in the neighborhoods such as army recruitment offices (Hall, 2005). Similarly, intentional and radical activists engaged in contentious politics against the authority of school boards and other school leaders as a tactic for securing constitutional rights for youth (Birmingham 1970; Libarle & Seligson 1970; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006).

All three social movements shared the view that many of the governing bodies in America functioned as oppressive agencies. From the 1950s through the 1970s, this rhetoric of oppression was used often to characterize the denial of basic human rights (i.e., freedom of expression, voting rights). Many of the individuals who participated in the counter-culture social movements that dominated the era shared a view of America as a land where power and privilege was denied to certain individuals based on their race, sex, or social status (Howard, 1974; Lewis, 1998). For participants in the anti-Vietnam War movement, the American government not only ignored the personal beliefs and values of some of its own citizens by instituting a draft, it also promoted the denial of human rights to citizens of other nations (Hall, 2005). For youth activists, high schools were "factories of oppression" (*The Red Tide* Letter to *CHIPS*, 1975c, p.1); hence no legitimate fight against oppression could be waged unless high schools were targeted. Intentional and radical activists across the nation believed that when they exercised their constitutional First Amendment rights school leaders countered with suspensions (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *FPS*, 1975a; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975b). As the 1970s progressed, student activists' frustration with school administrators was transformed into fierce anger over the use of police officers to break up student led protests.

The Youth Empowerment social movement shared aspects of its agenda with Civil Rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement. Many scholars have discussed the strong,

though at times strained, relationship between the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement. What united these two movements was the shared view of American government as an oppressive force and their common critique of hypocrisy in the American government's actions (Howard, 1974; Lewis, 1998; Hall, 2005). Examining underground newspapers reveals that radical activists viewed many of the governing bodies in America as hypocritical, and this critique extended to school officials such as school board members and principals as well as elected officials, including congressional members and the president. Radical activists pleaded with their high school peers to participate in anti-war rallies by stating that "the actions of this government to oppress our Brothers and Sisters across the world is just as painful as what has happened to us in our schools and neighborhoods" (*FPS*, 1970b, p.20). Radical activists used underground newspapers to continually emphasize the relationship between US actions in the Vietnam War and the treatment of youth in the states. As a result, the Youth Empowerment social movement maintained an active role in the Anti-Vietnam War movement.

To a certain extent, the Youth Empowerment social movement existed in the shadow of both the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement. Many scholars agree that this was in part due to media attention paid larger movements, as well as to the fact that the Civil Rights movement pre-dates the high-school student-led struggle (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2005). The Vietnam War was a modern conflict that captured America's attention because in fact it was a global conflict that transformed young citizens into armed soldiers. High school activists attracted some national prominence for their protests (Graham, 2005), but throughout the 1960s and 1970s their struggle would have to take a backseat to the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement (among other movements). The Youth Empowerment social movement was inspired by the ideologies, tactics and success (i.e. the

ability to mobilize massive rallies) of both the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement.

However, underground newspapers were not puppet organizations controlled by adults or civil rights groups such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) (Trump and Hunt, 1968; Erickson, et al., 1969; Wittes, 1970; Hoffman, 1972). Many school administrators attributed the explosion of social protests that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s to the outside influence of SDS members (Trump and Hunt, 1969; Erickson, et al., 1969). As stated by superintendent of New York City Schools, Bernard E. Donovan, in discussing the possibility of adults such as SDS members being in control of the Youth Empowerment Social movement, "There is too much printed material and general similarity for me to believe it is not being led by adults" (Pileggi, 1969, p.567). Historical evidence demonstrates that SDS members and high school activists shared political and social viewpoints and at times were involved in the same rallies (*The Rag*, 1971; *Red Army*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1975d; Graham, 2005). However, there was no evidence in any of the underground newspapers examined for this study to suggest that high school activist organizations (i.e., the High School Student Union) or any underground newspapers were controlled by adults. Furthermore, some scholars concur with my finding by stating that SDS was not involved actively in organizing any of the protests that occurred in high schools in the 1960s and 1970s (Pileggi, 1969; Howard, 1974).

High school activists were more connected to one another's organizations and newspapers than they were to civil rights groups. During the mid-to-late 1960s, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the SDS demonstrated a level of cooperation that was reflective of the relationship between the two movements (Lewis, 1998; Hall, 2005).

However, high school activist organizations did not take their direction from SNCC or SDS. Historical evidence suggests that high school activists in the 1960s and 1970s were committed to the idea of "by high school students, for high school students" (*The Red Tide*, 1974c, p.1). Because of this, resource mobilization was pivotal for high school students; several letters to *CHIPS* revealed that student activists depended on each other to acquire typewriters, ink, mimeograph machines and other materials for creating their underground newspapers (*Daily Planet* letter to *CHIPS*, circa 1960s; *Local Rocks* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970; *FPS*, 1975a; *The Red Tide* Letter to *CHIPS*, 1975b). High school activists exchanged ideas and discussed tactics for organizing protests, primarily with one another. During the Civil Rights movement, intentional and radical high school activists certainly held their own in terms of organizing and leading the Youth Empowerment Social movement, while at the same time operating their social movement mostly in the shadows of the Civil Rights movement.

My study indicates that the Youth Empowerment social movement lacked the organizational structure that typified the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement. All three social movements reflected the ability of everyday citizens to empower themselves and engage in grassroots activism by engaging in resource mobilization. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and SDS were two national organizations that emerged from the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement. Like HSSU, *CHIPS*, and *FPS*, these two organizations (SNCC and SDS) advocated that their members use contentious politics and challenge the authority of government officials. They all promoted successfully a formal declaration of beliefs and supported a reform agenda across their respective chapters.

However, the Youth Empowerment social movement was not able to develop an organization that was as highly structured as SNCC or SDS. Based on my study, neither *CHIPS* nor *FPS* was able to create a national conference that attracted members from across the United States. This was connected directly to their respective missions; both *CHIPS* and *FPS* functioned primarily as way for student activists to exchange ideas and stories. In the case of the HSSU, there is not enough evidence to suggest that it functioned as a hierarchal organization, in which a national leadership group communicated with regional chapters and held some authority to govern the regional sites, as SNCC or SDS. In 1970, during the first national conference organized by and for high school activists, student activists decided not to create a national organization (*FPS*, 1970e). Certainly, HSSU had chapters in high schools in cities throughout the United States, but it is unclear if the Berkeley HSSU, the founding chapter located in Berkeley, California, had any ability to influence the actions of a HSSU chapter in Baltimore, Maryland.

Another critical difference that existed between the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement and the Youth Empowerment social movement centered on youth activists fighting against "ageism." The overwhelming majority of supporters for the Civil Rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement were over the age of 18; while activists for either the Civil Rights movement or anti-Vietnam War movement could engage in debates and dialogue as activists and voters, the latter carrying legitimate political power, the vast majority of high school students did not have the ability to vote (Kerr, 1970; Hendrick and Jones, 1972). The status of "minor" further constrained the ability of many high school students to obtain jobs (making the task of operating underground newspapers much more difficult), or attend late school board meetings (due to curfew laws in many cities). Unlike for college activists, high school activists raising funds for their underground newspaper, or a student organization required

to some extent parental consent, this was a roadblock that often stopped youth activists in their

tracks (Pileggi, 1969; Hendrick and Jones, 1972). As a result, radical high school activists during

the 1960s and 1970s advocated an end to "ageism" as part of their movement's goals. Radical

activists included as part of their platform abolishing all laws and customs that deny young

people the right to control their future. Some radical activists even included a demand for the end

of ageism as part of their educational proposal (*FPS*, 1971a; *High School Action*, 1973a; *Rebels'*

Voice, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1975a).

Radical and intentional activists agreed that self-determination, or providing high school

students with the power to decide their experiences in high schools, was a major goal. According

to the writers of *The Bathroom Bomber*, "Out of the late 60s and early 70s came the cry for full

student rights. Some of your older brothers and sisters may have rallied under this cause as did

many of their youth of that time." The authors go on to state " we will make once more students

of this school and other schools realize that daily we are denied our constitutional and human

rights" (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b, p.1). The Youth Empowerment social movement that

developed in the shadow of the Civil Rights movement consisted of high school students

engaging in resource mobilization and forming student organizations committed to activism,

while using underground newspapers to fight for complete authority over their own lives.

Radical Activists Challenge Authority of Administrators and Police.
As student activism entered the 1970s, intentional activists gave way to radical activists,

who began to argue that both school administrators and police officers were oppressive forces

(*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Word,* 1970b; *The Rag*,

1974c). One important factor that spurred this shift from intentional to radical activists was the

increased frustration felt by high school students who wanted educational reform. By the 1970s

many of these student activists held a deep mistrust of school administrators. In contrast to their predecessors, radical activists argued that it was not just school administrators who opposed youth empowerment but law enforcement as well. A major reason for this shift in ideology was that many high school activists became exposed to global issues such as the Vietnam War, and connected the use of military force to oppress a group of people to their own experiences as students. High school activists' distrust of school authority that existed in the 1960s became a distrust of all authority a decade later. Radical activists challenged the hierarchy of authority that existed in society. They believed that the major role of school administrators and police officers was to punish high school students who did not adhere to school policies. Many radical activists argued that police officers and school administrators were simply enforcers of unjust laws, and believed that school administrators were no different from the police (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Rag*, 1974c). A plethora of underground newspapers referred to both administrators and the police as "pigs" (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1973b; *The Rag*, 1974c). The "pigs," according to many radical activists, were not interested in student empowerment but rather in hurting students and keeping students in "prison" (*FPS*, 1973b, p.3). The term "pig" in the era of the 1960s and 1970s was commonly used in reference to the police, and it conveyed a message of disgust. Therefore, the underground newspapers that referred to school administrators as "pigs" were promoting the viewpoint of radical activists that administrators were oppressive forces seeking to deny freedom to high school students.

In fact throughout the 1970s it became more and more common to find underground newspapers advocating the message that school administrators were responsible for the oppression of students (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The*

Rag, 1974c). Many radical and intentional activists argued that school administrators were unwilling to improve the poor quality of education found in their schools. According to writers at *The Word*, "the administrators don't do anything because they don't want to admit that there's anything to be done (this would be an admission of their ineffectiveness as administrators)" (*The Word,* 1970c p.1). This sentiment was shared almost across the board by newspapers published in the four geographic regions examined in this study.

Radical activists pointed to several common responses by school administrators and board members as a sign that there was no genuine intention to reform schools through cooperation: 1. the repeated process of stalling or failing to meet with student activists by school administrators and board members; 2. the ignoring of formal, typed, educational reform proposals by key policy makers; and 3. the repeated violation of students' constitutional rights by administrators (*The Midnight Special*, 1970a; *Beverly Stash*, 1971; *Red Army*, 1971a; *Renegade*, 1971c; *Pack Rat*, 1971b). Historical evidence indicates that many intentional activists became frustrated by these responses from school leaders and as a result spurred a growth in the number of radical activists (*Local Rocks*, 1970b; *I'm All Right*, 1970a; *Pack Rat*, 1971b; Graham, 2006).

By the 1970s radical activists represented the group of high school students who were no longer looking inside the schools for solutions to the problems that concerned them. A radical activist writer at *The Word*, described the educational plight that troubled many students by saying, "The schools are there. Fine. But something is wrong with them. The students aren't happy, neither are the teachers or administrators. But how do you change that? You can't rock the boat – they won't let you. But the boat is sinking. Do you holler for help? No, because everyone is on the boat. Do you swim for shore? No, because no shore is in sight. What do you

do? Simple: you tear up the boat and build a raft" (*The Word,* 1970c, p.2). This points to the main distinction between radical and intentional activists; intentional activists were willing to stay on the boat and continue to fight with administrators to rock the boat, whereas many radical activists were looking to build a new boat. They sought educational reforms that existed outside of the school walls.

Discipline in Schools: Use of Suspensions—Expulsion and Schools as Prisons
This section explores ways in which radical activists influenced underground newspapers by spurring a shift in how high schools were described. Radical activists began to portray high schools as prisons and school principals as wardens. This section will also compare and contrast the ways intentional and radical activists approached the use of suspensions by school administrators. Documents in the Youth Liberation Archives reveal that despite differences in the ways intentional and radical activists wanted to approach administrators' use of suspensions, both sides remained committed to resource mobilization and contentious politics. Accounts in various underground newspapers reveal that the school suspensions enacted by administrators strengthened the Youth Empowerment social movement. This occurred for two main reasons: 1. student activists were united by the fact they shared a common enemy (school administrators); 2. the use of suspensions underscored activists' message that administrators were oppressive and their continued use of them led to an increase in resource mobilization, specifically the ability to attract new students into the movement.

Schools as Prison
As the 1970s began, a shift occurred in the ways activists described high schools. Unlike intentional activists, who often regarded high schools as educational institutions, radical activists portrayed high schools as prisons. This direct reference was made in an overwhelming number of

newspapers examined in this study. For instance, in describing the actions of principals who had visited Berkeley High School, Jim Williams, a radical activist, wrote, "the principals came and they went. They went back to their own prisons all over the country to share with their fellow wardens and prison guards the experiences they had encountered and to relate their conclusions" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p.17). Throughout the 1970s, school administrators became closely identified with prison wardens and guards, and activists used their identification to drive home their argument about the use of oppressive tactics by school administrators. This analogy of school as prison was even displayed in the artwork of the *The Rag*. In the illustration (Figure 1) police officers are depicted with fishing nets attempting to capture students and send them to school, which is illustrated to resemble a prison (*The Rag*, 1972a, p.3). In the 1970s, radical activists dramatically changed the content of underground newspapers by connecting school leaders to a hierarchy of oppressive authority that included prisons, law enforcement and the national government.

Radical activists used the analogy of schools as prisons to argue that the school structure oppressed students and student rights. Underground newspapers described high schools as institutions that were totalitarian and racist, denying constitutional rights to its young occupants (*Alternative*, 1970b; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c; *High School Action*, 1974c). Many student activists argued that schools use armed police to protect the authority of the administration while abusing student rights (*The Vast Minority*, 1969a; *FPS*, 1975a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). In the 1970s, radical activists argued not just for the end of police presence in schools but also for an end to policies that denied students constitutional rights granted to adults (i.e., freedom of expression, freedom of press). Many student activists believed that discipline policies in schools, such as restricting students from leaving the school grounds during lunch

were draconian and treated students as criminals (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *FPS*, 1971a; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974b; *The Red Tide*, 1975b). The struggle for student rights that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s led to greater frustration as school leaders ignored or halted activist efforts for reform, which gave way to even more organized and larger student activist protests. However, very little changed as many administrators continued prohibiting the distribution of underground newspapers, suspending students for violations of school policies as well as hassling student activists. Student activists discussed these actions in their underground newspapers in an attempt to raise awareness and build solidarity around their cause.

Radical activists focused the prison-school analogy on school leaders' use of unfair punishments, comparing them to prison jailers. In the minds of both radical and intentional student activists, school leaders acted illegally in punishing or threatening students by suspension. Student activists were often suspended for aiding or being affiliated with activist organizations, distributing underground newspapers on school grounds or participating in walkouts or sit-ins. These actions certainly made it challenging to recruit students or mobilize a large number of supporters for an event. Activists set their own sights on curtailing any school leader's power to punish students unfairly; hence a wave of challenges faced school leaders, and radical activists led the charge.

The Youth Empowerment social movement demanded that school administrators treat students less like prisoners and more like adults. Intentional and radical activists often demanded that all school policies be published and made public so that students could examine the rules and be informed citizens (*Pack Rat*, 1969a; *The Paper*, 1969b; *The Word, 1970a*, *Screwdriver*, 1974, *FPS*, 1975a). According to staff members of the *Issue*, "These [dress] regulations are

arbitrary, spur-of-the-moment decisions of the administration, none of which are available in written form to the student" (*Issue,* 1970a, p.2.). Whereas intentional activists believed that such a policy shift could take place by demanding that school administrators publicize school rules, radical activists contended that the matter was larger than simple educational policy.

Radical activists believed that students were treated as prisoners in part because they were denied their constitutional rights granted by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments (*The Paper*, 1969a; *The Midnight Special*, 1971c; *Sphinx's Farrow*, 1973; *Renaissance II*, 1976). The Fifth Amendment guaranteed that all citizens receive a fair trial and that the federal courts adhere to specific procedural guidelines to protect citizens; the Fourteenth Amendment simply applied these same rights (along with others) to states (Garber, 1966; Schneider, 1970; Abbott, 1972). Radical activists wanted all adults, from school administrators to police officers, to treat high school students as citizens with Fifth Amendment protections. As a result, a popular educational reform proposed by radical activists was that administrators' grant students' greater due process. They argued that school administrators could not override the guarantee of fundamental fairness that was afforded to citizen's accused of a crime. In a fiercely written statement, radical activists in Bryan high school demanded that school administrators grant high school students equal protection of the law:

There is no justice in such dress regulations: students are regularly suspended or threatened with suspension for violating these unwritten regulations. And this constitutes a violation of 'equal protection of the law.' A violation because students remain American citizens when they enter the doors of their school and they remain entitled to the equal protection of the law (and due process) guaranteed in the 14th amendment to the Constitution. (*Issue,* 1970b, p.2.)
Radical activists wanted constitutional rights for high school students while intentional activists focused on fighting for student rights just in schools. Both recognized that youth empowerment

would not be possible until students were able to challenge or eliminate administrators' ability to enforce policies by suspending students at will.

Intentional and radical activists agreed that the use of suspensions by administrators were unlawful and abusive. They believed suspensions were used as a tool of control, one that served to threaten and harass any student who was even connected remotely to school activism (*The Vast Minority*, 1969a; *FPS*, 1970d; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974b; *The Red Tide*, 1975b; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Underground newspapers were important sites for students not only to publicize incidents where a student was suspended without just cause, but also to shed light on pending cases in hopes of mobilizing a quick and massive student response. In addition, both intentional and radical activists agreed that printing information in underground newspapers was an effective method for teaching their peers methods for handling administrators who threatened the use of suspensions (*FPS*, 1975d). Several underground newspapers went so far as to print articles detailing offenses for which students could not be punished by suspension (*The Rag*, 1972a; *The Word*, 1970a; *Screwdriver*, 1974). The issue of suspensions unified many student activists and provided moments when activists could attract sympathetic peers to participate in a rally or take part in a walk-out, therefore enhancing the ability of student activists to engage in resource mobilization.

As a result, the Youth Empowerment social movement gained momentum with administrators' continued use of suspensions. Several underground newspapers posted comments in their articles about suspension that was geared at motivating students who were not activists to join in the efforts of student activists (*Alternative*, 1970b; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970c; *High School Action*, 1974c; *FPS*, 1975a). Radical activists in their underground newspapers

often aligned suspensions to receiving a prison sentence. Both intentional and radical student activists took serious offense at the "imprisonment" of youth without a fair hearing or no discipline hearing at all, as well as the unjustified practice of suspending students on the "spot" without any warnings. The Youth Empowerment social movement was committed to abolishing these practices and as a result intentional and radical activists supported each other in their efforts to curtail the abusive use of suspensions.

However, high school activists were not always sure how to counter effectively the administrative power of suspensions. Numerous student newspaper editors wrote to *CHIPS* and *FPS* asking for legal advice regarding fighting school suspensions (*FPS*, 1970a; *Pack Rat* letter to *CHIPS*, 1970a; *FPS*, 1975b). For example, George Guzzardo, from *Logos*, wrote a letter to *CHIPS*, stating "we are eager to find out if you or any other paper out there has any suggestions for how we can avoid punishment for distributing our paper" (*Logos* letter to *CHIPS*, 1972c, p.1). Intentional activists and radical activists both agreed that school administrators abused their power to suspend students. However, examination of underground newspapers shows a distinction in how each group wanted to address what Rick Leo, a student writer for *Above a Whisper,* called "the most abusive force used to punish students" (*Above a Whisper*, 1970, p.5). Intentional activists wanted to limit school administrators' use of suspensions by enacting policies that made the process more equitable, whereas radical activists believed that the power to suspend students had no place in the hands of school administrators.

Throughout the 1960s and for much of the 1970s, intentional activists sought to call attention to their educational proposals, many of which focused on checking administrators' power to suspend students. Several different methods for achieving this goal were discussed in

underground newspapers, yet there were two reform proposals that proved to be popular. Some underground newspapers favored requiring a school board hearing before a student could be suspended (*The Word*, 1970d; *High School Action*, 1973b). Yet, most intentional activists favored creating student courts that would review student suspensions (*Pack Rat*, 1969; *The Rag*, 1971; *Observer*, 1970b; *The Midnight Special*, 1971d; *FPS*, 1975g). The goal for intentional activists was to ensure that students would have some ability to defend their actions before administrators handed out a suspension. Many intentional activists believed instituting a student court where students could appeal a suspension would give students a voice in the discipline process and ensure suspensions were justifiable. These proposals demonstrate how intentional activists sought educational reforms that worked within the present educational system. Throughout this period, intentional activists remained committed to this desire to modify the discipline system that was used in high schools by fighting for a more just process.

In contrast, radical activists like Larry Baddeur, a high school student in Durham High school in North Carolina, argued that "principals should be stripped of this right [to suspend students]" (*Uprising* , 1971, p.4). Radical activists argued that school administrators were part of an oppressive system that included members of the police and government officials. Many radical activists, like Robert Chavez (*The Word*), Greg Goeckner (*Logos*), and Glenn Arden (*Screwdriver*), used their underground newspaper to promote their belief that school administrators used suspensions as a way to dominate the actions of students, thus repressing student activism (*The Word*, 1970a; *Logos*, 1972b; *Screwdriver*, 1974). These activists contended that liberation of students meant, "eliminating the tools of domination that allowed them to keep us down," (*FPS*, 1975b, p.17). As a result, radical activists differed from

intentional activists, in that radical students believed that the use of suspensions had no place in high schools.

Underground newspapers charged that school administrators suspended students illegally. Intentional and radical activists across the nation encouraged students to contact their parents or even the local American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) office to challenge illegal suspensions (*Pack Rat*, 1969; *The Rag*, 1971; *The Midnight Special*, 1971b; *FPS*, 1975d). *The Rag* went so far as to cite the Berkeley school district policy regarding the use of suspensions, which stated that a student could be suspended only for "theft, or threat of theft, bodily harm or threat of bodily harm, arson, damage to school property or possession or sale of drugs" (*The Rag*, 1971, p.4). Intentional and radical activists wanted to put an end to this practice. Student writers dedicated several articles in *The Red Tide* to documenting the use of illegal suspensions by school administrators. Writers for *The Red Tide* noted that students were punished for actions such as "demoralizing staff members . . . truancy . . . using profanity . . . disrupting class . . . smoking on school grounds" (*The Red Tide*, 1974b, p.4). None of these offenses matched the criteria for suspension that the school district outlined, yet as intentional activists noted, "still, the administration breaks its own rules every day and suspends people all the time" (*The Red Tide*, 1974b, p.4).

Furthermore, radical activists contended that many administrators used their power of suspension to deny activists their constitutional rights (*Local Rocks*, 1971c; *FPS*, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971c). Students often argued that any suspension handed out by an administrator was unconstitutional because it punished students for using their constitutional rights. Students argued that their First Amendment right to free speech, press, assembly, as well as their Fifth

Amendment guarantee of due process, was repeatedly violated by school administrators who punished students for actions such as holding rallies in front of school grounds or publishing underground newspapers.

In Columbus, Ohio, high school activists were able to engage effectively in contentious politics and force several educational reforms with regards to suspensions. In 1974, nine high school students were suspended for behavioral misconduct (Thorum, 1977; Graham, 2006). However no students were provided an opportunity to testify or provide their side of the story before the suspensions were handed out. The students believed their constitutional rights were not protected and decided to legally challenge the authority of the school to suspend them without any form of a hearing. Their decision demonstrates that they were radical activists because they sought to use an institution outside of the educational system to foster change within their school system. The students were interested in seeking more than just a reform of school policy; they were also focused on legitimatizing their belief that high school students had constitutional rights.

The Ohio State Court ruled, in the case of *Goss v. Lopez* (1975), that the students' due process rights, as outlined by the Fourteenth Amendment, were violated by not providing a hearing to determine the student suspensions (Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). This ruling represented a significant victory for student activists. The Court's ruling echoed student activists' demands that before an administrator makes a suspension official students should be able to hear the charges, be presented with some of the evidence against them as well as offered an opportunity to defend their actions. By focusing on the bigger picture, these radical activists

gained constitutional rights for students. This legal victory led directly to reforms in the

educational policies that existed in high schools throughout Ohio.

Case Study: How Student Activists Engaged Administrators in Contentious Politics over the Issue of Suspensions.

Berkeley High (California) provides a major example of the ways in which intentional

activists worked to curtail abusive suspensions. In 1969, students at Berkeley High proposed a

plan for a "Student-Staff Court" that was approved by the school board (*The Rag*, 1971, p.1).

The purpose of the court was to "prevent unjust suspensions and other disciplinary actions taken

against students by the administration" (*The Rag*, 1971, p.1). The Student-Staff Court was

approved by the school board with the directive to serve as a panel for reviewing student appeals

if students believed that they were unjustly suspended (*The Rag*, 1971; 1971b). Even though the

Berkeley school board passed the Student-Staff Court in 1969, efforts to select members would

not begin until 1971. The main reason for the two-year delay was because of resistance by the

administration to allow election of student members to the court to occur (*The Rag*, 1971).

According to *The Rag*, "the court will take away the administration's total authority over

disciplinary actions. It will set up a system of justice based on a trial by a student's peers" (*The

Rag*, 1971, p.1). However, intentional activists used their underground newspaper to mobilize

student protest, which forced the administration finally to allow elections for the Student-Staff

Court (*The Rag*, 1971). *The Rag*, in 1973, even dedicated an entire issue to promoting the

viewpoints of various students who wanted to be elected to the Student-Staff Court, as expressed

in *The Rag*, "this court was created to override the administration . . . it is important that we keep

it going by electing the individuals who will best serve the students at BHS" (*The Rag*, 1973,

p.2).

In 1974, Joel Andreas, one of the editors of *The Rag*, decided to challenge a recent suspension he received by appealing to the Student-Staff Court (*The Rag*, 1974). According to the Rag, Joel was suspended for "defiant behavior and profane language" during an encounter with a school administrator (*The Rag*, 1974, p.2). The Student-Staff Court, with its six student members and 5 staff members, listened to the arguments presented by both parties and even allowed several other writers for *The Rag* to present evidence. Staff members of *The Rag* focused their testimony on proving that there was an administrative pattern of suspending students illegally "in retaliation for their political activities in the past" (*The Rag*, 1974, p.2). As a counter, the administration cited California state education law that prohibited students from engaging in disrespectful behavior towards a school administrator (*The Rag*, 1974). In the end, the Student-Staff Court upheld the suspension of Joel Andreas (*The Rag*, 1974). Intentional activists writing for *The Rag* viewed the decision as indication that the court had "given their approval of total administrative power and disregard of student interest" (*The Rag*, 1974, p.2). In spite of this result, Andreas would write in a later article that "I have not given up. . . . [the school system] must be changed" (*The Rag*, 1974b, p.4). The presence of the Student-Staff Court represented a victory for students of Berkeley High School. Even if some suspensions that intentional activists at the school believed were illegal were upheld by the court, the creation of a formal process for challenging the authority of school administrators represented a significant achievement for these high school activists.

Constitutional Rights

This issue of suspensions was a major catalyst in triggering the legal fight that occurred between student activists and school administrators. The Youth Empowerment Movement engaged high school administrators in contentious politics by asserting their right to publish

underground newspapers that were free from censorship. Across the nation, members of the

Youth Empowerment Movement began to engage in legal battles against local school boards.

Five major cases focused on addressing the power struggle between student activists and high

school administrators: *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (1969), *Sullivan v. Houston*

Independent School District (1968), *Scoville v. Board of Education* (1969), *Eisner v. Stamford*

Board of Education (1971) and lastly, *Rowe v. Campbell Union High School District* (1968)

(Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Raskim, 2003; Graham. 2006). The legal battles were significant for

high school activists because all five rulings were in favor of defending or delineating the rights

of high school students.

  Many of the students who decided to wage these legal battles were radical activists

because they wanted to ensure that both the legal system and schools changed. Radical activists

wanted to ensure that the constitutional rights of high school students were protected and

guaranteed in the same manner as the rights of adults. As stated in *The Word,* "students in school

as well as out of school are 'persons' under our Constitution. They possess fundamental rights

which the state must respect . . . our liberation demands that these fundamental rights be given to

all students" (*The Word,* 1970c, p.2). Furthermore, radical activists, in contrast to intentional and

incidental activists, were most willing to go outside of the school system (going over the heads

of school administrators, board members, and educational policy makers) and use the legal

system to spur reform. The court cases that emerged in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s

reflect radical activists' deep commitment to fighting for student empowerment.

  Starting in the late 1960s, student activists experienced a wave of legal victories that

spurred educational reform in high schools. In *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969), the Supreme Court

established that a regulation banning an armband protest, as well as threatening suspension for such protest, was unconstitutional (Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Raskim, 2003). A major aspect of this case was the illegal use of suspension by the school administrators. Student activists had used their underground newspapers to protest tirelessly against such suspensions. However, it would require the Supreme Court stepping in to check the authority of school administrators. This case set a precedent for other cases that would further limit the ability of school administrators to punish students.

Following the Tinker case was *Scoville v. Board of Education of Joliet Township* (1969). The plaintiffs in this case were two high school students who were suspended and then expelled for distributing their underground newspaper *Grass High* on school grounds (Raskim, 2003). The school argued that that the underground paper was slanderous and critical of school policies. The Illinois Seventh Circuit Court, in a 5-1 vote, decided that students could not be suspended for distributing their underground newspaper without reasonable evidence that the students' actions would spur a significant disruption of school activities. Other decisions, *Eisner v. Stamford Board of Education* (1971) in Connecticut, and *Sullivan v. Houston Independent School District* (1968) in Texas, would refer to Tinker (1968) (Abbott, 1972; Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Raskim, 2003). High school administrators were required to ensure that the constitutional rights guaranteed adult citizens outside of schools were extended to high school students.

During the early 1970s three cases helped to bolster the claims made by student activists that their constitutional rights protected not only the publications of underground newspapers, but also the distribution of such papers on school grounds (Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Raskim, 2003; Graham, 2005). These cases, *Eisner v. Stamford Board of Education* (1970)*, Bright v. Los*

Angeles Unified School District (1970)*,* and *Quarterman v. Byrd* (1971), span the nation and serve as evidence of student activists' abilities to utilize contentious politics to force educational reform in their schools. In 1970, several high school students in Stamford, Connecticut, were denied by the school administrator, citing a school board policy, the opportunity to distribute their underground newspaper, the *Stamford Free Press*, on school grounds. The state court ruled, once again citing Tinker (1968), that unless the school district has strong evidence pointing to a "substantial disruption" a school board cannot limit a student's First Amendment rights. Similarly, in 1970, the Northern District of California court ruled, in *Bright v. Los Angeles Unified School District,* that the school district could not ban the distribution of partisan or propaganda publications from school campuses. This decision led to the almost immediate removal by the California legislature of state laws that made such unconstitutional demands. In addition, school reform occurred on local levels as school districts followed suit with similar changes to their policies.

The Youth Empowerment social movement mobilized students to engage in contentious politics rather than submit to the complete authority of school administrators. For instance, in 1970, Charles Quarterman, during his sophomore year at Pine Forest High School (North Carolina), rebuked the policy of his principal that required students to submit to him any document that was to be handed out on school grounds (Glassner, 1972). Quaterman was interested in resource mobilization; he wanted to educate and recruit his peers. Quarterman decided to distribute copies of the local underground newspaper on the school grounds. Upon learning of this action, the school principal decided to suspend him. However, the young activists were not deterred, and following the suspension, Quaterman was caught handing out leaflets advocating student involvement in the anti-war effort. For his actions Quarterman was given a

second, lengthier suspension. School administrators at Pine Forest High School, in North

Carolina, argued that since the school principal did not approve the publications in question;

therefore, students were prohibited from distributing them on school grounds. Quarterman, like

his radical activist peers, believed that the school was denying him his constitutional rights and

decided to settle the issue by going over the school board and directly to the court system. In

1971, *Quarterman v. Byrd*, the state court ruled in his favor, arguing that the principal's policy

violated Quarterman's freedom of press and expression (Glassner, 1972).

Constitutional Rights Summary

In the late 1960s and even into the 1970s, despite their legal victories, intentional and

radical high school activists found it necessary to continue their fight for constitutional rights in

terms of freedom of expression, press, assembly, and due process. As late as the 1970s, many

high school administrators continued prohibiting distribution of underground newspapers on

school grounds, as well as suspending students for being affiliated with such papers (Schneider,

1970; Stough, 1974; Major, 1980; Staffo, 1982). In this same time period, almost all

underground newspapers that were included in this study dedicated at least one article to arguing

for protection of their constitutional freedoms in and around the high school. Numerous

underground newspapers lamented the censorship that took place in the administrator-approved

student papers (*The Vast Minority*, 1969a; *The Paper*, 1969a; *The Midnight Special*, 1971c;

Sphinx's Farrow, 1973; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Many editors asserted that the "right to

publish or speak up without retribution or punishment was the greatest cause [of the student

empowerment movement]" (Birmingham, 1969, p.8). As late as 1974, student activists protested

the continued use of suspensions as a weapon to curtail the distribution of underground

newspapers and other protest literature on school grounds, even though high-ranking courts in

several states (i.e., California, Illinois, and Ohio) had already ruled such actions unconstitutional (Schneider, 1970; Stough, 1974; Major, 1980). Certainly, as high school activists were able to gain the support of state courts as well as the Supreme Court in authorizing educational reform, it appeared that there were school boards and school administrators that were reluctant if not directly opposed to granting students their constitutional rights. This phenomenon points to a disconnect that existed between school administrators and the changing society around them.

Critique of High Schools

This section explores the two main proposals for changing and improving schools that radical activists advocated throughout the 1970s. The first proposal was not a single idea; rather, radical activists' use of underground newspapers called for a complete overhaul of high schools through a series of broad reforms—ending racism in schools, abolishing tracking, adopting a more relevant educational curriculum, ending the use of academic grades, and allowing students to teach courses. Some radical activists believed that such challenges were too much to overcome and so advocated that students create their own educational institutions. The second proposal examined here is the plan to create "Free Schools" and the larger *Alternative* School Movement that inspired this approach. Radical activists, upset with not just the state of high schools but the direction educational institutions were headed, advocated abandoning district institutions and creating their own alternative or free-schools.

Radical activists agreed that the problems of high schools were the problems of society (*Alternative*, 1968; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Radical activists wanted to liberate oppressed people locally and globally by bringing publishing articles and stories that brought attention to societal issues such as racism and sexism. Many believed that

"American schools are no longer meant to educate the people. Their purpose is to coax the people into submission through the use of grades, tracks, dress codes . . . suspensions and expulsions" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.8). These activists argued that allowing high schools to continue the suppression of young minds would only hamper their goal of liberating oppressed peoples (*Alternative*, 1968; *Pack Rat*, 1970b; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973a; *Probe*, 1974b; *FPS*, 1975a).

For many radical activists, the struggle against global issues was almost linked inextricably with intentional activists' fight to improve high schools. In part, this connection explains why in the 1970s radical activists focused some of their efforts on the task of educational reform. Therefore, these educational reform proposals reflect the willingness of radical activists to cooperate and not compete with their intentional activist peers.

Educational reform, the practice of tinkering with district policies, school guidelines, classroom curriculums, and teaching strategies, is a task that many adult thinkers have engaged in arguably since the creation of the first school. Starting in the 1950s in some areas, many intentional activists decided to engage in educational reform. By the late 1960s, these intentional activists established underground newspapers like *The Beverly Stash*, *Little Brown Watermelon,* and *The Vast Minority,* which became sites through which intentional activists could publish their educational reform proposals. Intentional activists advocated a range of reforms such as updating the current educational curriculum to include more culturally relevant and sensitive material, implementing more equitable grading policies, as well as eliminating the use of tracking to separate students. However, school leaders ignored the overwhelming majority of student reforms. This response from adult educators spurred a national shift in the ideologies of

many high school activists, as radical activists emerged and became incredibly active in the struggle for student empowerment. Radical activists favored more than just educational reform; these students desired a revolutionary restructuring of high schools.

Overall Critique of Education System in the United States
In the 1970s, the vast majority of underground newspapers became engaged in the national discourse regarding the quality and direction of high schools. The federal government enacted a wave of legislation that directly influenced the lives of high school youth. Two major changes include the ratification of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment in 1971, which lowered the voting age to eighteen, and the passage of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which made it illegal to discriminate by gender in courses or athletic teams offered (Minz, 2004). In addition, by the early 1970s, Congress would dramatically increase the amount of funds it allocated to states for public education (Angus and Mirel, 1999; Mintz 2004). These policies reflected the growing concern of lawmakers and voters regarding the condition of America's schools and the education of its young people.

Yet high school activists remained troubled about the top-down nature of these changes. Many radical activists argued that adults (lawmakers and school leaders) could only scratch the surface in terms of understanding what was going on in high schools in the 1970s (*Red Army*, 1971a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971b; *The Red Tide*, 1975a). As expressed by one student, "unless you are a student, you have no clue of the atrocities occurring, of the abuses and suspension of constitutional rights . . . only the high school student can tell the full story" (*FPS*, 1973a, p.19). Radical activists were eager to tell their story and so, like their intentional activist peers, in the 1970s radical activists used underground newspapers to present their critiques of the educational system.

Underground newspapers from all four regions of the United States shared five major critiques against the U.S. educational system. The next section examines these critiques in order of frequency. According to many radical activists, the most common flaw of high schools was that high schools were racist (*Alternative*, 1969; *Red Army*, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1975a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1978). The second most frequently cited problem with high schools was the use of tracking to organize and separate students (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *The Word,* 1970b; *FPS*, 1973c). Third, radical activists contended that the high school curriculum denied students the opportunity to connect with other oppressed people and learn about the contemporary world (*Alternative*, 1968; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *Probe*, 1974a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Fourth, these student activists argued that the use of any grading system enforced the oppressive position of adults over students (*Individual*, 1969a; *Quack*, 1971b; *High School Action*, 1973b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1975a). Lastly, some radical activists believed that their present teachers were ineffective and asserted that students should be allowed to teach courses (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Alltogether*, 1973b; *The Red Tide*, 1976b). To understand more completely the perspective of radical activists, each position will be examined individually.

Racial Prejudice in Schools

One of the most common themes for underground newspapers in the 1970s was the presence of racism in high schools. Some radical activists argued that many of their teachers and administrators failed to respect racial differences and targeted certain students for punishment based on their racial background (*Pack Rat*, 1969; The Bathroom, Bomber, 1970a; Birmingham,

1970; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c; *Local Rocks*, 1971a). Students in *FPS* declared that high school leaders (administrators, school board members, and teachers), "rather than bending to meet the differing needs of students from different backgrounds, [the schools] try extremely hard to bend the poor, the black and the oppressed students into the mold of the dominant culture: that of white middle-class America—and with devastating effects" (*FPS*, 1973a, p.22). Many radical activists boldly challenged school leaders to engage in educational reform that addressed racial inequality (*FPS*, 19702a; *Red Army*. 1971d; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c). Across the nation radical activists engaged in social protests to gain attention to this cause. According to a student activist at a walk-out at Bellaire High School in Houston, Texas, "Black power is not anti-white people . . . there are too many adults in HIPSD [Houston Independent School District] that are afraid of anything not white" (*Plain Brown Watermelon*, 1970, p.13). This fear often resulted in schools leaders either rejecting student activists' request to adopt Black Studies or Hispanic Studies courses or dragging their feet.

The lack of racial diversity on many school boards was a major factor in the prevailing belief among radical activists that high schools in their present form were incapable of enacting educational policies that would end racism and liberate students. School boards throughout the 1950s–1970s were almost all white and majority male (Trump and Hunt, 1968; Mann, 1973; Graham, 2006). Sixteen-year-old Susan Snow blamed the end of an after school course "Minorities History" that was offered in her high school on the school board. She stated, "all of the members of the Erie School Board are white, and they have no interest whatsoever in any black issues or Black Studies program" (Libarle & Seligson, 1970, p.92).

However, charges of racism were not just based on limits on the curriculum; radical students in some schools observed that suspensions and expulsion punishments were overwhelmingly used on students of color (*Red Army*, 1971c; *Ball and Chain*, 1971; *FPS*, 1973e; *The Red Tide*, 1975b). The presence of racism in a school, according to one student, hindered the ability of students to "learn about the differences that existed between people from different races" (*FPS*, 1975b, p.27). This charge of racism was prevalent, and many radical activists argued that racism was at the core of the next four issues.

Discrimination in Schools: Tracking

Radical activists charged that racism on the part of school administrators manifested itself in the use of tracking. Tracking, or ability grouping, is the educational practice of placing students into cohorts based on academic competency and skill-set development (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Loveless, 1998). In the early 20th century, progressive reformers developed tracking as a tool to organize students in the newly developed comprehensive high school (Oakes, 1985; Angus and Mirel, 1999). Supporters argued that the perceived merits of tracking were that it allowed high-achieving students access to rigorous content at a fast pace that stimulated their academic growth and challenged their performance, while allowing students who were struggling to refine and hone their skills in a course that moved at an appropriate pace (Loveles, 1998; Angus and Mirel, 1999). The process for tracking varies, with the most common methods requiring students to complete a standardized or IQ test and then arranging students, based on test performance, into one of three tracks: 1) college preparatory/honors track; 2) "*regular track*" for students who demonstrate no advanced skills but have achieved at or near the average; 3) vocational track, which contains low level courses in the basic subject areas—

reading, math, general history, and science, coupled with vocational training such as woodshop or home economics courses (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Oakes, 1985; Loveless, 1998).

By the mid-1900s tracking became wide-spread and entrenched within the comprehensive high school. During the 1930s and 1940s the national discourse about high schools focused on the concern that schools were not preparing students to be effective and knowledgeable workers (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Labaree, 1997; Angus and Mirel, 1999). Some educators argued that the comprehensive high school was responsible for social efficiency, instilling students with the skills and content needed to be productive workers and citizens (Labaree, 1997; Angus and Mirel, 1999). High schools in the 1930s and 1940s became intensely curriculum-driven and used tracking as the method for sorting students. (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Labaree, 1997; Angus and Mirel, 1999). In the 1950s, the use of tracking was also reinforced by the launching of Sputnik, as educators saw tracking as the best method for rapidly expanding science and math education and ensuring that the best and brightest students were in the most rigorous science and math courses (Labaree, 1997; Angus and Mirel, 1999). Hence, high schools still retained their function as a vehicle for social efficiency; educators believed that schools should adjust their curriculum to match the economic needs of society (Labaree, 1997; Angus and Mirel, 1999). However, by the 1960s, student activists, radical activists in particular, would push back against the use of tracking.

Radical activists by the 1970s were vocal and active in their critique of tracking. For radical activists tracking was part of the tools of oppression used by school leaders and the government to keep students, especially students of color, subjugated (*The Midnight Special*, 1970c; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Renegade*, 1971a; *The Word,* 1970b; *The Rag*, 1974c). Underground

newspapers were filled with student accounts attacking the use of tracking and arguing that the

practice separated students based on social class standing and race (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *Rebels'*

Voice, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971d). Several studies conducted in the 1970s found evidence to support

this assertion (Heyns and Cohen, 1971; Bowles and Gintis, 1976). Radical activists writing for

the *Rebels' Voice* included as part of their educational reform a demand for the immediate end to

the use of tracking. According to these students, "tracking exists because there are two classes in

America—an owning and controlling class and a working class. For the owners and controllers

to stay in power it is necessary for them to produce (through the schools) a regimented and large

class of people who have been taught to work for the owners and give up the wealth that they

produce" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.7). Radical activists viewed tracking as racial discrimination

and as part of the global practice of racism (*Midnight Special*, 1970d; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Red*

Army, 1971c; *FPS*, 1973b). Many radical activists believed tracking created artificial distinctions

among students and that these distinctions mirrored the social and race structure that existed in

society (*Midnight Special*, 1970d; *High School Action*, 1973b; *FPS*, 1975a). Several scholars

would later conduct research and present viewpoints that dovetailed with those of the high school

radical activists (Heyns and Cohen, 1971; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Loveless, 1998).

Some student activists argued against tracking on the basis of gender; suggesting that

tracking divided students by gender. Radical activists observed that in some high schools girls

were required to take home economics but prohibited from taking any technical classes (*Rebels'*

Voice, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971c; *FPS*, 1973b). Radical activists saw this practice as a method by

which schools would oppress high school students and deny students the ability to have agency

in their lives. In response, a group of twenty students at Cass High protested the divisions

between male and female in course offerings by walking out of their respective home economics

or shop classes (*Rebels' Voice* letter to *CHIPS*, 1971, p.1). Those students who walked out continued fighting "for the rights of students" by creating their own underground newspaper, *Rebels' Voice* (*Rebels' Voice* letter to *CHIPS*, 1971, p.1). Radical activists were not willing to allow school administrators to negatively influence the career paths available to students after high school.

An examination of how underground newspapers waged a fight against tracking reveals how both intentional and radical activists had a stake in this issue. Both intentional and radical activists were troubled with the ability of school leaders to determine the course offerings, career opportunities, and overall high school experience of any student with one decision. However, each group presented a slightly different educational proposal. For intentional activists, tracking served to further strip students of self-determination because administrators, counselors, and in some cases teachers decided which track a student entered (Oakes, 1985; Loveless, 1998). According to *Logos,* "students in the lower lanes are not given a college-oriented education, while those in the higher lanes are" (*Logos*, 1972c, p.5). Most intentional activists opposed tracking because it factored into why some students had a boring high school experience; it relegated some into courses that the student had not selected or it failed to challenge them (*New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *The Word,* 1970b; *FPS*, 1973c)

In some underground newspapers, intentional student activists demanded that students be provided greater options in terms of course selection (*Individual*, 1969a; The *Probe*, 1971; the *Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975d). Writers at *The Probe* argued that if tracks had to exist then there should at least be diversity in options; these students suggested to the Warren County School Board (Pennsylvania) that their high school create more tracks in the curriculum (1971).

Students in the Covington school district in Kentucky attended their school board meetings in hopes of obtaining for their peers the right to veto a course selection or semester schedule created by the school counselor (The *Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975d). Hence, intentional activists were willing to keep the system of tracking but wanted to modify it to provide students with the ability to empower themselves.

For radical activists, the power to track students allowed school administrators the ability to require students to learn a skill set that aligned with the political and military needs of society (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *The Word,* 1970b; *FPS*, 1973l). According to one student, "we are in effect told to resign ourselves to a pre-ordained fate that by the end of ninth grade your position in society has been determined" (*Probe*, 1974b, p.3). Radical activists believed that global racism fostered the belief that certain people cannot be allowed to enter certain professions (or obtain predetermined credentials) and that tracking was a tool used to ensure poverty and oppression for certain races. Since radical activists connected their educational reform proposals with the problems and dilemmas that affected society as a whole and not just their high schools, the only viable solution was to completely abolish the use of tracking.

The Critique of Curriculum

According to radical activists, racism and the tracking system directly influenced school leaders' decision to use educational curriculums that did not promote global awareness. Radical activists believed that the courses offered in many high schools were inadequate for the task of teaching students how to examine critically issues that impacted nations beyond the United States (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1973l; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974c; *The Red Tide*, 1976a).

Reading underground newspapers published in the 1970s, it was common to come across articles discussing the economic, political, and social events of other countries. Underground newspapers engaged in this action in order to counter what they believed was complete control of high schools by school board and school leaders. As expressed by one student, "the administration 'manages' the school; in so doing it represses students' activities to conform to its standards, and regulates the educational curricula to meet the political philosophy of the dominant forces in capitalist American society" (*The Rag*, 1973, p.2). Radical activists were frustrated with this experience, and as a result, cooperated with intentional activists to protest against school leaders unwilling to listen to educational reforms proposed by students.

Authoritarianism in Schools: Grades as a Tactic to Control Students

As some student activists called for changes to the curriculum, others wrote articles critiquing the use of grades to evaluate students (*Individual*, 1969a; *Quack*, 1971b; *High School Action*, 1973b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1975a). Some activists argued that the use of Grade Point Average (GPA) was a scare tactic given to educators to control students who were intelligent and capable of critically questioning teachers (*FPS*, 1972a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971b; *High School Action*, 1973a). Radical activists suggested that the use of grades in classrooms stripped the learning that occurred into a game where students were focused on scoring points rather than learning. As stated in *FPS*, "grades should cease to matter. As they are currently used, they are essentially destructive; we work, not because we want to, but, because we'll get bad grades if we don't" (*FPS*, 1972c, p.24). These activists believed that use of grades as a punishment or threat by teachers limited the ability of students to be engaged with the material in their own way (*Beverly Stash*, 1971; *Observer*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c; *The Word*, 1970c);

rather, students were compelled to learn the material in only one manner and only from their classroom teachers. Radical activist Matt Hann argued, "schools should serve as an oasis of learning in the labyrinth of life, in which everyone would have the chance to follow his interests and expand his horizons" (*Splinter*, 1976b, p.3). However, in the 1970s, many high school students were still subject to the whims, opinions, and rule of teachers.

Some radical activists argued that schools used grades as a method to keep students divided. According to one writer, "THE SCHOOLS ARE PROMOTING COMPETITION AMONG STUDENTS! The grading system is wrong. Students are taught and shown at a young age that good grades should be a student's goal rather than gaining knowledge" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.1). Radical activists who shared this viewpoint asserted that a major function for high schools was to pit students against one another for the purpose of sorting students into various social categories (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971; *FPS*, 1975c). According to radical activists, the use of academic grades, and with it the practice of giving students grades of "D" or "F," was in part labeling students "defective, unsuitable and a threat to the system" (*FPS*, 1975c, p.34). Radical activists argued that this method of labeling ensured that the school systems prevented students from uniting and challenging the power structure both at the local and national level (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971c). Therefore, radical activists were opposed to academic grading because it could drain students' desire to engage in activism.

Replace the Teachers: Students Teaching Students

A few underground newspapers argued that high school students should be involved in the process of hiring and, most importantly, in firing teachers. On several occasions student activists attended school board meetings demanding the firing of teachers for being incompetent,

racists, or uninformed about their subject matter (*FPS*, 1971a; *High School Action*, 1973a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c; *The Red Tide*, 1975b). Many student activists, both intentional and radical, believed that the social changes that were occurring had created a dramatic shift in how students should learn (*The Word,* 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1973l; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974c; *The Red Tide*, 1976a). According to radical activists, gone were the days when all learning should take place in a room and with a textbook as the only contact to the material being taught. Student activists demanded that teachers adopt new teaching practices. By the 1970s, radical activists began publishing articles in their underground newspapers with such comments as, "let's get rid of these dinosaurs . . . have any of you learned in this classrooms. Old teachers hold on to their old ways" (*FPS*, 1973d, p.32). Many high school activists agreed with this sentiment and sought the removal of veteran teachers who were deemed too old to be able to connect to the youth of the 1970s.

Several underground newspapers boldly declared that it was time for school boards to pass a mandate allowing high school students to teach in the high school classroom (*Alternative*, 1968; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *Probe*, 1974a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Students at the Bronx High School of Science (New York) in the September edition of *Daily Planet* argued that now was the time to develop an educational program where students would teach students (*Daily Planet*, 1970a). Radical activists in Pascagoula High School, in Mississippi provided justification for their proposal to offer classes taught by high school students by stating, "many of us are curious about what is going on in Vietnam. There is a small number of students who . . . have taken the time to study the war . . . and would be willing to share their knowledge with interested others" (*Alltogether*, 1973b, p.4). Students in Philadelphia went further and advised that the board convene a teacher evaluation panel (*Red Army*, 1971d). The purpose of the panel

would be to review the teaching standards of all educators in the building and rather than "hire another poorly trained person, the panel would identify a high school student or community member best suited to teach the course" (*Red Army*, 1971d, p.6). This proposal of having students teach students was not discussed widely but aligns with the efforts of radical activists to overhaul the educational system.

Even though only seven papers formally advocated having students teach courses (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Alltogether*, 1973b; *The Red Tide*, 1976b), numerous underground newspapers contained articles in which students expressed a passionate desire to understand the changing world around them and to have teachers who were willing to guide students through the process (*Alternative*, 1968; *My Weekly Reefer*, 1974a; *Probe*, 1974a; *Subversive Scholastic*, 1979). Many students believed that the 1970s ushered in a new era of ideas, and as such, schools should hire teachers capable of explaining and teaching these new ideas. However, there were two cases, one in California, the other in Mississippi, in which teachers were removed from their posts for moving beyond the strictly applied curriculum, allowing discussions of the Vietnam War and global oppression in their classrooms. (*Pack Rat*, 1970b; *Alltogether*, 1973b). Student activists argued that schools were left with teachers who were not willing to connect with their students. In lieu of this system, a few radical activists advocated that high school students be allowed to teach some courses (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *Daily Planet*, 1970a; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970b; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Alltogether*, 1973b; *The Red Tide*, 1976b).

Radical high school activists made no substantial gains in terms of seeing reforms passed by local school boards on any of their five issues. Radical activists, like their intentional activist peers, used walk-outs, sit-ins, and rallies to attract attention to their causes. Many of these

student activists continued to attend school board meetings to promote and advocate their

educational reforms, yet, in only a few instances was there evidence that indicated that board

members made educational reforms based on student proposals (Lachman and Polner, 1970; *The

Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975a). By engaging in this tactic of ignoring student proposals,

school board members hardened radical activists' belief that their desired educational reforms

would have to take place without district support and occur outside of the school walls. As a

result, many radical activists began thinking of alternatives to high schools, and some found

support and a solution in the Alternative School Movement.

Alternative School Movement

The counterculture environment of the 1960s and 1970s galvanized many college

students, adults, and high school students to move from attempting to transform educational

institutions to engaging in an effort to develop their own schools (Howard, 1974; Deal and

Nolan, 1978; San Miguel Jr., 2001; Miller, 2002). According to Howard, "for many youth, the

massive protest movements of the 1960s culminated in the attempt to create a viable set of

alternative institutions" (1974, p.210). This movement took shape in what has been termed by

many scholars as the "alternative schools movement" (Cremin, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Kozol,

1982). Many scholars have characterized this movement as an attempt by individuals deeply

frustrated with the direction of elementary and secondary schooling in America to engage in

activism (Cremin, 1978; Hernandez, 1978; Murphy, 1978; Mercogliano, 1998). Within this

alternative schools movement was the effort by some to create "free schools"; the main

distinctions between the two will be explored shortly. The common mission of both the

alternative and free schools that developed in the 1960s and 1970s was to create schools free

from the rampant racism, sexism, and ageism that existed in traditional schools (Cremin, 1978; Hernandez, 1978; Murphy, 1978; Mercogliano, 1998).

To better understand what radical activists were fighting for we must examine the origins of the alternative school movement. First, many scholars in the field agree that all "free schools" are alternative schools, but not all alternative schools are free schools (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Kozol, 1982). This is because the term alternative school is a broad category that refers to schools created to serve a population of students that did not want to or were not allowed to attend traditional schools. As result there are three types of alternative schools: 1) alternative schools with specialized curriculums -a school that is under district control but offers a curriculum that is geared and focused for a specific population of students. This specialized curriculum is different from what can be found in a traditional high school (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978). 2) Alternative schools for behavioral challenged students - a school that is under district control and is created to educate students who were removed from the traditional school because of disciplinary issues (Deal and Nolan, 1978). 3) Free schools- a school that was not under district control and offered a unique curriculum (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Kozol 1982; Miller, 2002). Free schools belong under the umbrella of alternative schools because they were created to cater to students who wanted a different educational experience. It is important to note that alternative schools with specialized curriculums and alternative schools for behavioral challenged students were part of the public school system whereas free schools were privately operated (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Miller, 2002).

Even though both alternative schools with specialized curriculums and alternative schools for behavioral challenged students shared the "alternative" label there were several significant

differences. One important distinction that needs to be made is that not all alternative schools were products of or inspired by the alternative school movement that took place during the 1960s and 1970s (Fantini, 1978; Kozol, 1982; Miller, 2002). Alternative schools for behavioral challenged students were created by school districts as mandatory programs for students who had exhausted the disciplinary provisions that exist within a traditional school and needed to be educated until they turned 18 (Fantini, 1978). Therefore, another difference between alternative schools with specialized curriculums and those for behavioral challenged students was that in the former students willingly decided to attend whereas in the later students were mandated by the district to attend (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Kozol 1982). Alternative schools for behavioral challenged students, even though they carried the label "alternative," did not share the ideological values or structural designs of schools that were created as part of the alternative school movement.

Radical Activists and the Alternative School Movement

The Civil Rights Movement galvanized many citizens to examine critically the quality and conditions of high schools across the United States. Like the high school activists involved in running underground newspapers, many parents and interested adults did not approve of the curriculum, discipline policies, or the authoritative control of school leaders that existed (Howard, 1974; San Miguel Jr., 2001; Graham, 2006). This led to an increased demand for community control of high schools. Intentional activists took part and at times spearheaded efforts to wrestle some control over educational decisions (such as teacher hiring) from school board members and administrators (Howard, 1974; San Miguel Jr., 2001; Graham, 2006). An example of this occurred with students from Malverne High School in Long Island, New York,

who orchestrated a sit-in of three hundred African-American students to protest the lack of African-American staff and faculty (Graham, 2006). However, such efforts often failed to produce the desired educational reforms.

By the mid 1960s, high school activists, along with like-minded parents and community members, lost faith in the ability of school boards and districts to create educational institutions that aligned with their ideologies and catered to their policies. Free and alternative schools with specialized curriculums emerged from this desire of students, parents, and some educators to establish educational institutions that were child-centered and focused on social reform (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Miller, 2002). The frustrated efforts of intentional activists to engage school boards in educational reform spurred many to become radical activists and seek solutions that existed outside the traditional walls of schooling. As expressed by student writers, "it is time to seize the opportunity and empower ourselves as students to create the schools that we know we deserve. Schools where we are treated as humans, given our constitutional rights, allowed to make mistakes and grow and given the power to decide what happens" (*FPS*, 1970f, p.43). By the 1970s, many high school activists involved in the Youth Empowerment social movement were actively involved in efforts to establish a free school or an alternative school with a specialized curriculum in their area (*Beverly Stash*, 1971; *Observer*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970a; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c).

Radical high school activists supported both alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools because these institutions challenged the academic oppression that existed in traditional schools. Advocates of free schools, like radical activists, challenged the ideology that "adults know best" in terms of curriculum decisions (Kozol, 1972; Miller, 2002).

Free schools argued that education was about inquiry and not instruction. Advocates of free schools believed that educators should get out of the way of a child's learning and that state standards and district curriculums limited the learning potential of students. Similarly, alternative schools with specialized curriculums catered to students who wanted unique subject matter and or more relevant vocational training. The wider gamut of courses that alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools offered appealed to many radical activists. As expressed by one student, "our world is brimming with important and fascinating ideas and events. But, unfortunately, the schools, which are supposed to be 'preparing us for real life,' never even come close to the living breathing issues which fill our waking hours with such urgency" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.12). This student reflected the perspective shared by many radical activists that not only did students desire courses that were not offered in their present schools, they wanted classes that were relevant to their life experiences and informed their world view.

Across the nation, the Youth Empowerment social movement spoke out in favor of alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools because such institutions opposed the academic structure of traditional schools. Supporters of the movement wanted to design schools that allowed young people freedom to move, think, act, and learn (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; *Red Army*, 1971d; *Logos*, 1973a; *Probe*, 1974b; *FPS*, 1975a; 1975e). The vast majority of alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools created in the 1960s and 1970s rejected the use of tracking and automatic suspensions (many free schools adopted discipline courts that consisted of teachers and students) and also lacked any dress or grooming codes (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Kozol, 1982; Miller, 2002). Both alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools were noted for including students on their board of trustees or including student representatives in any formal decision-making agency. Numerous

schools adopted the practice of opening all major decisions that impacted the school to a town hall democratic vote, in which every participant has an equal vote and voting was open to all members—students and adults alike (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Kozol, 1982; Miller, 2002).

However, there are some important distinctions between alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools. The most important difference cited in the literature is that free schools were all run privately (through support from community members, parents, students, and interested educators) and operated independently of any school board's policies or curriculum mandates (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Miller, 2002). However, alternative schools with specialized curriculums often were public institutions that shared some relationship with the local school district; some of these schools were allowed to create their own curriculums, whereas others received a modified curriculum approved by the school board (Deal and Nolan, 1978). Alternative schools with specialized curriculums, in contrast to free schools, still had to interact with and seek some form of approval from the local school board (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Fantini, 1978; Kozol; 1982). This hampered the ability of some alternative schools with specialized curriculums to truly break free from the same regulations and institutions that warranted their creation (Fantini, 1978; Murphy, 1978). In the 1960s and through the mid-1970s, it was reported that anywhere from 400 to 800 free schools were created in the United States (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Miller, 2002). In contrast, during the same time period, it was believed that there were over 1400 alternative school programs in existence—it was not clear how many these were just alternative schools with specialized curriculums (Deal and Nolan, 1978).

One common model for alternative schools with specialized curriculums that developed was schools designed to address racial injustices (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Hernandez, 1978;

Kozol, 1982). Radical activists who wanted to abandon district schools and establish schools that were more culturally inclusive (i.e., hiring teachers from non-white cultural backgrounds) found support from parents, community members, and some educators who shared similar viewpoints. This model of alternative schools with specialized curriculums became extremely popular in urban centers such as New York City, Oakland, and Houston (Deal and Nolan, 1978; San Miguel Jr., 2001). In New York City radical student activists demanded "the reorganization of high schools by September 1969, along community lines, so that black students will not be forced to go to hostile communities to seek an education" (Birmingham, 1970, p.185). In North Carolina, students proposed leaving the public high school and creating "liberation schools" where students would "learn about ourselves and our beautiful Black proud history" (*Uprising*, 1971c, p.8). Alternative schools with specialized curriculums that followed this model emphasized community involvement as a critical factor in their success (Deal and Nolan, 1978; Hernandez, 1978).

Regional Differences among the Educational Proposals Made by Radical Activists

From the Youth Liberation Archives, a few notable differences emerge in the ways in which underground newspapers, based on their geographic region, discussed the educational reforms proposed by radical activists. For example, papers that were analyzed and located in the South—Texas, Mississippi, Missouri, Kentucky, and Louisiana—had very few published articles discussing free schools or alternative schools. However, these states were on par with their peers in terms of articles discussing specific proposals for how to overhaul their school system. The West coast and East coast regions had the most content focused on alternative and free schools. In addition, the states of California and Illinois appear to have the most developed alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free school programs. Lastly, in the regions of the West

coast and East coast, activist student organizations played a critical role in advocating for the development of alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free schools.

The differences in culture and climate among different geographic regions that existed in the 1960s and 1970s helped to account for the variation in educational proposals made by student activists. For instance high school activists located in the South (i.e. Missouri, Mississippi, Texas) had to face the conservative political and social culture that characterized the region. This restricted the ability of high school activists living in the South to propose more radical objectives such as free high schools. As a result it was more likely that student activists in the South were intentional rather than radical activists. In contrast to their southern peers, student activists located on the eastern and western coasts (i.e. California, Pennsylvania and New York) existed in a social climate that had more frequent incidents of political protest and were considered hotbeds of activism (Trump and Hunt, 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970). Student activists in the East and West regions were able to push the envelope in terms of radical educational proposals because of the intense activist climate that existed.

Lastly, student activists that operated in the Midwest (i.e. Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio) encountered a social climate that experienced high levels of protest but not to the extent that was found in the West or East regions (Trump and Hunt, 1969; Herr, 1972). High school activists that operated in the Midwest were able to propose educational reforms that were very similar to their peers from California and New York. However, no evidence was found that verified if students in Midwestern states were able to achieve success in the more radical proposal of establishing free schools in their regions. Nonetheless, by the 1970s, based on the articles published in underground newspapers, it was more likely that in the East, Midwest and West student activists

would be radical rather than intentional activist. The remainder of this section will discuss in greater detail the events and ideas discussed by underground newspapers in each region.

East Coast

Based on the collection of underground newspapers used in this study, it appears that the movement by radical activists to abandon their traditional high schools and create alternative schools with specialized curriculums and free high schools was very active in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In the underground newspapers that were included in this study, there was no mention of any free or alternative school program available in the state of New York. Yet, some radical activists in Pennsylvania invested time and effort in advocating as well as running a free school (*Observer*, 1970a; 1970b; *Fusion*, circa 1970s; *The Probe*, 1971).

In Philadelphia, Sue Fine and Kate Sharp, two high school seniors, used their underground newspaper, *Observer,* to promote their platform for educational reform. These high school activists wanted "revolutionary changing of public schools . . . transforming institutions or replacing the ones that will not change" (*Observer*, 1970b, p.4). Fine and Sharp, as radical activists, argued that schools had become too oppressive and controlling of students (*Observer*, 1970; 1970b). According to Sharp, "The main function of school . . . is to be a resource center, a place where a student may browse through information about projects and areas of knowledge that most interest him" (*Observer*, 1970, p.2). High schools no longer served this role and as a result students needed to create and transfer to free schools. Fine and Sharp described a free school as a site where a student could answer the questions that existed in her own mind and study the material that she believes is applicable to her life (*Observer*, 1970; 1970b). Using the *Observer* as their medium, Fine and Sharp advocated the reasons why students should consider

abandoning the traditional school model. In an article titled, "*Think This is the Only Way a School Can Be Run*," Sharp asserted that transferring to a free school made sense if a student was "looking for a new school that is meaningful and relevant to your needs" (*Observer*, 1970, p.6). These students argued that since free schools focused on learning primarily by doing, it was a better educational model for those interested in liberation and fighting oppression (*Observer*, 1970).

These two radical activists used their underground newspaper to advertise the existence of free and alternative school programs across the nation. Fine and Sharp engaged in resource mobilization by gathering information for other students regarding joining a free or alternative schools with specialized curriculums. In the *Observer*, there was mention of a student-run school where thirty students who used to attend Philadelphia public high schools banded together along with like-minded adults to operate a youth-run high school (*Observer*, 1970a). In addition, the newspaper refers interested students to the "Parkway Program" as well as "the Philadelphia Folk High School"; both were alternative schools created to provide a school for individuals seeking greater autonomy (*Observer*, 1970a). Interestingly enough, Fine and Sharp also collected information on free and alternative schools with specialized curriculums being offered in Los Angeles and Berkeley, California (*Observer*, 1970a). The actions of student activists such as Fine and Sharp demonstrated their commitment to contentious politics, in that these students were not interested in allowing school leaders to completely limit their educational options. These students functioned as educational reformers because not only were they critiquing the current system, they were also offering plausible solutions outside the existing school system.

Fine and Sharp wrote a series of articles on alternatives to the traditional public high school. According to Sue Fine, "there is a strong movement away from the public schools. Already teachers, community groups, and students have set up a sizable number of alternatives. New ones are constantly coming into being" (*Observer*, 1970, p.5). In part, the establishment and growth of free and alternative schools with specialized curriculums in the region could be attributed to the ability of student activists like Fine and Sharp. These high school students utilized their underground newspaper to not only establish the argument against traditional schools but also promote the existence of free and alternative schools. Underground newspapers, and the student activists that ran them, served to fill a hole for young students by providing information that otherwise might be very difficult to find. These two radical activists were following their convictions and backing up their critiques of high schools with action. The numerous articles published in the *Observer* serves as proof of the ability of student activists to function as educational reformers. They used their underground newspaper to examine the school system and then employed it as a tool for promoting their educational reform proposal.

High school activists in Philadelphia engaged in their own efforts to design an alternative school with a specialized curriculum. The underground newspaper *Fusion* succinctly presented their reason for demanding curriculum reforms. The editors argued that "the public education system in Philadelphia has failed to meet its responsibility to provide a relevant and democratic learning experience for students" (*Fusion*, circa 1970s, p.10). To address this educational issue six high school students took a proactive step and formed a group called the Philadelphia High School Project (*Fusion*, circa 1970s). These students joined another organization, People for Human Rights, to create the Free High Project. The goal of Free High Project was to "provide a learning experience that is absent from the conventional schools in Philadelphia" (*Fusion*, circa

1970s). The students collaborated with interested community members, along with organizations like the Institute for Educational Development, to create the curriculum, program schedule, and mission statement of the Free High Project (*Fusion*, circa 1970s).

Midwest

Underground newspapers in the Midwest offered no evidence of free schools being active in the states of Illinois, Michigan, or Ohio. However, there was ample discussion of students leaving their traditional high school for alternative schools with specialized curriculums. In addition, radical activists in the Midwest were passionate about creating more schools that did not follow the model of traditional high schools (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971c; 1973b; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). Student activists in Detroit, Michigan, argued that school administrators were incapable of running educational institutions that properly educated students. Intentional and radical activists were frustrated with the inability of school leaders (administrators, school board members, and teachers) to address some of the flaws that existed in schools such as the use of tracking to sort students unfairly or the misuse of suspensions and expulsions. According to the *Rebels' Voice*, "there doesn't seem to be any evidence that the schools have ever solved these problems and there is no indication that they will be solved because the old methods don't work on either the old problems or the new ones" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.1). This mindset taken by many radical activists spurred them to become committed fully to the work of educational reform.

Towards this end, radical activists in the Midwest created a formal proposal identifying their major goals for reforming the school system. Radical activists writing for *Rebels' Voice* (Michigan) published their list of twelve demands in their November issue (*Rebels' Voice*,

1971a); a very similar list of demands was published in *FPS* several months later (*FPS*, 1972b). In *Rebels' Voice,* eight of the twelve published demands (number 1,2,4,5,8,9,10 and 12) dealt directly with the need to overhaul the educational system (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a). Of note, radical activists wanted to abolish tracking, use of suspensions and expulsions, school board control, use of property tax to fund schools, as well as eliminate what they termed as "the student/teacher caste system" (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a, p.8–9). As discussed in other underground newspapers, radical activists wanted to completely change the structure of schools controlled by school districts so that high school students would have a significant if not the final say in all decisions (*FPS*, 1971c; 1973b; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977).

Unlike underground newspapers on the East coast, some radical activists in the Midwest argued that the problem of unemployment facing high school students was connected to the inadequate and oppressive curriculum offered by area high schools (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971c; 1973b; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). Many of the underground newspapers from the Midwest region published multiple articles that described the inability of high school students to find summer jobs (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971c; 1973b; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). For all the newspapers that examined this issue, the explanation for this unfortunate circumstance was connected to what was going on inside the high schools. Some radical activists in the Midwest argued that the oppression of students' beliefs in schools, coupled with constant threats of suspensions, had taken a toll on the eagerness of students to participate in the outside world (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). Another theory was that school leaders were continually seeking new ways to ensure that high school youth remain oppressed; therefore, school board members were willing to allow cuts to summer programs and educational work opportunities (*FPS*, 1973b; *New Expression*, 1977).

Some student activists appealed to their local school boards to incorporate coursework into the educational curriculum that would aid students in finding work (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). Others used resource mobilization to find organizations or alternative schools that offered a curriculum where students could learn relevant skills (*FPS*, 1973b; 1974d; *Logos*, 1972d; *New Expression*, 1977).

In Chicago, radical activists used their underground newspaper, *New Expression,* to promote alternative schools with specialized curriculums for interested students. Staff writer Kathi Isserman wrote an article, "Why alternative schools? Some want to learn how to learn," that investigated the reasons why over 200 high school students had left their traditional high schools for alternative programs, like Community High (Michigan) (*New Expression*, 1977, p.11). Community High was an alternative school that, according to Isserman, caters to students who are eager to be prepared for the workforce and desire the opportunity to create their own curriculum (*New Expression*, 1977). Isserman identified that a major factor for the shift was the opportunity for students to "learn materials that they could *really* use to get jobs" (*New Expression*, 1977, p.12). Students also pointed to being unsatisfied with the level of engagement and rigor they found in the traditional Chicago high schools.

What made these students radical was that they did not simply wait for school leaders to reform the curriculum. These high school students believed that the traditional schools were ineffective and took action into their hands. According to Isserman, students in Chicago who enrolled in alternative schools, described their previous school experience in traditional Chicago high schools by saying, "the work was too easy and boring. Class was a drag. We did the same thing day after day" (*New Expression*, 1977, p.11). Isserman's investigation highlighted the

ability of high school students to vote with their feet; students who were fed up with the inability of high schools to adapt to their needs or even stay current with the world were willing to leave the district.

Many high school students did not want to remain in a school system that they believed was unable to offer students the course curriculum they desired (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971c; 1973b; *Logos*, 1972c; *New Expression*, 1977). As a result, many radical activists in the Midwest engaged in contentious politics in an effort to force reforms in traditional high schools (*Rebels' Voice*, 1971a; *FPS*, 1971c; 1973b). At the same time, radical activists in the Midwest used their underground newspapers to build support for alternative schools with specialized curriculums like the Niles Township's Action Learning Center (ALC). Student Beth Posmantier decided to attend Niles Township's Action Learning Center (ALC), a public alternative school, because the structure of ALC allowed students to participate in "independent study, student organized study groups and focused job preparation" (*New Expression*, 1977, p.11). Again the opportunity to engage in courses that spoke to the needs of high school students was very appealing. Furthermore, many students who elected to be a part of alternative schools like ALC strongly disliked the lack of student autonomy, dearth of course options, and disconnected teaching styles that existed in traditional high schools (*New Expression*, 1977). For many radical activists in the Midwest there was a strong preference for alternative schools that focused on teaching job skills.

West Coast

Similar to their peers on the East coast, radical activists in California used activist student organizations to develop both free and alternative schools with specialized curriculums. The

High School Student Union (HSSU) lobbied in the *Pack Rat* for "replacing inept schools and dinosaur administrators" with an alternative community run school (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.6). In California, radical activists argued that free schools were better than the traditional high schools because free schools allowed the entire community to take part in the learning and teaching process (*Pack Rat*, 1970a; 1970b). According to radical activists, "the [high school] campus only occupies the teachers and the students 7 or 8 hours a day; and after that they are back into the community" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.6). Members of the HSSU went on to contend, "it's impossible to talk about waging any type of struggle, if the community is not part of that struggle. So if we have problems, we have to bring the community into the campus. We have to stop isolating ourselves from the community" (*Pack Rat*, 1970a, p.6). Hence, radical activists in California proposed designing free schools that allowed students to not only teach each other, but also to learn from and teach individuals from the surrounding neighborhoods (*Pack Rat*, 1969; 1970b; *Local Rocks*, 1971b; *The Rag*, 1972; 1974).

The ideologies behind free community schools reflect the shared ideas of radical activists. Radical activists participating in the various HSSU chapters in California rejected the curriculums that existed in their local high schools (*Pack Rat*, 1969; 1970b; *Local Rocks*, 1971b; *The Rag*, 1972; 1974). This response by radical activists is interesting because in areas like Berkeley and Beverly Hills California intentional activists had already achieved victory in obtaining alternative school options, access to Black studies courses as well as greater freedom regarding dress and grooming (*Pack Rat*, 1969; *Local Rocks*, 1971b; *Beverly Stash*, 1971). These concessions did not go far enough for many student activists, who argued that, "high school continues to deny students liberation of mind and body . . . until there is an end to tracking, illegal suspensions and forced curriculums . . . the fight must continue" (*The Rag*, 1972). In

California, the two most cited reasons radical activists were attracted to free schools were the level of independence offered to students (in terms of designing their own curriculum and schedule) as well as the inclusion of students as full voting members of the school board (*Pack Rat*, 1969; 1970b; *Local Rocks*, 1971b; *Beverly Stash*, 1971).

In the March issue of *Pack Rat* Jim Ginger wrote an article, "Community High School" that reported on the status of an alternative school with a specialized curriculum in Berkeley, California. As explained in the article, Community High School (CHS) was designed as an educational institution for high school age students seeking greater academic freedom (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Ginger argued that the students attending CHS were committed to the school because it "offers numerous classes in subjects never dreamed of in most public high schools. They include, Black, Native American and Asian Studies, photography, wilderness-survival, Aikido, and Tai Chi Ch'uan [self defense martial arts courses] and independent study in all areas" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.12). Students at Community High were able to create their own course by identifying a topic of interest and then finding a teacher or fellow student willing to serve as instructor. This structure allowed CHS to function as a student-centered site and served to separate the school from the local district-controlled high schools.

Community High shared several important similarities with the Free High Project in Philadelphia. Like the Free High Project, students at CHS had the ability to make their own schedules, read whatever material they deemed appropriate for the course, as well as select their teacher (*Fusion*, circa 1970s; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). The course listing at both sites addressed issues that reflected the concerns of many activists, such as racism, global conflicts, economic oppression, and constitutional rights. Reports on both schools touted the fact that local adults

were tapped to serve as educators and staff members, ensuring that each school really welcomed the community and allowed their students to connect with the individuals in the local area. Community High School was able to attract 250 students and the Free High Project had an estimated 150 students enrolled, thus indicating that students were taking advantage of these opportunities (*Pack Rat*, 1970b).

However, unlike Free High Project, CHS did not have complete autonomy, because some academic oversight was granted to the Berkeley High administration (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). As a result CHS students were required to take certain courses, such as foreign language and industrial arts at Berkeley High School. In fact, Community High School shared a campus with Berkeley, but classes were taught at local community colleges as well as in public sites in the Berkeley area. Based on Ginger's report, the relationship between CHS and the Berkeley High administration did lead to some friction. According to Ginger, "many of Community High's problems are caused by uptight members of the Berkeley High Administration and faculty who don't believe that students should study what they are interested in—who believe that schools are for indoctrinating students, not for educating them" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b, p.12). It was not surprising to learn that many teachers and administrators at Berkeley High had ideological differences with CHS and were not supportive of a school that was student-centered. Unfortunately, the exact fate of CHS is unclear, since it did not appear in any other underground newspaper or secondary source in my study.

South Region

The level of activity and success that was achieved in California was not duplicated in the Southern region. Discussions of alternative schools with specialized curriculums were not as

frequent in the South as they were in other areas of the United States. Yet, a few underground newspapers did offer some insight into how students responded to the idea of alternative schools with specialized curriculums. Only one underground newspaper, *The Word*, made mention of a free or alternative high school with a specialized curriculum in the region (*The Word*, 1970a). Unfortunately, the article, "Free High School in Chains," offered no specifics about the school (no name, course offerings); instead the article focused on detailing the flaws of this unnamed school (*The Word*, 1970a). Examination of the article shows that the school being described was not a free school but rather an alternative schools for behavioral challenged students because it was designed for students kicked out of El Paso High (*The Word*, 1970a). Furthermore, this free high school was designed with a mission that did not serve radical students, but rather "with only a narrow purpose in mind which is to prepare the students for the college board exams and the high school equivalency test" (*The Word*, 1970a, p.6). As a result, *The Word* criticizes the school for not living up to mission of liberating young minds established by its counterparts in other regions of the United States (*The Word*, 1970a).

Yet this does not mean that high school activists located in the South did not strive to make radical reforms to their school system. Students critiqued the compulsory courses and course selection offered at local high schools in the Durham, North Carolina, metropolitan area (*Uprising*, 1971b), as well as in Pascagoula, Mississippi (*Alltogether*, 1973b) and El Paso, Texas (*The Word*, 1970d). The most active state in this region was Texas, which had several newspapers, *Plain Brown Watermelon, The Word, Ball and Chain*, and *Issue*, that published multiple articles advocating an overhaul of the El Paso, Houston, and Bryan high schools (*Issue*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970a; *Plain Brown Watermelon*, 1970).

Like their peers in other parts of the country, radical activists in the South advocated courses that discussed information pertinent to the present day experiences of high school students (*Alltogether*, 1973d; *Underground Railroad*, 1973a; The *Chronicle of Current Events*, 1974a; 1975d). Radical activists in Pascagoula High argued that "education is not prepared information, force-fed into young minds as our school thinks it is"; rather these activists believed that the purpose of education was to open a student's mind (*Alltogether*, 1973d, p.2). Some radical activists in El Paso went further, asserting that the only legitimate purpose of schools was to provide a student the skills she desired (*The Word*, 1970d). In fact radical activists in the South invested a lot of time and article space to expressing their viewpoint on what should be the purpose of education and the role of teachers, administrators, and students (*Issue*, 1970a; *The Word*, 1970a; *Plain Brown Watermelon*, 1970; *Uprising*, 1971b; *Alltogether*, 1973b). These opinions were published and presented to school board members across the South. Like their radical activists peers in Pennsylvania and California, these student activists believed that a teacher's role is to serve the needs and desires of each individual student and an administrator's task was to manage a school, not discipline students (*Observer*, 1970a; *Fusion*, circa 1970s; The *Probe*, 1971; *Beverly Stash*, 1971; *Local Rocks*, 1971b;). These opinions reflect radical activists' efforts to have high school students be actively involved in shaping high schools.

Student activists located in the South discussed in their underground newspapers reforms that were geared to radically changing schools. One very interesting proposal made by student activists in the South was that their school board adopt a teacher report card system. Under this system, students would be able evaluate the performance of their teachers (an idea utilized in colleges but never at the high school level). Several underground papers in the South attacked the grading system as an area in schools that needed radical reform (*Issue*, 1970a; *Plain Brown*

Watermelon, 1970; *Uprising*, 1971b; *Alltogether*, 1973b). One version of a reform that was proposed by students in Covington, Kentucky, argued that having such a dual-grading system (where students would grade teachers and vice-versa) would "provoke some kind of discussion between teachers and students about their relationships and teaching and learning methods" (The *Chronicle of Current Events*, 1974a, p.8). Many student activists in Texas contended that instituting such a system would force teachers to acknowledge the flaws of the grading system used on students (*Little Red School House*, 1970b; *The Word*, 1970a; 1970c)**.** Radical activists supported this proposal of grading teachers because they argued that in so doing students would be exercising a great deal of authority and influence in school matters, and teachers would loathe being graded so much that student activists would gain an ally in their fight to abolish grades altogether (*Issue*, circa 1970s; *The Word*, 1970c; The *Chronicle of Current Events* 1974a). This fight to abolish grades was aided by *FPS* and *CHIPS*; both organizations provided underground newspapers with a "Teacher Report Card" that was mass printed and distributed to students across the nation (*FPS*, 1973d; 1974b; *The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1974b).

Like their peers across the nation, radical activists in the South desired power to counter the decisions made by school administrators. Radical activists used the *Issue* to argue for the creation of a district-wide student court (composed of a student majority but also included teachers and an administrator) that would "have power to negate a specific school's administrative decisions" (*Issue*, 1970b, p.2). Unlike other proposals for a student court with oversight jurisdiction over policies set by local administrators, this reform called for giving the student court regulatory power second only to the school board (*Issue*, 1970b, p.2). Radical activists believed that school administrators should be required to make the case for suspending a student in front of a panel of students. Radical activists believed that students were deserving of

such rights because as one student asserted, "liberation of the oppressed minority, which in this case is US, requires the oppressed gaining power over their oppressors" (*Ball and Chain*, 1971, p.6). The ideology of youth empowerment was present in the South, and radical activists in the region identified their present high schools as oppressive institutions worthy of a radical overhaul. Hence, even though no Southern underground newspapers, from my collection, cited a free or alternative school this did not mean that radical activists in the South did not share the same views as their peers from other regions.

Big Picture Discussion of Alternative schools with Specialized curriculums and Free Schools
For students one of the greatest appeals of free or alternative schools with specialized curriculums was the ability to take courses not offered in traditional schools. In Philadelphia, Ronald Jenkins and Dave Power, both students at Lower Merion High School, argued that the course offerings and curriculum of the Free High Project allowed students to engage critically issues such as racism, oppression, the Vietnam War, and modern-day sociology (*Fusion*, circa early 1970s). The uniqueness of the courses was very attractive to high school students and directly spoke to student activists' critique of the lack of courses available in their traditional schools.

The existence of free and alternative schools with specialized curriculums like the Free High Project and Community High School (CHS) serves to support the assertion not only that student activists acted as educational reformers but that many of their reform proposals were feasible. These two schools serve as evidence that what intentional and even radical activists were calling for in a school could be realized. Both the Free High Project and CHS addressed student concerns over curriculum and autonomy by allowing students the ability to design their own courses focused on whatever issue they desired (*Fusion*, circa 1970s; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). In

some of these free or alternative schools with specialized curriculums students were even permitted to serve as instructors and teach courses to their peers. Furthermore, the Free High Project and CHS incorporated other items that were also part of the educational reforms high school activists in the 60s and 70s were clamoring for, such as no use of automatic suspensions, student selection of teachers and, most importantly, the inclusion of students in all policy decisions (*Fusion*, circa 1970s; *Pack Rat*, 1970b). Radical activists could praise CHS and the Free High Project as prototypes for how high schools should be constructed because many of the educational reforms student activists pushed for were present in both institutions.

The Cooperative Spirit of Radical Activists

In the 1960s and 1970s, radical activists were passionately focused on changing society as well as schools. These high school activists believed that they could impact society and bring about global reforms by calling attention to the inequalities that affected other oppressed groups (not just high school students). A common phrase found in many underground newspapers was, "we must first open our minds before we can change theirs" (*FPS*, 1973c, p. 3). Towards this end, radical activists in the 1970s utilized underground newspapers such as *FPS*, *The Midnight Special*, *Red Army*, *Renegade* and *Quack* to publish stories informing their peers about government oppression, racism (locally and abroad) and the Vietnam War. Radical activists did not ignore the challenges they faced as high school students. As a result, radical activists argued that tracking and grading were other methods by which students were oppressed (*FPS*, 1972a; *Red Army*. 1971d; *Rebels' Voice*, 1971c). Radical activists' struggle to improve society was connected to intentional activist's efforts to reform schools. For radical activists school administrators, police officers and foreign authoritarian regimes were all guilty of denying young people their legal and human rights (*FPS*, 1971b:1973d; *Red Army*,1971b; *The Red Tide*, 1975b).

In analyzing the actions of radical activists what was most impressive was the level of sophistication and dedication they displayed in fighting for student rights. Radical activists' ideological commitment to confronting global oppression did not prevent them from cooperating with intentional activists. Student activist organizations such as the Radical Student Union and various chapters of the High School Student Union allowed radical activists and intentional activists to organize protest that reflected their shared desire for student empowerment. Student activist organizations served as evidence that high school activists had become more autonomous. Through these student activist organizations radical and intentional activists were able to engage in activism without any assistance from adults or school leaders. Furthermore, the existence of these student activist organizations helped to form the backbone for what would be the Youth Empowerment Movement.

By the 1970s the Youth Empowerment Movement had fully emerged as a social movement led by high school students. The creation of *CHIPS* and *FPS* allowed radical activists and intentional activists to promote their educational reforms and fight for an end to the oppression of young people in society. During this Youth Empowerment Movement radical activists were able to protect as well as extend the constitutional rights of high school students by achieving victory in cases such *Bright v. Los Angeles Unified School District* in 1970 and *Quarterman v. Byrd* in 1971 (Glassner, 1972; Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Raskim, 2003). As part of the Youth Empowerment Movement high school activists were able to increase their level of independence because they won various rights and freedoms such as the ability to distribute underground newspapers on high school campuses (What Happens When Students Criticize, 1969; Gorton, 1970; Shapiro, 1971). Throughout the 1970s the Youth Empowerment Movement gained strength as intentional activists and radical activists utilized underground newspapers to

increase the number of mass protests at high schools (*FPS*, 1975e; Jones, 1975; Thorum, 1977; Graham, 2006). Intentional activists and radical activists were strongly united because both groups were intensely frustrated with the unwillingness of school administrators to adopt the educational reforms desired by student activists. However, the level of cooperation that existed between intentional and radical activists would not be displayed by school administrators. This next chapter will explore how school administrators were sharply divided into two camps over how to respond to student activism.

CHAPTER 5: THE INTERACTION BETWEEN SCHOOL LEADERS AND STUDENT ACTIVISTS

Overview

This chapter examines the varied response by school administrators to high school student activism. The discussion is organized first to investigate how school leaders handled incidental activists, and then to understand their policies for dealing with intentional activists. Lastly, this study explores the different tactics used by administrators to manage radical activists. Throughout this chapter efforts will be made to contrast student activists' observations of their high schools to the stated objectives of school administrators.

This study utilized professional journals for school administrators and educational policy leaders to understand how school leaders responded to student activism. This investigation reveals three major findings. First, school administrators, superintendents, and school board members can be categorized into two groups: "open-minded school leaders" and "heavy-handed school leaders" (Erickson et al., 1969; Trump & Hunt, 1969; Vacca, 1971; Graham, 2006).[6] Second, school leaders (mainly those who were "open-minded") wavered in their faith that student government and school-sponsored newspapers could be effective tools for curbing student activism. Thirdly, the ability of student activists to engage effectively in contentious politics and mobilization of resources forced school districts across the nation to revamp their discipline policies and develop sophisticated strategic response plans.

The Transformation of Youth Culture

The 1940s and 1950s gave birth to the formation of a distinct youth culture that was heavily influenced by consumerism. During this time teens became the chief beneficiaries of the

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[6] Graham (2006) acknowledges the existence of these two groups but instead utilizes the terms doves and hawks.

booming economy. It was not uncommon for a high school student to have a part-time job that provided a disposable income. It was believed that in the mid 1940s "American youth had an estimated spending capacity of $750 million" (Savage, 2007, p. 448). Because many youth chose to spend their money on fashion, film, and music, this new found wealth allowed young people to transform the way in which America dressed, the movies it saw, the music that was played.

Starting in the 1940s the entertainment industry slowly began to roll out new products that tapped into the youth market. Publications such as *Seventeen (1944), Tales from the Crypt (1950)* and comic books specifically targeted America's youth as their main audience (Mintz, 2004; Savage, 2007). Even adult centered publications such as *Life, Good Housekeeping, People Weekly* devoted space to covering issues related to youth culture (Mintz, 2004; Savage, 2007). Television shows such as *Mickey Mouse Club* (1955) and *American Bandstand* (1957), emerged with the intention of attracting young viewers (Mintz, 2004; Savage, 2007). However, no industry did more to cater to youth culture than the movie industry (Wyn & White, 1997; Mintz, 2004). Drive-in movie theaters began to focus almost exclusively to the "teen flick" with films such as *Live Fast, Die Young, High School Hellcats, Rebel without a Cause* and *Date Bait* (Mintz, 2004). These movies shared a common theme where young people were mainly depicted as bold, risk-taking individuals who were seeking to break-out of the control of adults. Even though these movies appealed to America's young people they also reflected the burgeoning concerns of adults—that the youth were alienated and maladjusted.

In spite of their newfound purchasing power youth continued to be seen by adults as immature and, thus, still in need of parental control. Many adults, in the 1950s, were preoccupied by reports of growing juvenile delinquency. According to Mintz (2004), "between 1948 and

1954 the number of youths appearing before juvenile courts increased 58 percent" (p. 293). It was becoming increasingly common to read news reports exploring teenagers' propensity towards violence and sex, involvement with gangs and drugs, and overall negative attitudes toward signs of authority (e.g. schools and police). In school settings the emergence of heavy-handed administrators was rooted in this fear that young people were out of control.

The concept of the alienated youth or maladjusted youth became popular in the 1950s as a way to describe teenagers who adults believed were rejecting established norms regarding appearance, language and social habits. Adults viewed these changes as signs that "young people were losing their morals and values" and that "America was being slowly corrupted and twisted from the inside out" (Stinchcombe, 1964, p. 49). School administrators who shared this belief argued that high schools had to uphold the values that youth culture was eroding. Heavy handed administrators urged their peers to tighten dress and grooming policies to ensure "a decency of appearance and reflection of properness (Administrative Techniques In Handling Discipline, 1955, p. 2).These school leaders along with many other adults were opposed to the changes occurring in youth culture and uncomfortable with the rapid pace with which the changes were taking place.

School Leaders Response to Incidental Activists: The Focus on "Alienated Youth" and "Maladjusted Students"

The history of high school activism from the 1950s to the 1970s reveals shifts in the policies and practices of school leaders. Examination of educational journals, such as *Nation's Schools*, *Journal of Secondary Education*, *School Management*, and the *High School Journal*, provides insight into the beliefs that influenced responses of school leaders towards the actions

of high school activists. However, in the 1950s school leaders in their journals did not focus on incidental student activists. In the 1950s school leaders did not describe the actions by some high school students to challenge specific school rules and policies as a form of social protest. Rather, school leaders characterized most forms of behavior that did not adhere to school policies as disruptive and labeled such students as maladjusted (Havighurst, 1958; Boorstin, 1969; Grinder, 1969; Wittes, 1970).

My examination of educational journals reveals that it was more common for school leaders to view incidental student activists as alienated youth. Many administrators argued that at the root of disruptive student behavior was an inability to connect positively with peers and no sense of belonging in the school community (Havighurst, 1958; Grinder, 1969; Wittes, 1970). Based on the historical documents utilized in this study the phrase "alienated" was equivalent to "maladjusted" (Slatery, 1942; Havighurst, 1958; Boorstin, 1969; Erickson et al., 1969). The term "alienated youth" was most commonly used to refer to young people who did not follow "the traditional values of society" but instead rebelled against authority without getting politically involved in any reform effort (Boorstin, 1969, p. 23). This lack of political involvement is one major factor that distinguishes alienated youth from the student activists that this study focuses on.

During the 1950s, many school leaders focused on addressing the problem of alienated youth (Klein, 1950; Classroom Discipline And Management In Secondary Schools, 1955; Erickson et al., 1969). Wittes (1970) argues that at the root of many student disruptions is the problem of emotional maladjustment. Emotional maladjustment serves as a "barrier that separates the individual from other people" (Slatery, 1942, p. 1). School leaders believed that

maladjusted students engaged in the following types of behaviors: "the excessively argumentative pupil…[and] the negative pupil, who is usually against any action that may be proposed…." (Slatery, 1942, p. 2). Maladjusted students were viewed as students who were negative for the sake of being negative. For many school leaders the outburst of student activism that was taking placing in schools across the nation was a sign that schools' problem with alienated youth was increasing at an alarming rate. (Classroom Discipline And Management In Secondary Schools,1955; Havighurst, 1958).

It would not be until the mid-1960s that educational journals began to distinguish student activism (behavior that can be disruptive but has a political agenda (such as challenging the dress code), from maladjusted behavior (lacking a political objective). Eventually, by the early 1970s, school leaders clearly became conscious of the massive social protest that was impacting institutions of higher education. Some of these administrators reexamined their high school campuses and realized that some of the students they once thought were alienated youth or maladjusted students were in fact student activists.

High school students, in their efforts to engage in educational reform, had to contend with school leaders who were charged with achieving an educational agenda. Historical documents indicate that in the 1950s school leaders did not feel threatened by the presence of incidental activists, those students who were interested in challenging specific school policies but were not committed to any ideological viewpoint or engaged in resource mobilization. Rather, in the 1950s the majority of school leaders (principals, superintendents, and school board members) examined student behavior through the lens of alienated youth. In addition, in terms of addressing student needs school leaders were more focused on restructuring high schools to meet

the growing number of high school students as well as the possibility of an increased role for the

federal government in education. As a result, the actions and specific demands of incidental

activists did not resonate among school administrators as a pressing concern.

Shifting Agenda for School Administrators: Intervention/interference by the Federal Government
One event that served as a major catalyst for change in high schools was the explosion in

population of high school students that took place in the postwar era. According to some

estimates in the 1950s general school enrollment was augmented by over 30% (Angus and Mirel,

1999; Mintz, 2004). In the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, high school principals and

superintendents were concerned over data pointing to possible teacher and school shortages

(Angus and Mirel, 1999). School leaders expressed angst over their abilities to educate and

regulate the rising number of young people entering high schools. In order to accommodate these

shifts there was an increase in the number of courses (such as physical education and health) that

were offered at the high school level (Angus and Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2004).

However, the federal government would soon take on a major role in shaping the

secondary curriculum. In the 1950s, school administrators witnessed an increase in federal

involvement in educational matters. The size of the federal budget for education doubled; this

was mostly in response to demands for more teachers and schools (Angus and Mirel, 1999). In

administrative journals there was a strong sentiment that the power of school boards would be

reduced if a district accepted federal money. School leaders feared that federal funding might

come with restrictions on how the money could be spent. In addition, school leaders believed

that federal funding might justify close government examination of the educational decisions

made by school boards and superintendents, such as hiring practices, curriculum development,

and school zoning policies.

In fact, the mid- to late-1950s were marked by a continued power struggle between the federal government and school leaders at the local level (school boards, superintendents, and principals). The 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case forced local school boards to alter if not abandon their zoning and segregation practices for student placement (Reese, 1995; Hall, 2005; Graham, 2006). In 1957, in a moment that shocked and stunned many school administrators, federal troops were utilized to integrate Central High School forcibly in Little Rock, Arkansas. The following year, partially in reaction to the launching of the Russian satellite Sputnik, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). This 1958 piece of legislation influenced school curricula across the nation by authorizing increased funding for scientific research and science education (Angus and Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2006). Some school leaders were not happy with what they believed was federal interference in local matters (Angus and Mirel, 1999; Mintz, 2006). Still compliance with NDEA was required for any school that wanted federal funding, and so the law was enforced even if against the wishes of some school leaders at the local level.

The struggle for power that took place between the federal government and school leaders did not trickle down into all areas of student life. Incidental activists recognized that dress and grooming code decisions were still made by the school board members and enforced by school administrators. In fact the situation was such that in a Los Angeles High School, in the 1950s, school administrators could change the dress code on a weekly basis without prior authorization from any other agency (Morris, 1997). For many high school students the strict dress and grooming policies were major issues. However, this sentiment was not shared by school board members and principals. Rather, school leaders utilized their space in educational

journals to discuss other aspects of student life, specifically the positive impact that student government and school newspapers could have on students.

The next section will examine the argument laid out by "open-minded" school administrators in support of school newspapers and student governments. What unites both programs was that they represented the authority that school leaders at the local level still had in determining the course of action of high schools. In contrast to the changes that took place in the 1950s in the realm of the curriculum and school segregation, some school leaders were "overjoyed to be able to exercise unquestioned control over some educational policies" (Grieder and Grider, 1968, p. 3). In addition, school newspapers and student governments represented an effort by open-minded school leaders to manage student behavior by creating opportunities for engaging maladjusted students. In fact my study found numerous articles, from the 1940s to the 1950s, that argued for the increased use of student government and school-sponsored newspapers as vehicles for instilling leadership among high school youth (Hill, 1939; Lafferty, 1944; Dane, 1950; McMonies, 1950; Shipp 1950). Open-minded school leaders disagreed with their colleagues who favored heavy-handed approaches to address the problem of maladjusted students.

The Fight over Student Governments
School administrators defined student government[7] as "the major organization of the student body through which these activities, mainly co-curricular, are financed, supervised, and controlled" (Shipp, 1950, p. 1). In the 1950s, open-minded school leaders argued that student government provided training in ethical decision-making, increased students' civic awareness,

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[7] It should be noted that throughout the historical documents the terms student "government," "council," are used interchangeably. The same will be followed in this document

and, lastly, provided students with opportunities to serve others (Dane, 1950; Shipp, 1950). In fact several open-minded school leaders strongly believed that developing leadership skills and instilling values "must always be the chief objective of any student council" (Dane, 1950, p. 1).

Many open-minded school leaders expressed faith that student governments were effective mechanisms for engaging students and addressing their needs. As a result, in the 1950s, many school administrators supported student government by defending or even increasing the use of school funds for the organization (Some Hints On Student Government, 1950; McMonies, 1950). According to the superintendent of one California school district, "students should be attracted to the opportunity to vocalize their concerns among peers" (The Student Council Handbook, 1950, p. 3). Several school leaders supported funding student government because they argued it would reduce the number of students unhappy with the conditions of the school (The Student Council Handbook, 1950; Shipp 1950). Furthermore, Dane argued that "in order to prevent students from making mistakes, and often serious ones [in their personal lives]…administrators should allow student council freedom to make decisions" (1950, p. 3). However, accounts from incidental activists indicate that some students believed that student council could decide only minor issues such as the location of the prom (Forum On Student Participation In School Government, 1950; Morris, 1999; Graham, 2006). The actions of the incidental activists in Berkeley, California who in 1950 stood outside of their student council meeting and spoke out against school policies served as evidence that the organization was not meeting expectations (Klein, 1950). In spite of this there was still a dominant perspective held by school administrators that student governments were effective tools for addressing student needs.

However, a few school administrators desired to give student councils increased status by expanding their responsibilities and duties (Shipp, 1950; The Student Council Handbook, 1950; Olsen, 1954; "Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963). One suggestion included "giving the student council an actual place in the curriculum;" a few school administrators believed that student government members should have an input on course offerings (The Student Council Handbook, 1950, p. 2). Other open-minded school leaders advised that student council members "meet daily as a 'Leadership Class' for which credit is given" (Shipp, 1950, p. 3). In this leadership class students would receive formal training in decision-making as well as utilize the time to hold discussions of current issues and proposals that affect the student body (Shipp, 1950). It is interesting to note that a decade later, in the 1960s and even in the 1970s, intentional and radical activists would advocate the very same revisions to the practices and responsibilities of student governments.

Heavy-handed school leaders, in contrast to their open-minded colleagues, were not interested in giving high school students more power. One reason that student governments were not given increased rights and responsibilities is that heavy-handed school leaders were concerned about the possibility of allowing student councils to become too strong (Shipp, 1950; The Student Council Handbook, 1950; Anderson, 1952). According to one administrator, "while it is important to strengthen the feelings of belonging among students, there must still be clear lines of obligation and respect for authority" (Shipp, 1950, p. 4). Towards this end these heavy handed school administrators argued that faculty members should sit in on student government meetings and report back to the principal regarding all student council proposals (Shipp, 1950; The Student Council Handbook, 1950). This sentiment remained present among school

administrators in the 1960s and in the 1970s ("Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963; Grieder, 1967; Mcguire, 1970; Graham, 2006).

No evidence was found that suggested that any high school in the 1950s implemented the policies suggested by open-minded administrators. In spite of the presence of open-minded school leaders incidental activists were treated as alienated students in the 1950s. School leaders that favored using a heavy-handed approach were able to prevent any serious reforms to student newspapers and student councils. Instead of adopting the changes proposed by open-minded school leaders many high schools continued to use suspensions and other disciplinary measures to respond to incidental activists. The division that existed between open-minded school leaders and those that favored a more disciplinary approach to student activism would continue into the 1960s.

At the 1969 National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) conference, which over 10,000 principals and school administrators attended, there was a small faction of open-minded school leaders that were willing to improve the opportunities that existed for student involvement in decision-making (Trump & Hunt, 1969). According to John J. Howard, principal of Northern Valley High School (New Jersey), "possible areas of involvement might concern rules and regulations affecting discipline, cafeteria, dress standards, school newspapers, yearbooks, assembly programs, grading systems, and even furniture and equipment selection" (Trump & Hunt, 1969, p. 2). Open-minded administrators viewed high school activists as individuals who felt powerless but were motivated to seek changes to their schools (Olsen, 1954; "Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963; Grieder, 1967; Mcguire, 1970). At the NASSP conference school leaders like Mr. Howard sought to develop student government as

a vehicle for mollifying student protest. In contrast, the majority of school leaders present at the conference indicated that their focus would be not on increasing student participation but rather on improving the lines of communication between administrators and teachers.

As student protest increased in the mid-late 1960s heavy-handed school leaders became even more hesitant to empower student government with new rights or responsibilities. One school superintendent expressed the belief that school leaders had "lost control of our students. The student council cannot become a site where students go to hatch their plans for dissension and rebellion" (Lowe, 1961, p. 2). These school leaders wanted to remind students (including those on student government) that administrators were still in complete control of their high schools. A chorus of school leaders argued that school principals should utilize with greater frequency their ability to veto ideas presented by the student council (Lowe, 1961; Swat Students Who Misbehave, 1964; Erickson et al., 1969; "Schoolmen Split Over Student Involvement," 1969). In addition, these heavy-handed school administrators favored restricting the activities and responsibilities which could be delegated to the students.

Student Empowerment via Student Government
Another source of conflict between student activists and school administrators was the issue of student representation on student government. School administrators stated that they structured their programs so that the student council should represent all the students of the school (Shipp, 1950; Some Hints On Student Government, 1950; The Student Council Handbook, 1950). In the 1950s, some school leaders expressed a desire to increase the representation in student government so that students who were once identified as "outcasts could be invited into the daily fold" (Shipp, 1950, p. 4). During the 1960s, several school administrators indicated that they believed that their student governments had representatives

from all student demographic groups (Erickson et al., 1969; "Student Involvement," 1969). However, student activists strongly disagreed with this analysis. According to Joan, an intentional activist, "the student government does not represent the real students. You're only allowed to join if you are in 'good standing' with the teachers. That excludes the very students who would need representation…student government is a puppet of the teachers and principal" (*FPS*, 1970a, p. 17). This critique of student government was echoed in underground student newspapers throughout the nation and continued well into the 1970s.

In the 1960s open-minded school leaders continued to argue, just as they had done in the previous decade, that student activism could be redirected through student councils. Open minded some school leaders argued that student activism would not abate until legitimate efforts were made to provide students with opportunities to exercise increased decision-making ("Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963; Grieder, 1967; Herr, 1972). According to one report, "school administrators, for example, may face more turmoil than necessary in the next few years if they sustain 'Mickey Mouse' student councils whose chief role is to set the date of the student prom—subject to faculty approval, of course" (Cohodes, 1969, p. 1). A contingent of school administrators favored empowering students via student government by allowing students to have input in some school decisions ("Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963; Erickson et al., 1969; Shapiro, 1971; Vacca, 1971). Intentional activists certainly would have supported school administrators who advocated such policies, thus leading to increased cooperation between student activists and school administrators. Unfortunately, school leaders were not in complete agreement regarding the issue of expanding the rights and responsibilities of student councils.

In the 1960s, heavy-handed school administrators were once again able to stifle the reforms proposed by open-minded school leaders. Historical evidence indicates that rather than empowering students many school leaders elected to assign faculty to baby-sit the student council as well as limit its jurisdiction to minor issues and avoid hot-button items, such as curriculum, teacher evaluation, and discipline policies (Cohodes, 1969; Erickson et al., 1969; Graham, 2006). This decision by school leaders served to frustrate student activists and contributed to the emergence of radical activists. For some student activists the inability of school leaders to acknowledge their grievances by working with the organization created to address student grievances pushed them closer to adopting the radical activist belief that "the entire school system is incapable of changing" (*FPS*, 1975c, p. 33). Once again the division between school leaders who were open-minded about student activism and those who adopted a hard-line stance against youth activism stalled student activists' efforts to reform their high schools.

The Fight over the School-Sponsored Student Newspaper

In an effort to counter the problem of alienated youth open-minded school leaders in the 1940s and 1950s advocated the development of school-sponsored student newspapers. Some educational scholars argued that schools should encourage the success of school newspaper programs (Lafferty, 1944; Dane 1950). School newspapers had the potential to provide a sense of social identity and purpose for the students who were part of the news staff (Lafferty, 1944; Dane 1950). In addition, for the students who were not staff members, school newspapers could instill in them a sense of belonging and community ownership. According to Lafferty, such newspapers have the capacity to ensure that students are "aided in achieving a fair measure of group recognition and approval, a condition essential to a well-balanced, normal life" (Lafferty,

1944, p. 1). Furthermore, school newspapers fill a common need because "people like to see their name in print" (Lafferty, 1944, p 2). Many school leaders argued that meeting this need was an essential component of ensuring that students were wholesome individuals "who did not lack for an identity or sense of community" (Dane, 1950, p. 2). In addition it was argued that school newspapers have the capacity to counter feelings of alienation that might exist in some youth (Lafferty, 1944; Dane, 1950; Fine, 1969).

Another benefit for administrators supporting the school newspaper was that it could serve as a forum in which students could publish their desired policies and others could vote on the suggestions. According to Fine, "school administrators have a vested interest in establishing school newspapers. Such organizations allow students a medium to communicate with their peers" (Fine, 1969, p. 3). In addition, student-led school newspapers allowed administrators "to remain well informed regarding the thoughts and opinions of the student populace" (Dane, 1950, p. 3). Several other school leaders agreed that one way to overcome indifference toward student government was to utilize the student newspaper to keep all students informed of the school's decisions (McMonies, 1950; "Some hints…," 1950; McGuire, 1970). As one school administrator put it, "the school newspaper if used right can build up school morale and motivate students to support their schools…" (Gothberg, 1968, p. 2).

However, this approach was not effective in addressing activist youth. In contrast to alienated youth who felt completely disconnected from the educational institution, incidental activists and youth activists in general were connected to their schools. Incidental activists wanted to see changes to specific school policies but were overall content with their educational institutions. As described by Morris (1997), the incidental activist students who opposed LA

High's dress and grooming policies still participated in the school dance, voted for student government, regularly attended classes and for the most part obeyed the authority of school administrators. Incidental activists were active members of the school community. Hence efforts focused on bringing in students into the school social scene had little to no effect on addressing the concerns of incidental activists.

The constant shifting of agendas for school administrators created an environment in which they were not able to see the build-up of frustration among a population of their students. Historical evidence points to the fact that, during the 1950s, school administrators targeted alienated youth and focused on developing programs to address their needs (Wittes, 1970). This emphasis created a situation in which the desires of incidental activists were overlooked. School administrators who supported the use of student government believed that "pupils are able to gather the opinions of the student body and present their grievances to the principal" (Forum On Student Participation In School Government, 1950, p. 2). However, such a belief did not align with the sentiment expressed by many incidental activists that student government did not represent the opinions of all students (*The Vast Minority*, 1969c; Birmingham 1970; Herr, 1972; Graham, 2006).

In fact the emergence of intentional activists can be connected to the inability of school administrators to recognize that a portion of their student population was greatly dissatisfied with their student governments. The educational goals and objectives set for and by school leaders were in a state of flux during the 1950s. In order to keep up with society's expectations school administrators exercised their authority to create, revise, and enforce educational policies. But even though these changes directly impacted the lives of high school students, they were made

without incorporating the voices of incidental activists. The vast majority of school leaders who favored a heavy-handed approach for dealing with student activism ignored pleas from open-minded school administrators to restructure student governments and school newspapers to provide students with more opportunities to make their thoughts heard. As frustration set in for incidental activists the path was cleared for intentional activists to make some noise and gain the attention of school leaders.

Shift in Youth Culture

The division that existed between heavy-handed school leaders and their open-minded counterparts was exacerbated by their contrasting responses to the attitudes about youth. As previously discussed, shifts in America's economy during the 1920s to the 1940s spurred the creation of the cultural concept of youth (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Savage, 2007). The concept of 'youth' as it was understood before the 1960s signified a stage of life where an individual was carefree, and without purpose (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Savage, 2007). According to Howard (1974), "historically, the status of youth has been associated with subordination and dependence" (p. 165). In the 1950s many adults viewed youth as childish; that is to say that teenagers were believed to have more in common with children than adults (Mintz, 2004). During this time school leaders, along with most adults, subscribed to the belief that to be a youth meant that you were not ready to make your own decisions about serious matters such as marriage or starting a career (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004). School leaders were accustomed to a stratified system in which they stood above high school students and youth were required to respect and obey the authority of adults.

However, the Civil Rights movement helped to spur a shift in youth culture. As African-Americans challenged long established beliefs about the inferiority of Blacks, high school students took note. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s incidental, intentional and radical student activists attacked the previously held ideology that young people were disinterested and not serious about their future. The Youth Empowerment Movement offered an alternative perspective of young people by striving to disprove the perception of youth as individuals who were without care, aloof and simple-minded (Howard, 1974). Incidental activists challenged specific school policies that they believed were unfair. Intentional and radical activists participated in "adult issues" by protesting racial discrimination, attending Civil Rights rallies and taking part in sit-ins and boycotts. Radical activists writing for FPS declared that "they can't continue to hold on to the world that once was. Blacks are gaining rights. People are dying in the streets for their rights! Students must gain our rights! We can not let this pass by being idle and scarred about the consequences. We are no longer their 'little boys' or 'little girls'… we are humans…we demand our rights" (1975c, p. 22). By critiquing the perceptions of young people as disinterested and childish, high school activists were expanding the definition of youth.

Open-minded school leaders were adults who were willingly to view youth as individuals capable of understanding adult issues. Open-minded school leaders viewed student government and the school sponsored newspaper as tools that allowed young people to engage, in matters often confined to adults. In contrast, heavy-handed school leaders held on to the negative stereotypes that young people were not interested or ready to participate in adult decisions. These school leaders continued the belief of previous administrators that high school youth had no role to play in evaluating or reforming school policies. As a result, many school leaders viewed the

emergence of incidental activists not as part of a shift in youth culture but as isolated incidents of alienated youths.

School Administrators and Intentional Activists

As a result, school administrators' response to the emergence of student activism was for the most part delayed and hesitant. The majority of school leaders held on to the belief that high school youth were not interested in the larger issues that affected society. Examination of academic journals written by secondary education administrators reveals that many of these school leaders were deeply surprised by student protests during the 1960s. Grieder (1963) argues that many principals and superintendents during the early 1960s were in denial regarding not only the mere presence of high school activists but also the extent and seriousness of student protest. Another article cited several school leaders who declared that the emergence of student activists on their high school campuses was completely spontaneous and unexpected (Grieder and Grider, 1968). The inability of school leaders to address the concerns of incidental activists effectively left them unprepared for the emergence of intentional activists.

Many open-minded school administrators were uncertain how to respond to intentional student activists. According to Walter Crewson, Associate Commissioner for elementary, secondary and continuing education for the state of New York, "we've been preaching participation and responsibility (to the students), and all of a sudden now that they believe us, we're afraid" (Thomson, 1969, p. 1). Other school leaders expressed concern regarding the message they were sending students by opposing student activism (Hendrick & Jones, 1972). One school principal, Warren Settles, from Junction City, Kansas, stated, "Wouldn't it be terrible if our young generation were not concerned with hunger, war, drugs, crime, disease and basic

moral beliefs" (Trump & Hunt, 1969, p. 1). School leaders that favored a heavy-handed approach believed that student participation in social protest could be offset by adding stiffer penalties (Abrell and Hanna, 1971; Hoffman, 1972; Graham, 2006).

There appeared to be a level of naiveté or flat-out denial that existed among some school administrators about the nature of student activism. They assumed that student activism affected only certain school districts (Lucey, 1967; Cohodes, 1969; Honn, 1969; Graham, 2006). It is true that studies found that student protests occurred most frequently in urban school districts (Thompson, 1969; "What student..," 1969; Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Graham, 2006). Yet this does not mean that incidents of protest did not occur in suburban or rural schools (Erickson et al., 1969; Thompson, 1969; Herr, 1972; Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Graham, 2006). Some school leaders were also naïve regarding the "source" of student protest. Cohodes (1969) surveyed several high school principals in 1969 and found that they were fully aware of the social protest that had overwhelmed many colleges and universities. In fact, many school administrators believed that college students were directly responsible for the rise in student activism that took place in the 1960s (Erickson et al., 1969; Taylor, 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1972; Graham, 2006). However, many of these administrators were unsure of their school's protocols in response to massive student unrest (Trump & Hunt, 1969; Schneider, 1970; Hoffmann, 1972).

In many school districts, school leaders argued that high school students were simply following the lead of college students (Cohodes, 1969; Taylor, 1969; Vacca, 1971). Administrators who subscribed to this belief focused their effort on closely monitoring the distribution of ideas and papers around school grounds ("Student unrest," 1968; Caliguri, 1968; Lucey, 1967; Hoffmann, 1972). However, several studies and scholars confirmed that almost all

high school student activist organizations, protests, and rallies were spearheaded by high school

students without any supervision from their college-aged peers (Taylor, 1968; Thompson, 1969;

Wagschal, 1969; Abrell and Hanna; 1971; Herr, 1972). Many school administrators agreed that

there were several sources of student protest: frustration with inflexible school leaders; angst

over school policies that students deemed too restrictive; feelings that student rights and voice

were not respected by school leaders (Thompson, 1969; What student activists are doing?, 1969;

Hendrick and Jones, 1972). Unfortunately, historical evidence suggests that during the 1960s

many school leaders decided to overlook these factors, focusing instead on eliminating the

presence of outside agitators such as college students (Trump & Hunt, 1969; Study of student

unrest, 1970; Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Sapp, 1973).

Some school leaders thought that home life influenced the rise in student activism. On

March 1, 1969, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) met in San

Francisco to discuss issues that impacted secondary schools. During that convention school

leaders argued that "one cause of the new militancy is that activist students usually come from

permissive, liberal homes and encounter strict authority and discipline for the first time in the

schools" (Trump & Hunt, 1969, p. 1). These school leaders believed that some student activists

came from families where they were encouraged to take part in decision-making alongside their

parents. In contrast, high school administrators were uncomfortable if not unwilling to provide

students with meaningful opportunities to shape the policies of schools.

A 1968 article titled "Student Unrest Will Spread to High Schools, Many Fear," in

Nation's Schools warned high school administrators of the youth empowerment social

movement. Authors cited the development of the high school student activist organizations in

cities across the nation ("Student Unrest," 1968). According to the author, "more than 200 students there worked through the summer and fall to organize the 300,000 students in the city's [New York's] more than 100 public and private high schools" ("Student Unrest," 1968, p. 1). Several other reports warned school leaders that activist students were committed to changing high schools (Cullen, 1968; What Happens When Students Criticize, 1969; What student activists are doing?, 1969). Editors at *Nation's Schools* informed administrators that student activists utilized their student organizations in order to "end censorship in student publications, liberalize dress codes, obtain high school draft counseling services, and participate in policy decisions and curriculum reform" (High School Activists Tell What They Want, 1968, p. 1). Later the next year a National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) study found that over sixty-seven percent of high schools reported incidents of student protest (Trump & Hunt, 1969). Intentional and radical activists were absolutely committed to advancing their Youth Empowerment social movement. As one student stated, "they [school administrators] better recognize that we are the future and that change is coming to this school and this country. Like it or not, us students are going to make some serious changes" (*FPS*, 1973c, p. 28).

The Power of High School Activists

High school student organizations proved that they were very adept at resource mobilization; that is, the ability to unite and organize large numbers of high school students for a common purpose. Heavy-handed school administrators, who at first doubted the ability of high school students to organize, were overwhelmed by the size and frequency of protests which intentional and radical activists were able to generate (McGowan, 1968; Thomson, 1969; Herr, 1972). For instance, in response to the loss of holidays and the extension of class days that was created as part of the solution to the 1969 teachers' strike in New York City, high school activist

organizations pulled off a massive city-wide protest (Pileggi, 1969; Libarle & Seligson 1970).

According to the Board of Education, on December 2, the day of the protest, an estimated 35

percent of the 1.1 million public school students missed school (Pileggi, 1969). However, student

participation was not the only resource that student activists worked to mobilize. The students

who managed underground newspapers were able to utilize each other by sharing equipment,

ideas, and space. School leaders continued to be amazed, and some terrified, by the ability of

student activists to publish and distribute hundreds of underground newspapers, leaflets, and

protest pamphlets within short periods of time (Lucey, 1967; McGowan, 1968; Honn, 1969).

As the Youth Empowerment Movement continued, intentional activists and radical

activists continued to use underground newspapers to wage their fight for increased student

rights. Even though radical activists were primarily interested in exploring options for

empowering students outside the walls of schools (i.e. alternative and free schools) they were

still willing to join intentional activists in forcing school administrators to make serious changes

to school-sponsored newspapers. Editors in the *Pack Rat* stated that, "the censorship that occurs

in the so called 'student newspaper' limits the voice of the students and therefore cannot be

allowed to exist" (*Pack Rat*, 1970b). Like their predecessors, intentional and radical activists

believed that the censorship by administrators prevented the school-sponsored newspaper from

being an effective vehicle for engaging student activists. However, unlike incidental activists,

intentional and radical activists operating in the 1960s and 1970s would find that they had the

complete attention of school administrators.

School Administrators Vying with Underground Newspapers

In the 1960s and 1970s, another issue that deeply divided school administrators was in deciding how to respond to underground newspapers. Unlike the 1950s, school leaders in the 1960s and 1970s had to contend with the ability of students to publicize their criticism of high schools. The advent of underground newspapers such as *Alternative, Rebels' Voice* and *High School Action* allowed intentional activists and later on radical activists an opportunity to express their views on school policies. School leaders that were open-minded to student activism saw underground newspapers as an unnecessary replication of school sponsored student newspapers (Erickson, et al., 1969). For open-minded school administrators the school sponsored student newspaper allowed alienated and maladjusted students to express their opinions without resorting to violence (Cullen, 1968; High School Activists Tell What They Want, 1968; "Student Involvement," 1969). These administrators shared the perspective that was held by several of their peers in the 1950s that schools should use student newspapers to empower and engage students. In contrast, the sudden appearance of underground newspapers spurred school administrators that had favored a heavy-handed approach to student protest in the 1950s to adopt a tougher stance against student activism in the 1960s.

In the 1960s and 1970s, many heavy-handed school administrators felt threatened and angered by the contents found in underground newspapers (Lowe, 1961; Swat Students Who Misbehave, 1964; Divoky, 1970). In fact only a small number of school leaders acknowledged that they had read an entire issue of an underground newspaper or agreed to meet with their writers for an interview (Cullen, 1968; "Crusader For Conciliation?", 1972). Some intentional and radical activists believed that school administrators used the harsh punishment of suspensions to deal with students who distributed underground newspapers because they wanted

to suppress opinions that challenged their established power (High School Activists Tell What They Want, 1968; *Pack Rat*, 1969b). Examination of educational journals reveals that to a certain extent student activists' concerns about school administrators were well founded. School leaders who favored a heavy-handed approach based their opposition to underground newspapers on the premise that such publications promoted anti-establishment rhetoric and attempted to generate mass protest by the general student population (Garber, 1966; "Student Unrest Will Spread To High Schools, Many Fear", 1968; Brodbelt, 1970). By the 1960s and 1970s, heavy-handed school leaders viewed underground newspapers as warning signs that trouble was coming to their schools. Interestingly enough, as articulated by Herr (1972), "school leaders picked up on the danger signs too late;" underground newspapers more accurately indicated that youth activists had already arrived on campus and were organized for protest (p. 1).

In contrast, school leaders who were open-minded to student activism found redeeming qualities to underground newspapers. These open-minded administrators advised their peers to read underground newspapers because the publications offered a direct insight into the concerns of the student population that were often considered alienated (from peers) and misguided ("Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making,"1963; Grieder, 1967). Many high school administrators who adopted an open-minded approach to student activism took such a stance because they examined underground newspapers and found some of the commentary to be insightful (Grieder, 1967; Herr, 1972; Graham, 2006). These school leaders did take offense to the lewd and vulgar language used by student activists. But they were able to go behind the word choice and analyze the arguments and educational proposals posited by student activists in underground newspapers.

In some instances underground newspapers did allow student activists to exchange ideas and collaborate with open-minded school administrators. Student activists at Ithaca High School (New York) had a positive relationship with their principal, Mr. Musco. Even though intentional activists writing in the underground newspaper, *School Spirit,* criticized several of the school policies, Mr. Musco still allowed the paper to interview him. In the interview students pushed Mr. Musco to justify the school's restrictions of activist student organizations as well as explain how student activists could accomplish some of their goals (*School Spirit*, 1977). The intentional activists that were responsible for *School Spirit* were also active members of the local student activists' organization, the Student Association. However, Mr. Musco's interview for the *School Spirit* did not mean that he completely supported student activists. In his interview, Mr. Musco declared that he believed that an underground newspaper and other attempts to mobilize students were "too close to the line of disrupting learning and distracting students" (*School Spirit*, 1977, p. 1). Mr. Musco told the intentional activists that he remained committed to limiting the actions of the Student Association (*School Spirit*, 1977). What puzzled some administrators like Mr. Musco was why student activists could not express the same concerns in the school-sponsored newspapers. For many student activists and school leaders the answer was censorship.

Student activists were upset with the amount of censorship that took place with school-sponsored newspapers (High School Activists Tell What They Want, 1968; "Coming To Grips With The Underground Press," 1972). According to student activists, "the school paper is a joke, you can't say anything bad about those lazy, crooked administrators who abuse their power" (*Red Army*, 1971c, p. 4). In the educational journals examined in this study there was only minor mention of completely removing censorship restrictions on school newspapers; an idea that was frequently demanded by intentional and radical activists. However, in terms of giving students

more latitude to critique school administrators, some school leaders stated that they were already practicing this ("Crusader For Conciliation?" 1972), whereas others indicated that they would consider it ("Schoolmen Split Over Student Involvement," 1969; Osen, 1971; Sapp, 1973). Revising censorship restrictions on school sponsored student newspapers was a topic of frequent debate among adult educators (Grieder, 1967; McGowan, 1968; "Schoolmen," 1969). The only consensus opinion that developed was that each school would assess its own situation (which for student activists meant status quo on the issue of loosening censorship). Yet these events were important because they indicated that, at least within their educational journals, school leaders did examine some of the ideas for reforming schools that were proposed in underground newspapers by student activists.

In publication after publication school leaders, in the 1970s, remained divided regarding their response to the demands of student activists (Shapiro, 1971; Sapp, 1973; Jones, 1975; Thorum, 1977). In contrast, student activists were more united in their fight for youth empowerment. As a result, high school activists were able to achieve their biggest educational reforms through the legal system. Radical activists, because they were the students willingly to go outside of the school walls, spearheaded the efforts to use the court system to challenge the authority of school leaders. They were able to produce educational reform in various areas, from freedom of expression in schools and student rights regarding school newspapers to the use of suspensions by administrators.

Intentional and radical student activists were unrelenting in their public criticism of school principals, school board members, and even superintendents. These high school students were aware of and willing to utilize their First Amendment protections. Unfortunately, during the

1950s and 1960s the vast majority of school leaders did not completely acknowledge such rights

for high school students (Lowe, 1961; Swat Students Who Misbehave, 1964; Herr, 1972;

Graham, 2006). According to intentional activists, "it is past time students were allowed to

practice, without punishment or threat of it, what is preached to them in US government classes

about the Bill of Rights" (*FPS*, 1975a, p. 9). Radical activists successfully took to the courts to

argue for protection of their First Amendment rights. School leaders were stunned at the

decisions in cases such as *Bright v. Los Angeles Unified School District* (1970), *Eisner v.

Stamford Board of Education* (1970) and *Quarterman v. Byrd* (1971). Superintendents and

principals alike did not anticipate the courts would support student free speech rights over the

authority and duty of school officials ("High School Students Are Rushing into Print and Court,"

1969; Knowles, 1971). After swallowing their pride, some school districts responded to student

activists' demands and by creating documents that identified students' rights and protections

(Hendrick and Jones, 1972; Hudgins; 1972; *FPS*, 1977; Graham, 2006).

Given the willingness of radical activists to involve the legal system in their fight for

youth empowerment, several resolutions were also reached in terms of the school newspaper.

Student activists' discontent with school-sponsored newspapers resulted in an explosion of

underground newspapers. One report estimated that in 1969 there were over 200 underground

student newspapers in the nation ("Student Activism Grabs the Spotlight," 1969). One

superintendent vehemently opposed underground newspapers because they were "published

without administrative approval or support or faculty guidance" (Ashbaugh, 1969, p. 1). For

some time during the 1960s it was unclear if student activists had a legal right to publish and

distribute underground newspapers in a school or on school grounds. Intentional and radical

activists argued that the constitutional guarantee of free speech assured them as citizens the right

to publish their critiques of the principal, school board, and school policy. To the displeasure of many school leaders, several school districts were informed by their lawyers that student activists were within legal authority to publish their viewpoints (What Happens When Students Criticize, 1969; Gorton, 1970; Shapiro, 1971). As a result, many school board members and principals reluctantly decided to "ignore the existence of underground newspapers" (Gorton, 1970, p. 5).

School leaders who advocated a hard-line response to student activism were equally upset with student activists' victories regarding the right to distribute underground newspapers on school grounds. In the late 1960s and 1970s many school leaders invested time in their educational journals to examine the legal merits of student activists' challenge against school administrators (Knowles, 1969; "Schoolmen Split Over Student Involvement," 1969; Hudgins, 1972). Many school leaders sought legal counsel and asked on what basis an administrator could interfere with a student's first amendment rights ("High School Students Are Rushing into Print and Court," 1969; Knowles, 1969; Hoffmann, 1972). Before the case of *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969) many school leaders expressed confidence that any student behavior that took place on school grounds was subject to the approval of school officials (La Morte, Gentry & Young, 1971; Gorr, 1973). However, cases such as *Tinker v. Des Moines*, and *Scoville vs. Joliet, Illinois Board of Education* (1970) disproved that theory. Operating on a national scale the Tinker case was a blow to the ability of school leaders to regulate student expression. On the matter of distribution the court verdict in *Scoville* meant to some school leaders that their "ability to control the events that take place on school grounds has been greatly restricted…" (Knowles, 1971, p. 2). High school activists were able to utilize contentious politics and successfully limit the authority of school leaders.

However, as was the case with other court verdicts, news of the students' victory did not immediately mean the end of certain practices. High school activists were not always able to produce educational reforms that had a universal impact. A small number of school leaders in other states took heed of Scoville (1970) and altered their behavior (Knowles, 1971). Open-minded school leaders were already willing to compromise with student activists and wanted to get these students involved with their schools' student governments and school- sponsored newspapers (Honn, 1969; "Student Involvement," 1969; "Crusader For Conciliation?", 1972). Others were school board members, principals, and superintendents eager to stay out of court (Knowles, 1969; Hoffmann, 1972; Jones, 1975). Nonetheless, the *Scoville* verdict applied only to public schools in the state of Illinois. Therefore, post *Scoville*, there continued to be reported incidents where students were suspended for distributing underground newspapers on school grounds (*Underground Railroad*, 1973c; *Screwdriver*, 1974; *FPS*, 1977).

It is fair to say that many school leaders vehemently opposed not just the legal decisions but the fact that educational reforms originated in the court room (Garber, 1967; "High School Students Are Rushing into Print and Court," 1969; Knowles, 1971). Just as was the case in the 1950s with the passage of *Brown v. Board of Education* or even the implementation of NDEA in 1958, many school administrators, superintendents, and school board members were furious with outsiders interfering with their locally controlled schools. Scott Thompson, superintendent of a school district in Illinois, stated "those zealots who want students to play at school all the games of the adult world under the aegis of civil rights…simply do not understand the Pandora's box they're attempting so righteously to unlock" (Graham, 2006, p. 175). Thompson's response reflects the beliefs of school leaders who elected to resist, ignore, or flat out reject intentional

activist attempts to work with school administrators and board members. This hard-line tactic pushed some intentional activists towards radical activism.

Yet, school leaders that favored a heavy-handed approach rejected the argument that their continued anti-student activist stance only spurred more protest (Shapiro, 1971; Sapp, 1973; Jones, 1975). Instead some school leaders remained convinced that student activists were misguided youth who were being directed by college groups and outside agitators (McGowan, 1968; Honn, 1969; Sapp, 1973; Jones, 1975; Graham, 2006). In light of the court verdicts clarifying and at times asserting the constitutional rights of students these school leaders favored using suspensions and expulsions and thus maintained a hard-line response towards student activism.

Victory: Reforms in Dress Codes and Grooming Policies

Student activists were able to utilize a combination of legal pressure and social protest to achieve educational reform with regard to dress and grooming codes. Incidental activists' disregard for school dress codes continued into the 1960s. Even though intentional activists believed that dress codes were only part of a larger system of abuse by school leaders, they used underground newspapers to push against these policies (*Alternative*, 1969; *High School Action*, 1973b; *FPS*, 1970a). Soon enough some school leaders recognized that "adopting dress codes…created for themselves far more problems than they would have without a dress code" (Scriven and Harrison, 1970, p. 3). By the late 1960s, many high schools had adopted more lax dress codes (Stough, 1974; Graham, 2006). The dress and grooming policies that had existed in the 1950s were abandoned for policies that were more prohibitive than prescriptive (Scriven and Harrison, 1970; Heussenstamm, 1972b; Graham, 2006). By the mid 1970s in many school

districts the tide had completely shifted. Gone were policies that outlined what students should wear, or that mandated a certain hair length. Instead radical high school activists used the courts to force these changes. Students correctly argued that dress and appearance were extensions of expression and that any regulation of dress was an unconstitutional violation of students' First Amendment rights.

Charges of Racism

The dramatic social protest of the 1960s was driven by the fight of African-Americans for Civil Rights. As a result, racial issues and charges of racism became hot-button topics in America. Organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were committed to bringing national attention to the wholesale discrimination against African Americans that existed in the United States (Howard, 1974, Carson, et al.,1999; Riches, 2004).The efforts of these organizations along with the mass coverage by news channels made the entire country more aware of racism and discriminatory practices (Billings, 1970; Howard, 1974, Carson, et al.,1999; Riches, 2004). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1964 represented major reforms of American laws (Howard, 1974; Carson, et al., 1999, Riches, 2004). These new laws were evidence that slowly but surely the fight against racism was producing change. However, by the 1970s it was evident that school administrators that advocated a heavy-handed approach against activism were not willing to address the concerns of racism in their schools that were expressed by intentional and radical student activists.

Starting in the late 1960s, radical activists became increasingly vocal about their accusation that school administrators (as well as the local and national government) were guilty

of racism against students of color. High schools were racist institutions, according to many radical activists: "schools don't care about us. Administrators are oppressive and racist pigs being paid by an oppressive system" (*FPS*, 1973c, p. 17). The lead article in the second issue of the *Bathroom Bomber* proclaimed, "Racism Runs Wild" (*The Bathroom Bomber*, 1975b). Radical activists argued that "the integration of schools has caused the racists and bigots of Boston, Louisville, and other cities across the map to violently resist the rights of blacks to receive a decent schooling. Blacks deserve the same quality of education as whites are accustomed to" (*FPS*, 1971b, p. 7). Radical activists charged that educational practices such as tracking, requiring counselor approval to take certain courses, and receiving grades from racist teachers, forced students of color into educational situations where academic or personal success were not possible (Spinning, 1964; Hickman, 1967; Billings, 1970; *Little Red School House*, 1970a; *Renegade*, 1972; *FPS*, 1974b; 1975e). Lastly, radical student activists argued that all students regardless of race deserved basic rights to determine their own educational experience. Students used this cause to argue for youth empowerment: "we are the ones who will inherit their power, and we should get together now to work for a truly free society…." The author went on to say that "politics, race, religion, or sex should not interfere with your basic human rights" (*FPS*, 1974c, p. 20).

School administrators were aware of the charges of racism that radical activists levied against them. For the most part administrators downplayed such charges but some did engage in debates regarding how to resolve racial tensions (Hickman, 1967; Mcgowan, 1968; Billings, 1970). The legally mandated policy of desegregation coupled with the intense student activist protest forced many school districts to restructure their schools. In many areas the results included retaining and even hiring more staff and teachers of color, adopting classes focused on

black or Chicano history, allowing students of color to participate in formerly white-only social events (i.e. prom, cheerleading), as well as including ethnic food on the cafeteria menu (Hickman, 1967; Mcgowan, 1968; Howard, 1974; Graham, 2006). These ideas were widely implemented by school leaders; however, some were willing to go even further to address radical activist charges of racism.

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, some school leaders elected to create educational committees focused specifically on addressing racial tensions that existed within their schools (Mcgowan, 1968; Thompson, 1969; *FPS*, 1973f; *The Red Tide*, 1975b; Graham, 2006). These "biracial" or "grievance" committees would consist of students and sometimes teachers from different racial and cultural backgrounds. The benefit of grievance committees would be that schools that were led by white principals could mollify a racial issue by allowing students to present their complaints to the grievance committee. The committees would be able to "to review charges of racism and make recommendations to the principal" (Thompson, 1969, p. 1). Interestingly enough, both school leaders and student activists took a "wait-and-see" approach with regards to judging the effectiveness of these organizations (Thompson, 1969; *FPS*, 1973f; *The Red Tide*, 1975b).

The success of high school activists can be attributed to a larger extent to the fact that from the 1950s through the 1970s America was undergoing a cultural, political and social transformation. According to Weinberg, "the important trends that are taking place in the schools across our land today are occurring because of the developing Negro movement. These people are simply not accepting the old bureaucratic excuses" (1964, p. 5). The Civil Rights movement brought with it a wave of challenges to practices, policies and laws throughout the US. For

instance, in 1954 the Brown case ushered forth an era of integration and by 1963 national polls

showed that the majority of White Americans were accepting of the end of segregation in public

schools (Weinberg, 1964). In many cases U.S. courts at the local and national level handed out

decisions that expanded student rights. The entertainment industry in the 1960s allowed young

people to become a dominant force in shaping American culture. Youth activists were inspired

by the Civil Rights movement, found allies in the courts and watched as young people became

the focal point for pop culture marketing (Howard, 1974; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006).

The world many adults were used to was rapidly changing. Heavy-handed school leaders

were part of the population of America that resisted the social change that was being brought

forth in the 1960s. These school leaders were threatened by the shifts in youth culture and

society as a whole. As a result, in the 1960s and 1970s, many heavy-handed administrators

would adopt new tactics in an effort to maintain young people's status as subordinates.

Discipline Policies and "Battle Plans"

During the 1960s and 1970s the difference in tactic for addressing student activism that

distinguished some school administrators from others became increasingly evident as student

protest increased. School leaders that favored engaging intentional and radical activists in

dialogue were overshadowed by their peers.

In attempting to respond to the intense mobilization of students that was taking place,

many school administrators realized that they lacked cohesive plans to address student protest.

Examination of educational journals shows a plethora of articles focused on creating effective

discipline policies and contingency plans for a massive student uprising (Bocciardi, 1963; Swat

Students Who Misbehave, 1964; Caliguri, 1968; "How Oakland Stiffened Student Discipline,"

1969; Hoffmann, 1972). This section uses the student behavior policy authored by the Salinas

Union district as an example of how some schools revised their discipline policies. Later this

study examines the contingency plans that were designed by various districts. It is interesting to

observe how school leaders were often "learning on the fly" and literally "making the rules up as

they go" in terms of quelling the actions of student activists (Hoffmann, 1972, p. 2).

In 1959, the Board of Trustees of the Salinas Union High School District, in Salinas,

California, adopted a new student behavior policy (Shock, 1959). Donald Shock was the

superintendent of the Salinas School District during the reform of the discipline guidelines. The

new policy was in response to the growing trend of students engaged in disruptive classroom

behavior and the declining academic success among students. The board believed that it was

important to state firmly that the primary goal of school was to gain knowledge and that any

student whose behaviors did not reflect a commitment to learning would not be allowed to

remain in the school (Shock, 1959). In their policy the Salinas Board mandated that school

administrators and teachers were directly responsible for ensuring that schools were free from

disruptive and disorderly behavior. Accordingly, the school board decreed that students "found

to be guilty of misconduct are subject to corrective measures such as being placed on probation,

being suspended, or expelled" (Shock, 1959, p. 1).

The new policy was introduced in the summer of 1959 to parents and community

members and was presented to students during school-wide meetings in week 1 (Shock, 1959).

In it students and parents found revisions as to how the district would handle both suspensions

and expulsions. The Board outlined in greater detail their suspension policy. According the

Salinas school board, "a pupil may be suspended from school by the school principal on

justifiable grounds for a period not to exceed two weeks. The parents are notified immediately by telephone when this action is taken, and the verbal notification is followed immediately by a written notification" (Shock, 1959, p. 2). This policy granted principals the ability to suspend students for longer periods of time. In addition, the policy reminded students and parents that the principal was the sole decision-maker in terms of authorizing a suspension and that suspendable offenses were up to the principal's judgment.

The Salinas school board also outlined the criteria for suspensions and expulsion. The Board asserted that suspensions and, even more so, expulsions were last resort measures. Of note the Board stated that the following student behaviors could result in permanent removal from school: "continued willful disobedience…open and persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher" (Shock, 1959, p. 2). The Salinas Board stated the expulsion process would require school administrators to provide substantial proof "that the pupil has committed misconduct and that means of correction other than suspension or expulsion have failed to bring about proper conduct" (Shock, 1959, p. 3). The Salinas Board, in revising their expulsion policy, was sending a clear message that they were committed to curtailing the actions of disruptive students and were willingly to take a tough disciplinary stance to maintain peace in their school district.

Shock argued that similar policies should be adopted across the nation in response to a wave of "academic underachievement" (Shock, 1959, p. 3). According to Shock, "community reaction [to the new policy] has been almost unanimously in favor of it, and many teachers during the first two months of school have remarked on the changed attitude of the students" (Shock, 1959, p. 3). It is vital to the success of schools that teachers take an active role in motivating students who are disengaged with the learning process. According to Shock,

administrators have a role in helping developing programs "which would place underachievers in regular contact with a carefully selected teacher for long enough periods to rehabilitate the student" (Shock, 1959, p. 3).

The Fight over Suspensions
      Intentional and radical activists critiqued discipline policies such as that of Salinas by asserting that administrators and school board members were not addressing the problems that students were calling to their attention but rather attempting to silence student's voices (*Individual*, 1969a; *Quack*, 1971b; *High School Action*, 1973b; *Rebel's Voice*, 1971a; *The Red Tide*, 1975a). Some scholars even argued that the use of tougher disciplinary practices would not be effective against a population that was as ideologically committed as high school intentional and radical activists (Anderson, 1961; Ashbaugh, 1969; Howard, 1974). In fact historical evidence affirms their argument, as school leaders in the 1960s and 1970s reported increases in student disruptions, not decreases (Cohodes, 1969; Brodbelt, 1970; Billings, 1970; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). Efforts such as that taken by the Salinas school board enhanced intentional and radical activists' arguments that school leaders were "afraid that students are rebelling against their system and no longer focused on their stupid and pointless classes or grades…." (*FPS*, 1973d, p. 5). However, school leaders in favor of a hard-line response to student activism could also point to research that indicated that the use of suspensions did spur a decline in disruptive behavior as well as a decrease in the number of repeat offenders (Bocciardi, 1963).

      In contrast to the division that existed among school leaders, intentional and radical activists remained deeply ideologically opposed to the use of suspensions. Student activists utilized their underground newspapers to appeal already handed-out suspensions (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *Alternative*, 1970b; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *Local Rocks*, 1971b). In one such

instance, the students at *Pack Rat* wrote a letter that was directed both to the student community and to the superintendent of the Berkeley school district, Dr. Foster, making the case against their individual suspensions (*Pack Rat*, 1969). Several writers for *Pack Rat* were suspended for distributing copies of the newspaper on school grounds. According to the students, "we were suspended for a week, without prior warning or knowledge of the administrative policy by which we were suspended" (*Pack Rat*, 1969b, p. 9). Writers for the *Pack Rat* stated: "we do not recognize the right of the principal to tell us what we can and cannot say, what we can and cannot distribute peacefully, as long as we act responsibly and do not disrupt classes" (1969b, p. 9). Writers for the *Pack Rat* declared, "We believe, and it is a federal law, that wherever there is a contradiction between a federal First Amendment, and a state education code law, the federal law prevails" (1969b, p. 9). Unfortunately, there was no later publication that indicated that the students' suspensions were rescinded.

There exists evidence that some school leaders did acknowledge student activist concerns regarding the use of suspensions (Grieder, 1967; Cohodes, 1970; Vacca, 1971). In February of 1975, a large contingent of intentional activists attended the Covington School board meetings to fight the suspensions of some of their peers (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975c). The students were able to force the board to temporarily suspend the use of suspensions based on possible misinterpretation of the Board of Education by-laws by the school principal (*The Chronicle of Current Events*, 1975c). In several educational publications school leaders warned their peers about "choosing to suspend a student without first conducting a proper investigation into the disruption" (Schneider, 1970, p. 2). School boards in El Paso, Chicago, Oak Park, and New York City reportedly reversed student suspensions in light of appeals made by the students involved (*The Midnight Special*, 1971; *FPS*, 1973a; 1975b).

These events, however, do not mean that school leaders who were open-minded and willing to compromise with student activists gave in to every student demand. In an attempt to push educational reform, student writers for the *Observer* (Philadelphia) demanded that the student council be given the power to review student suspensions and expulsions (*Observer*, 1970a; 1970b). According to David Fine, a student writer for the *Observer*, with this power the student council "could act as a check on the administration's power to infringe upon the rights of student (and teacher) minorities" (*Observer*, 1970, p. 2). Similar ideas were published in other underground newspapers (*Pack Rat*, 1969b; *Alternative*, 1970b; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1970a; *FPS*, 1973a; 1977). However, no evidence exists that such a policy was ever adopted by any school board or put into practice by any school principal. When it came to suspensions, some school leaders were sympathetic to the experiences of youth activists, but not committed to adopting their educational reforms.

Student Activists' Response to Revised Discipline Plans

Nonetheless, as student activists continued to mobilize their peers in an effort to reform their schools and gain increased student rights, many school leaders were becoming further entrenched in their anti-student activism stance. From the late 1950s into the 1960s it became common for school districts across the nation to adopt a tougher stance towards disruptive behavior ("Administrator's Views On Discipline," 1955; "Administrative Techniques In Handling Discipline," 1955; Bocciardi, 1963; Swat Students Who Misbehave, 1964). Many school boards adhered to the mentality identified by the Salinas Board that the privilege of attending school would be revoked for any student who did not comply with school rules and laws ("Swat Students," 1964*;* "How Oakland Stiffened Student Discipline," 1969; Hoffmann, 1972). These school administrators stood steadfast in the use of suspensions as the primary

method for dealing with disruptive students. According to one school administrator, "suspensions remain the greatest deterrent against unruly student behavior" (Bocciardi, 1963, p. 2). For many school leaders student activists were misguided, disruptive rule-breakers whose actions could only be halted by harsh and decisive action, that is, a suspension (Bocciardi, 1963; "Swat Students," 1964; Hendrick & Jones, 1970). However, once again, school leaders misjudged intentional and radical activists.

Almost a decade after the Salinas Board revised its discipline policy (and others followed suit), school superintendents were still overwhelmed with incidents where mobilized high school activists staged walkouts and rallies on school grounds ("Administrative Techniques In Handling Discipline," 1955; Erickson et al., 1969). Student activists were not able to force school leaders to adopt their proposals for forming disciplinary panels composed of students, teachers, and administrators. However, student activists in the 1970s continued to use the same tactics that they had utilized in the 1960s; intentional and radical activists continued to utilize contentious politics and stage large scale protests. Many school superintendents and principals were shocked to learn that for the most part high school activists were undeterred by the consequences and penalties outlined within their school's discipline plans ("Administrative Techniques In Handling Discipline," 1955; Erickson et al., 1969; "Schoolmen Split Over Student Involvement," 1969). Rather than adopting a more compromising stance towards intentional and radical activists many school leaders dug their heels in even further. As a result, in the 1970s many school administrators and school board members once again revised their discipline policies and developed more comprehensive response tactics.

Battle Plans

Thompson (1969) described radical activists as "political revolutionaries" who were interested in fighting for "the rights of all oppressed people" (p. 2). For one administrator in New Jersey, they were simply "a nuisance" (*FPS*, 1973c, p. 13). In the early 1970s, school districts began to design comprehensive procedure and contingency plans for preventing and managing massive student protest. These plans were sometimes referred to as "Battle Plans" (Erickson et al., 1969; Browder, 1970). In them you could find everything from a chain of command of authority in responding to a crisis to information on how to address the media, or even protocol for when to notify the local police. This study focuses on the Browder (1970) report *What To Do Before Students Demonstrate?* because it offers tremendous insight into how school leaders prepared to respond to student activism.

Browder, a former superintendent of schools in New Jersey, argued that school discipline policies such as the one created by the Salinas School Board were reactive and failed to address the possibility of massive protest. Browder advised that school leaders abandon their previous discipline plans and instead develop policies for addressing student protests that were both proactive and comprehensive (Browder, 1970). Browder reviewed a large number of recently published "battle plans," which were administrative plans mandated by the New Jersey State Board of Education. According to Browder, the state Board required that each school district establish "a specific plan for coping with potential student disorders" (Browder, 1970, p. 1). These administrative plans incorporated the strategy and perspective school leaders favored in terms of addressing student activists. Browder's analysis focused on Bergen County since it represented one of the state's largest and fastest-growing areas.

Browder found that some superintendents in Bergen County did favor a draconian response to student activists. In their administrative plans these school leaders stated that "any outbreak…shall be considered lawless behavior, and shall be subject to proceedings and penalties as provided by existing laws" (Browder, 1970, p. 1). Of the 32 district plans examined by Browder only two districts indicated that a student protest that was deemed non-disruptive would be allowed to continue (p. 2). In New Jersey's Bergen County, only 25 percent of the school districts had established a protocol for early warning of key school leaders (principal, school administrators, superintendent) if there was strong evidence of a protest breaking out (p. 2). Four Bergen County districts outlined that the local police would be placed on stand-by alert as part of their early warning system (p. 2).

In their battle plans many school districts placed maintaining order (by containing the disruption and keeping non-activists from getting involved) at a higher priority than quelling protests. Nine school districts agreed that at the onset of a protest their number one priority was to "retain nonparticipating students in their classes" (Browder, 1970, p. 2). In addition, several school districts mandated that teachers immediately take attendance during school protests. Sixteen of the 32 schools provided "a variety of procedures to protect persons and/or property during a disorder" (p. 2). Many school districts instructed school leaders to lock offices, file cabinets, and bar entrance to areas such as auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums (p. 2). School leaders were instructed by superintendents to ensure that, during student protests, all staff members focus on student safety (p. 2).

In his final analysis Browder advised school leaders to adopt more proactive plans because he was concerned about the long term negative impact that such reactive policies would

have on the relationships between students and their schools (Browder, 1970). Browder's

analysis of the Bergen County plans for disorderly students revealed that an overwhelming

number of school districts identified their protocol for punishing students. The most common

discipline was the use of an outright suspension; however, there were differences in terms of

"who" was suspended. Eight districts had mass punishment policies in which any participant

involved in a "disruptive protest" would be eligible for an "outright suspension" (Browder, 1970,

p. 2). In contrast, four districts indicated that only students who were deemed responsible for

planning the protest would be suspended.

School districts also indicated that teachers as well as administrators were responsible for

identifying disorderly students. A quarter of the districts' plans recommended that school leaders

advise students involved in protests that they could be prosecuted for their actions. In fact, six

districts indicated that the superintendent would actively seek legal action against suspected

student protests (Browder, 1970, p. 2). Lastly, only three district battle plans included

information regarding the role student councils could play in discipline hearings for students

involved in student protests. In 31 out of 32 plans discipline hearings were organized by school

administrators (p. 2).

Notification Systems

An overwhelming number of Bergen County school districts elected to be reactive rather

than proactive. Rather than invest time to develop polices or programs that focused on stopping

student protest before it started school districts elected to devise tactics that outlined procedures

for responding to student activism. According to Browder (1970), 68.8 percent of Bergen County

districts implemented their notification of key school leaders and the police once a protest began

(p. 1). However, only 21.9 percent of the districts indicated that teachers and staff members were

included as part of the group to be notified at the onset of a protest (Browder, p. 1). These

schools developed "elaborate code signals to inform staff personnel, without alarming the

students" (p. 1). However, there were some school districts that included in their administrative

"battle plans" a policy to contact student leaders. According to Browder, five school districts

declared that once a student protest broke out student leaders would be notified and asked to

communicate with the protesters (p. 1). This practice of attempting to utilize students was

advised by policy makers in other states (Grieder, 1967; Lucey, 1967; Erickson et al., 1969;

Thorum, 1977; Graham 2006).

Use of Local Law Enforcement
In spite of the protest by student activists against the use of the police to break up

protests, the battle plans presented in the 1970s maintained their inclusion. Thirty-one of the 32

school districts examined by Browder incorporated the local police as part of their administrative

plans. School districts differed in terms of who would be charged with the responsibility of

deciding if a protest warranted police involvement. Most schools left the decision at the local

level at the hands of the principal, whereas others allowed the administrator at the scene of the

disturbance to make the call. Only four school districts indicated that the superintendent was the

only person with the authority to contact the local police (Browder, 1970, p. 1). Of the 32

school districts, 71.9 percent indicated that the police would be utilized as a last measure (1970,

p. 1). Oddly enough no school district outlined any instructions for how the local police should

approach student-led protest. As a result, student activists complained of being unjustly attacked,

roughed up, and assaulted by police officers (*FPS*, 1971a; 1975d; *Red Army*. 1971d; *The Red

Tide*, 1975b).

National Shift in Tactics by School Leaders

Examination of other educational journals reveals that school districts implemented very similar battle plans in response to the actions of intentional and radical activists (Erickson et al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Hoffmann, 1972). Superintendents in California, Connecticut, North Carolina, New York, Missouri, and Texas mandated that principals in their school district immediately inform them at the onset of any "large scale student disruption that threatened the educational climate" (*FPS*, 1975a, p. 20). School leaders across the nation put into action battle plans that focused on countering disruptive dissension, protest, and demonstrations before they started (Erickson et al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Herr, 1972). In a NAASP meeting school leaders were advised to train their faculty and staff on how to properly handle sit-ins, underground newspapers, walk-outs, and other forms of protest (Trump & Hunt, 1969). In spite of student protest against suspensions, school leaders continued to utilize suspensions as a primary method for punishing students after a protest ended.

Regardless of whether administrative approaches were open-minded towards student activism and hard-line, there was general agreement regarding specific battle plan tactics. Browder's analysis confirmed what was reported in various educational journals that once a walk-out, sit-in, or rally began school leaders overwhelmingly favored publicly requesting mobilized disruptive students to disperse peacefully or contacting parents of protesters and requesting that they take their kids home (Erickson et al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Graham, 2006). Some school leaders noted that these tactics would be implemented as soon as possible, before contacting the superintendent or the police (Hendrick & Jones, 1970). Furthermore, several school administrators across the nation commented that their battle plans required teachers to assist in isolating disruptive students, as was the case with more than a

quarter of the Bergen County plans (Erickson et al., 1969; Browder, 1970; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Graham, 2006).

Other popular ideas for handling student disruptions reflected the ideals of school leaders who favored being patient with student activists. These policies included attempting to meet with a leader from the student protesters, asking students to present a list of grievances, as well as giving students time to hold their protest but mandating a fixed time limit (Erickson et al., 1969; Browder, 1970; Graham, 2006). Many of the Bergen County battle plans mirrored advice presented on a national scale to school leaders. School principals acknowledged that in dealing with a large scale protest administrators must demonstrate "patience and maintaining a cool head, while asserting the laws and defending the school from assault" (Trump & Hunt, 1969, p. 2). Many school leaders reflecting on their own encounters with disruptive students acknowledged that student protests were able to be quelled without much drama if events were allowed to play out (Erickson et al., 1969; Graham, 2006).

However, as was demonstrated by the Browder study, historical evidence indicates that across the nation school leaders were deeply divided over when to bring in the police (Erickson et al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Graham, 2006). Several school principals expressed discomfort with the idea of having the police on campus and possibly arresting minors (Grieder, 1967; Erickson et al., 1969; Cohodes, 1970; Vacca, 1971; Hoffmann, 1972; Graham, 2006). As one principal stated, "it is our duty to protect our students. The police should not have a role to play" (Hoffmann, 1972). Nonetheless, in the 1960s and 1970s there were countless reported incidents in which local law enforcement officers were called in to quell student protests (Vacca, 1971; *FPS*, 1973a; *FPS*, 1975b; San Miguel, Jr., 2001; Graham, 2006). Those school leaders

who were willing to involve the police viewed student activists as dangerous and characterized student protest as a destructive force. As a result, the difference in tactics between school administrators who were willing to compromise with student activists and those who favored a hard-line approach continued long into the 1970s.

Reflection on School Administrators' Response to Student Activism

It is puzzling to note that school leaders in the early 1950s (and even 1940s) anticipated student discontent with school-sponsored newspapers and student governments but were unable to address critiques of these programs effectively. Shipp stated it was important that the student council develop into an active, cooperative thinking group, with the ability to deal with problems of real concern to their peers (Shipp, 1950). This did not turn out to be the case in the 1960s or 1970s. Incidental activists grew tired of "Mickey Mouse club" student councils, thus giving way to intentional activists (Graham, 2006, p. 181). By the late 1960s, underground newspapers had popped up all over high school campuses. This was in part because of the inability of school leaders to address early calls by their own predecessors for school-sponsored publications that "were welcoming of constructive criticism of school policies…published student generated ideas…and represented the greater student population" (Dane, 1950, p. 2).

As student activism intensified it became clear that school leaders were divided into two camps: those that argued for a hard-line response to activism on high school campuses and those that elected an approach focused on making compromises and engaging in constructive dialogue with activists. However, by the 1970s it was evident that this division hampered school leaders' decision-making and led to increased frustration for student activists. High school activism was fueled by a multitude of events that were beyond the control of school leaders. But as this study

has demonstrated, there were certainly contributing factors that were directly within the sphere of influence for school administrators but were poorly managed.

In examining events from the 1950s through the 1970s, it is evident that school administrators who favored a heavy-handed approach to student activism and those that were willing to listen and negotiate with student activists held steadfast to their strategies. Both groups remained committed to their tactics even as high school activists shifted from incidental to intentional activism, and then later to radical activism. Despite being loyal to their strategies and points of view, over time heavy-handed school administrators did revise some of their policies. Up until the 1960s, school leaders that advocated using a hard-line stance to counter student protest supported the use of suspensions and expulsions. In contrast to the 1950s policies, in the 1960s and 1970s student code of conduct books contained rules for student behavior and conduct that were more clearly outlined, and delineated stricter punishments for students if school policies were violated. Certainly, this was not a shift in ideology by heavy-handed school leaders but it did represent a response to the reality of high schools in the 1960s and 1970s.

High school administrators that used an open-minded approach towards student activism, while holding steadfast to their overall approach for dealing with student activists, did begin to promote different policies and programs as student activism transformed. In the 1950s, open-minded school leaders argued for providing student governments and school sponsored newspapers with greater rights and duties as a tactic for dealing with alienated students. As open-minded school administrators began to recognize that some of their "alienated students" were in fact student activists these school leaders started to advocate for other programs that would involve students in positive ways in their schooling. Therefore, in the 1960s school

administrators not only called for their peers to empower students through student government and school sponsored newspapers, they also allowed some educational reforms to take place. Open-minded school leaders relaxed, and in many cases ended, dress and grooming codes. In addition, some of these school administrators decided not to discipline students who handed out underground newspapers on school grounds. These changes were made by open-minded school leaders in an attempt to "engage student activists in honest dialogue about their remaining concerns" (Student Involvement, 1969, p. 2).

By the 1970s open-minded administrators were willing to allow space and opportunity for student activists to advocate their proposed reforms. Open-minded school leaders were tolerant of educational policies that "provided concerned students the space to express their views…so long as students recognize that the authority remains in the hands of adults" (Vacca, 1971, p. 3). Despite their support of student activism and their reputation as being open-minded, these administrators still wanted youth to respect adult authority. In contrast, during the 1970s, heavy-handed school administrators tightened their stance against student activism. Heavy-handed administrators were deeply concerned about the increase in student protests that was occurring in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Erickson et al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Graham, 2006).This concern spurred the widespread adaptation of "battle plans" by school districts in the 1970s. Overall, the actions of radical and intentional activists pushed heavy-handed administrators as well as their open-minded counterparts to revise their policies regarding dress/grooming codes, distribution of underground newspapers, as well as, suspensions and discipline. Yet, both types of school administrators were never willing to engage in the more extreme proposals presented by radical activists (i.e.: allowing students to grade teachers, opening up the curriculum to student input, etc.).

In the mid 1970s, heavy-handed and open-minded school leaders remained focused on curtailing student protest. The Youth Empowerment Movement, which had its roots in the early actions of incidental activists but took form in the 1960s with the emergence of intentional and radical activists, by the 1970s had achieved significant educational reform. It was during the mid 1970s that many school administrators began to report a decrease in the presence of youth activists on their high school campuses (Allen & Gansneder, 1976; Thorum, 1977). One publication found that in 1976 some school administrators were reporting almost a 20% reduction in student protests from the previous year (Allen & Gansneder, 1976). While it is likely that the revised discipline codes and newly rolled out "battle plans" had their desired effect of curtailing some student protests, it does not explain the dramatic decrease in student protest that occurred in the mid 1970s. This is because at the core of the revised discipline protocols were the use of suspensions and expulsions which were tactics that were very familiar to high school students (Abrell and Hanna, 1971; Herr, 1972). Since the 1950s, school administrators had employed suspensions and expulsions in their attempts to prevent student protest. Yet, in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s the exact opposite occurred; youth activism intensified and become more widespread (Heathman, 1970; Sherkat & Blocker, 1994; Mintz, 2004; Graham, 2006). A more compelling reason exists to explain why starting in the mid 1970s there was a significant decline in youth activism.

The Youth Empowerment Movement was a victim of its own success. From the 1960s to 1970s one of the leading issues that motivated students to protest was the existence of strict policies regarding dress and grooming. However, a 1977 survey of over 110 superintendents from across the nation observed that in response to student activism school leaders were loosening dress and grooming policies (Thorum, 1977). This victory for student activists had the

effect of dampening further protest. A similar effect occurred as youth activists utilized the court system to defend and expand the rights of students. The diligent effort and success of radical and intentional activists in the 1960s and early 1970s contributed to the decline of the Youth Empowerment Movement that took place in the mid 1970s. The task of preventing youth activists from accomplishing even more educational reforms or as one school superintendent stated "overrunning our schools with their radical and ridiculous delusions of grandeur," can be credited more so to the history of success for youth activists than to the policies and programs of heavy-handed or open-minded school administrators (Abrell and Hanna, 1971, p. 2).

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined the history of high school students who were involved in activism from the 1950s to the 1970s, the Youth Empowerment Movement. Unlike previous research done on this social movement this study focused almost exclusively on underground newspapers. Underground newspapers provided a unique perspective because they represented the actual words and ideas of high school activists. However, in order to properly capture the challenges faced by these youth activists it was critical to analyze hundreds of articles published in educational journals. These journals allowed insight into the policies and tactics crafted by school board members, superintendents and principals.

In concluding my examination of high school activists (from the 1950s to the 1970s) I found clear evidence that school leaders (school board members, superintendents and principals) shifted over time, holding three contrasting perspectives of youth activists. In the 1950s, many school leaders viewed youth activists as alienated and maladjusted youth; however by the 1960s two other perspectives emerged. Some school leaders argued that student activists were motivated but frustrated youth. However, the majority of school leaders believed that they were misguided and dangerous youth. These divergent perspectives spurred a shift over time in how school leaders handled youth activists. In the 1950s, school leaders lumped incidental activists with other disruptive students and argued that these students were maladjusted and alienated youth. However, this categorization was not accurate because incidental activists were connected to their schools. My research has demonstrated that incidental activists simply disagreed with specific school policies. School administrators were misguided in treating incidental activists as alienated youth. Even though incidental activists focused on challenging specific school policies,

they were able simultaneously to participate in daily school events and attend their classes. In the 1950s, the vast majority of school leaders were unable to make this distinction.

However, the emergence of intentional activists and later on radical activists in the 1960s and 1970s led to a divided approach by school leaders. The popular response by school leaders was to engage in direct efforts to quell student activism and punish the students. A less widely used alternative was to redirect student activists to more acceptable means for voicing their disagreement as well as making some concessions to student activists' demands. My research has demonstrated that during the 1960s and 1970s school leaders and student activists battled over how and when to utilize suspensions and expulsions. The evidence available in educational journals indicated that the majority of school leaders favored using suspensions to address student activism and that a number were comfortable having high school activists arrested by the police in order to stop a protest. It was fascinating to find that high school activists persisted with their fight for educational reform in the face of suspensions and expulsions.

As the information from both primary sources (underground newspapers and educational journals) was combined it became clear that high school activists were able to engage in educational reform. Specifically in the 1960s and 1970s high school activists were able to publish their proposals for change in their high schools and distribute their ideas to students, administrators, superintendents, and school board members. Many of these ideas were debated in public or in private among school leaders. A few student activists initiating proposals for reform (i.e. limiting the power of school principals to suspend students) were able to bring them into reality. Therefore, it is safe to say that high school students in the 1960s and 1970s were able to function as both activists (fighting the social norm for a political purpose) and educational

reformers (challenging the authority of school officials and advocating structural changes to the school system).

Historical Summary

This investigation has revealed that there was a dramatic shift over time in the goals and tactics of high school activists. In examining underground newspapers, as well as primary and secondary source documents, this study found that as high school activism emerged in the 1950s there was a shift in objectives and an eventual agreement on tactics. For many high school students who were involved in activism in the early 1950s, a group I term incidental activists, the primary goal was to force school administrators to change specific policies (most commonly, incidental activists wanted an end to dress and grooming codes, as well as the creation of smoking lounges for students). Incidental activists were unable to achieve any reforms and this frustrated many high school students.

During the 1950s for the most part school leaders regarded incidental activists as alienated young people who were disconnected from the values of society and rebelled without cause against authority. School leaders debated over which educational programs were best suited for engaging maladjusted youth into their high schools. School administrators settled on funding and supporting the student government and the school-sponsored student newspaper. Even though there was not complete agreement on how to structure both programs, many school principals held faith that the school newspaper and student government would be enough to curtail the increasing number of alienated youth. However, student newspapers and student government programs did not address incidental activists' challenges to specific school policies regarding dress and grooming and smoking rights. Incidental activists were not mollified by the

increased funding given to such programs; instead, many remained dissatisfied with the decision-making process that existed in high schools.

As this frustration grew, national events, specifically the Civil Rights movement, were creating the structural strain needed to galvanize and transform some high school students into a slightly different type of activism. In the mid 1950s, intentional activists emerged in the geographic south. These student activists strived for a broader objective than incidental activists. Unlike their predecessors, intentional activists were interested in changing more than just a few school rules. They sought to empower students by forcing school leaders to include students in more educational decisions. By the 1960s, in school districts across the nation, intentional activists began to demand and fight for educational reform. Underground newspapers were developed by these youth activists to promote not only their ideology of youth empowerment but also to publicize their educational proposals for changing the policies, procedures, and curricula that existed in schools. As a result, underground newspapers embody high school students' efforts as not only activists but also educational reformers.

However, some high school activists argued that the objective of achieving school reform was too narrow and sought to revolutionize society by fighting for an end to the oppression of underprivileged people. The term radical activists was used to characterize high school activists who wanted to challenge not only the authority and legitimacy of school leaders but also of government officials at the local and national level. It was mainly the actions of this group of activists that allowed student activists to achieve any educational reforms.

By the 1960s many school leaders began to view student activists as not just alienated youth but as threats to school safety. This shift in perspective was in response to the emergence

of intentional activists. Many school leaders felt threatened by the actions of students who were now ideologically committed to activism, focused on building coalitions with other students (resource mobilization) and utilizing underground newspapers to engage in contentious politics. During the 1960s many school board members encountered intentional activists in their board meetings. Principals and school administrators were forced to watch activists mobilize protests and student rallies that took place in school cafeterias, auditoriums, classrooms and even outside the school walls.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, school leaders' opinions of activists became mainly divided between viewing student activists as young people manipulated by outside forces or as self-directed students focused on empowering themselves but frustrated with the structure of schools. The vast majority of school leaders chose to respond harshly towards student activists. School principals frequently suspended student activists, brought in the police to break up large rallies and sit-ins, as well as disciplined students involved in walk-outs. Many of these heavy-handed school leaders believed that student activists were being manipulated by adults interested in creating chaos in schools (Erickson et al., 1969; "Schoolmen Split Over Student Involvement," 1969). In fact, many school districts revised their discipline policies to indicate the more stringent use of suspensions and expulsions. Later on, some school districts would create "battle plans," documents that outlined the exact procedures and protocol that administrators and teachers should follow in response to student protest. However, not all school leaders favored such a heavy-handed response. Some school leaders were open-minded and attempted to reach a cooperative resolution. School principals allowed sit-ins to take place while meeting with youth activists to discuss their concerns. Others read underground newspapers and agreed to be interviewed by their writers as a way to bridge differences that existed. Even though such

responses were not popular among school leaders they were practiced by some and proved to be effective in numerous high schools.

Analysis of Youth Activism and the Response by School Leaders

This study has demonstrated that the most accurate representation of youth activists is that of motivated students who were frustrated with lack of decision-making power in their high schools. This was the viewpoint held by school leaders who were open-minded and avoided using a heavy-handed response to youth activism. Intentional and radical activists represent students who were not content with the denial of student rights that existed in high schools. Intentional and radical activists were not given marching orders by members of SDS, nor was there any evidence in the underground newspapers examined that they were being "controlled" by adults with an anti-establishment agenda.

This research has demonstrated that not all interactions between administrators and youth activists were counter-productive. There were various instances where open-minded school leaders and intentional activists were able to work within the walls of the school and achieve some form of educational reform (*Students Should Get A Crack At Decision-Making*, 1963; Jones, 1975; Philos, 1975; School Spirit, 1977). Intentional activists welcomed the presence and efforts of open-minded administrators because they believed that educational reform could be achieved by working with school leaders. Many open minded administrators advocated and implemented programs such as, town-hall meetings, and Ad hoc committees focused on student concerns because it helped to foster productive dialogue with intentional activists (Erickson, et.al., 1969; Hendrick & Jones, 1970; Hoffmann, 1972).

Unfortunately, many school leaders wasted opportunities to genuinely understand the arguments put forth by intentional and radical activists by treating student activists as misguided children. These school leaders failed to read even one copy of an underground newspaper (Erickson, et.al., 1969). One of the main distinctions between intentional and radical activists was that the former were willingly to cooperate with school leaders and participate in school board meetings and the latter argued that such efforts were futile. This wedge was in part created by the stubbornness of school leaders. The abusive use of suspensions and expulsions by some school administrators hindered the ability of students to graduate on time but did not necessarily deter their commitment to activism. In fact it pushed some student activists to adopt a more radical stance. In addition, school board members often delayed (sometimes indefinitely) voting on proposals brought to them by student activists. In the end these responses by school leaders represent a significant reason why intentional and radical activists were not able to achieve adoption of all their educational reforms.

Nonetheless, youth activists were able to generate some educational reform. High school students were able to place enough pressure on school leaders to force changes to dress codes and grooming policies. In addition, intentional and radical activists were able to achieve significant educational reform by forcing school administrators to be more transparent with regards to punishable offenses. The 1960s and 1970s saw a national wave of school boards and principals publishing and distributing to all students documents that outlined all school policies, prohibited behaviors, rights of students, and disciplinary protocols. Intentional and radical activists had written countless articles in underground newspapers demanding that school administrators print such a comprehensive code of conduct. Certainly by the late 1970s such publications existed in a large number of high schools, but especially in those high schools that

had encountered student protest (Thorum, 1977; Graham, 2006). School districts located in the states of New York, California, and Illinois did publish documents that identified the rights of high school students. This was certainly a victory for intentional and radical activists who placed a tremendous emphasis on youth empowerment.

Unquestionably, student activists achieved their largest victories by utilizing contentious politics and legally challenging the authority of school leaders. High school students as citizens have always held the power to sue their schools, but never before did students engage in this action with such zeal and frequency. Radical activists were not content with the limited success in achieving educational reform that was produced by intentional activists. Radical activists believed that working within school systems (i.e., attending school board meetings) would not bring about the comprehensive and sweeping changes they desired. As a result, the late 1960s and 1970s witnessed a barrage of state and federal court cases focused on expanding the rights of students and creating defined limits on the power of school principals and school boards. High school students won legal victories concerning issues ranging from personal expression, to the right to distribute "offensive" publications, to the use of suspension and other forms of discipline.

Failure to Launch: Proposals for Educational Reform That Were Not Adopted.

Radical activists' use of contentious politics in the 1960s and 1970s did not spur educational reform with regards to the use of tracking, even though radical activists could point to several educational research studies that supported their assertion that tracking hindered the ability to get ahead of students of color and students from low social class standings. There were no major shifts, in the 1960s and 1970s, in the use of tracking in high schools. In the 1970s,

student activists were able to utilize contentious politics to push some school districts to include more culturally relevant courses. However, this shift occurred in limited settings (typically in large urban school districts in California, New York, and Illinois), and resulted only in one or two courses being added to the curriculum. Intentional activists and radical activists were unable to convince school leaders to revamp the high school curriculum so that grades were eliminated, students permitted to teach classes or create their own courses. Furthermore, there was no evidence found of school boards accepting high school students as board members with voting privileges.

The Decline of the Youth Empowerment Movement

The decline of the Youth Empowerment Movement can be attributed to two major factors: the inability of high school activists to sustain interest in educational reform with each new incoming class of students, and the national decline of the activism spirit. It can certainly be argued that the Youth Empowerment Movement was a victim of its own success. The legal victories experienced by intentional and radical activists in the 1960s and 1970s led to more student rights in high schools. These high school activists were significant role players in changing the high school experience for the future generation of students. Gone were the days when students' right to public expression was limited in all venues within the high school. Students were able to exercise their constitutional rights with less fear of facing disciplinary action from school administrators. As a result, by the late 1970s, resource mobilization (recruiting new activists) was harder for intentional and radical activists.

However, this dilemma was not unique to the Youth Empowerment Movement. The spirit of rebellion and activism that had overwhelmed the United States in the 1960s and early 1970s

faded dramatically by the mid 1970s. The Civil Rights movement spurred the passage of several key laws. The Vietnam War was over and thus the anti-war moment saw a dramatic decline in supporters. Other social movements, such as the free speech movement, equally faded as core members moved on in their lives. The Youth Empowerment Movement could not escape this fate. Even though underground newspapers served as tangible reminders of the previous struggles, with each graduating class resource mobilization became harder. The core resource was always student participation and as veteran high school activists graduated or dropped out that core became depleted.

Even though the Youth Empowerment Movement faded from the national scene the effort, experience, and lessons of high school activists live on in the Youth Liberation Archives. In fact, the Youth Liberation Archives and its massive collection of underground newspapers serve as one of the greatest products of this Youth Empowerment social movement.

Personal Reflection

What struck me as most intriguing in conducting this study was realizing how intentional and radical student activists were highly knowledgeable about educational issues ranging from curriculum to policy. Underground newspapers such as *Pack Rat*, *The Word*, *The Red Tide*, *Splinter*, and *Rebel's Voice* contained well argued reasons for abolishing tracking, developing more alternative/free schools, limiting the power of school administrators, revising school curricula as well as adding student representatives to the school board. Simply put, these students understood educational policies. They possessed a sophisticated knowledge of the educational values and beliefs that shaped their high schools.

Organizations such as *FPS* and CHIPS were remarkably well organized considering that they were operated by individuals who had no formal training or substantial income. The ability of intentional and radical activists to engage in resource mobilization (coordinating meetings, rallies, and activities with students from numerous high schools; organizing a national conference; sharing information regarding their success and struggles) was simply inspiring. As Pileggi (1969) stated, these were activists who had to be home before 7:30 pm. Of course for many their dedication to activism forced them to stay up late writing and editing articles, researching school policies as well as state and federal laws, traveling across great distances to attend rallies and meetings, not to mention completing school assignments.

In terms of future research there are a plethora of possibilities. I am deeply interested in conducting a biographical investigation of students such as Joel Diaz, Monica Thompson, Charles Quarterman, Joel Andreas, and Ruth Edwards. It is fascinating to speculate about how many of these students become high school teachers, principals, or administrators. Did the staggering number of hours they invested in their fight for educational reform as high school students push them to work in the educational field as adults? In light of the current concern over the lack of civic engagement by high school students (Goldman & Newman, 1998; Mitra, 2008) another research question comes to mind. Did their struggle as activists motivate them to be engaged in voting, politics, social justice, or none of the above, as adults? In my attempts to create a focused dissertation, a tremendous number of underground newspapers were not mentioned in my study. Yet my fascination with youth activism drove me to spend hours reading article after article, closely examining student illustrations and pondering some of the following questions: To what extent did the actions of high school activists influence teacher training? Or, what efforts were made to establish an international conference/organization of youth activists?

In addition, there is also space to further explore many of the unfinished stories that were present within the Youth Liberation Archives. In conducting my research there were numerous instances where a fascinating investigation of a student activist project or organization, e.g. The Philadelphia High School Project, abruptly stopped because no further information was published or available within the archives. As a result, the underground newspapers in many cases provide pieces to an incomplete puzzle. Nonetheless, my study demonstrated the important role that this collection of underground newspapers serves as a primary source of historical content.

My personal experience as a secondary school educator pushed the following question to the forefront of my mind during my research. What would intentional and radical activists think about today's high schools? I would like to conclude by offering a possible response. Overall, the high school of the twenty-first century recognizes the constitutional rights of students to express themselves freely, print and distribute publications (without necessarily being underground), and to peacefully assemble. Intentional and radical activists from the 1960s and 1970s would be pleased with the existence of schools such as Boston Arts Academy (BAA), located in Boston, Massachusetts. Having worked in this school I believe intentional and radical activists would praise the school culture and climate created by the head, Linda Nathan. BAA not only focuses on providing students the basic instruction in both the academics and the arts, but it also has academic courses that explore current social issues. The student council at BAA has an input into school-wide decisions and its members are pushed to be active leaders. BAA does not place its students into academic tracks, and it proudly incorporates a curriculum that is anti-standardized testing and pro-development of critical thinking.

Unfortunately BAA is not the model followed by most school districts. Intentional and radical activists might be disheartened to learn that many of the educational practices they fought to abolish or reform remain in today's schools. The abundant choice in courses would not overshadow the lack of student input that remains in how schools address curricular issues. The disconnect that exists between many high school courses and intentional human rights issues and social justice would anger radical activists. Furthermore, intentional activists and radical activists would be greatly disappointed with the continued use of suspensions as a primary method for addressing disruptive students. The presence of bars on school windows, the increased use of police within the walls of high schools, the mandated searches of students and their possessions, along with the growth in popularity of school uniforms and the use of metal detectors would only strengthen radical activists' claims that schools are prisons.

This investigation of youth activism and its struggle towards educational reform has reminded me of the almost complete power school leaders hold in shaping our high schools. The poor quality of education that occurs in many of our nation's high schools underscores the fact that school leaders' efforts at reform have also experienced major setbacks. I wonder when school leaders will decide to include high school students in the decision-making process. Will it require a return of student activism on a national scale? Simply stated, what would it take for school administrators to trust their students and empower them? Thankfully there have been a handful of scholars who have advocated that school leaders consider empowering students as decision makers (Wehmeyer & Sands, 1998; Vatterott, 1999; Noguera, 2005; Crosby et. al, 2006; Mitra, 2008). However, to those administrators who would never want to buckle to student activism or allow students voting power in educational decisions, I offer this readily available but often ignored insight. High school students are humans and citizens deserving of respect and

conscious of the strengths and weaknesses of their schools and the educational system. A school leader's disagreement with the tactics of student activists should not blind her to the concerns raised by students. School principals, superintendents, school board members, and even teachers have an obligation to investigate such concerns and seek appropriate resolutions (Goldman & Newman, 1998). At the same time, the adults that work in schools and hold control over the direction and policies of schools (administrators and faculty) should recognize that what students are fighting for is in part access to decision-making powers. And as adults we (I include myself since I have certainly been on the other side of this struggle) should recognize that "access is more than just providing opportunities: it is also about teaching students how to gain entrée into the system that controls those opportunities" (Nathan, 2009, p. 148). If we disagree with the methods used by student activists then we should see it as part of our duty to teach students more appropriate manners for bringing about the legitimate change and youth empowerment that they deeply desire.

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