
DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Social conservatives have heeded the advice of Robert Weaver who convincingly argued that “ideas have consequences” and have gained the intellectual and political legitimacy needed to take their political and social ideology to the American public through the academy. The creation of philanthropic organizations and policy institutes allowed for social conservatives to move from being the political elite with aspirations to become the governing elite. To carry out the ideological attack against liberalism in the academy, conservatives developed think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, philanthropic organizations including the Bradley foundation which gave heavily to academic change organizations such as the National Academy of Scholars and the Madison Center for Educational Affairs. These organizations in turn financed scholars whose research reflected conservative political and social ideology, established college conservative newspaper training programs, organized speaker bureaus for conservative ideologues and supported legislation that would rid the nation of affirmative action.

The economics of race helps to explain more precisely the reason why Black Studies was bore the brunt of this conservative ideological attack during the academic culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s, although racism and racial chauvinism did factor into the equation. As described in case studies of individual Black Studies departments, the Academic Culture Wars had a profound impact on student enrollment, faculty hiring and institutional support for Black Studies. Certainly the financial implications of the
Academic Culture War were most profoundly felt at the public comprehensive universities where access to philanthropic support from the Ford Foundation was not available. Although Black Studies departments in the comprehensive, teaching based institutions may have felt the effects of the Culture War attacks on the discipline more acutely than their elite, research based university peers, the entire discipline continues to “suffer the burdens of its beginnings” and must continually defend its right to exist within the hallowed halls of academe. The Culture Wars may have not dismantled Black Studies but it has made the stability of the field far less certain as a result.
Dedicated to my grandmother, Catherine Tarpley
and to my late father, Paul Gearing
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

This dissertation explores the strategic organizing efforts of 20th century conservatives to shape liberal arts curricula in American higher education and the subsequent participation of conservative scholars in the debate over the legitimacy of Black Studies within the academy. This study discusses how political pressure brought by conservatives and the battles they initiated under the banner of the “Culture Wars” affected the viability of Black Studies as an academic discipline. Consequently, this project traces the development of a highly organized network of philanthropic foundations, think tanks and policy institutes as the funding sources for scholarly projects and educational policy initiatives that reflected the particular ideological stance(s) of these groups.

Several historians and educators have examined the role that philanthropy played in support of blacks in higher education since the establishment of historically black colleges for newly freed slaves (Anderson, 1988; Anderson and Moss, 1999). Additionally, work has been done that examines the uses of philanthropy in thwarting efforts by scholars such as Carter G. Woodson to promote the development of Black history as a viable field of inquiry at the turn of the twentieth century (Clark-Hine, 1986; Meier and Rudwick, 1986; Hall, 2000). However, little work has been done regarding
the more recent use of philanthropy as a means of calling into question the legitimacy of institutionalized Black Studies programs in the nation’s colleges and universities. This dissertation examines the "Culture Wars" of the 1980s and 1990s within a larger context of conservative philanthropy by demonstrating how financing from conservative think tanks and foundations has supported critics of ethnic studies and multicultural education, allowing them to mount a relatively successful ideological campaign against multiculturalism and diversity in higher education. This research project further examines the “Culture Wars” as an extension of the early grassroots and national organizing work done by modern American conservatives in the 1940’s and 1950’s to remove all vestiges of the liberal welfare state ushered in by Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal. Conservatives consider affirmative action, Black Studies and other “race-based initiatives” as a destructive outgrowth of the New Deal liberalism.

In April 2005, The Chronicle of Higher Education published an article entitled “Past their prime? After 35 years on campuses, black studies programs struggle to survive” (Wilson, 2005). The article examined the future of black studies programs in the nation’s colleges and universities. According to the Wilson, black studies programs have had difficulty successfully recruiting students to major in the discipline. In addition, programs have suffered faculty reductions due to budgetary constraints (Wilson, 2005). Moreover, some faculty within these programs have noted that the integration of multiculturalism and diversity into other disciplines and programs such as women’s studies, history, psychology and English, has resulted in fewer dollars and less university
attention which produce weaker black studies programs (Wilson, 2005).

Further, a contingent group of black and non-black academics without expertise in the discipline and not situated in these programs, have argued that Black Studies has never deserved a place within academia. One such black academician is Shelby Steele (1991), author of *The Content of Our Character: A New Vision for Race in America*, a widely read and controversial book. Steele, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University has asserted, that Black studies “…was a bogus concept from the beginning because it was an idea grounded in politics, not in a particular methodology” (p.1). Like other conservatives such as Dinesh D’Souza (1991) who have argued that black studies is an exercise in politics rather than a rigorous intellectual inquiry, Steele is confident in asserting that these "programs are dying of their own inertia because they’ve had 30 or 40 years to show us a serious academic program, and they’ve failed” (Wilson, 2005).

Steele’s assertions about black studies programs notwithstanding, the discipline has been able to maintain 450 active departments nationwide and not only grown but thrived at elite universities such as Wisconsin, Northwestern, Harvard and Yale (Wilson, 2005). A decade ago conservative scholars who considered their values and our national heritage under attack by the philosophies and methodologies of black studies as a discipline directly targeted these programs and began a hotly contested public debate about the state of American higher education *in general* and black studies *in particular*. The organized conservative launching of the “Culture Wars” suggests that Black Studies
programs are less likely to be losing ground because of self-created inertia than impacted by the "external forces" of conservative opposition manifested in their social movement.

1.2 Research Question and Purpose of the Study

By focusing this study on the philanthropic efforts of conservative foundations, think tanks, and institutes I have attempted to answer this primary research question:

• Why has conservative philanthropy been used to influence the discourse on race and multiculturalism in American colleges and universities?

This question sought to understand the motivations for conservative interest in what issues are being addressed in the college classroom with regards to race and diversity and to what extent does philanthropy (otherwise read as external forces) shape the curriculum. Furthermore, there are several secondary questions which undergird and provide focus to the primary question including:

• How does an understanding of modern American conservative political philosophy allow us to understand how conservatives have been mobilized socially?

• How were conservative scholars, politicians and business leaders able to amass considerable ideological, political and economic capital which enabled them to mount a relatively successful ideological campaign against academe?
• Why has Black Studies in particular been targeted for examination by conservative critics of American higher education? What made this particular field of study susceptible to a national debate and critique?

This critical inquiry provides insight into the nature of conservative thought and influence within American higher education particularly as conservative philosophy pertains to issues of race. Race is a highly complex cultural and social construction that has been utilized within the United States to designate the distribution of wealth, resources and opportunities (Rothenberg, 2004) therefore a discussion of race is often accompanied by a discussion of other variables such as gender and class. By studying how conservative political philosophy often favors a free market economic system, we are able to discover clues as to why conservatives used philanthropy which ultimately impacted the viability of black studies as an academic discipline. I demonstrate how these forces negatively influence the educational process. Thus, the purposes of my study are to:

• Bring awareness to the academic community about the role of conservative social organizing and philanthropy in shaping and disseminating ideas and the extent to which this philanthropy has undermined pedagogy and the independence of higher education.

• Demonstrate how conservative thought has grown in influence and significance in the intellectual marketplace of ideas and in society at large. Twentieth century conservatives can no longer be ignored as
backward and unsophisticated replicas of past generations of conservative thinkers (Gottfried, 1993).

- Demonstrate how “…trans-disciplinary scholarship, grounded in social activism, challenges prevailing notions of Black inferiority and cultural significance thus making it a target because it works to transform the academic social order” (Bobo et al., 2003).

The presumed “superiority” of liberal thought has been significantly weakened by the creation of a network of conservative organizations linked together by a tightly woven set of ideological beliefs. This study clearly demonstrates how liberal educators and politicians have potentially jeopardized many of the gains made in the academy with respect to ethnic studies by simply ignoring or underestimating the level of sophistication, organization and tenacity displayed by their conservative counterparts.

1.3 Research Design and Methodology

For this project, I utilized a critical education studies approach examining the phenomenon of conservative philanthropy and its impact on race in the American college classroom. A critical education studies approach is primarily a qualitative research tradition which uses critique as a method of investigation (McCarthy, 1991). Critical education scholars such as Henry Giroux (1981), Michael Apple (1995), and Peter McLaren (1998) draw heavily on the early work of critical theorists working in
Frankfurt between World War I and II who reject positivist understandings of knowledge and research. Critical education scholars “...help debunk two educational myths of liberalism – one that education is a neutral activity and the other that education is an apolitical activity” (Torres, 1998).

I selected such an approach because it allowed me to interrogate and examine both the motivations and methods employed by social conservatives to call into question the legitimacy of Black Studies as a valid field of academic study. My primary research methodology utilized a critical analysis of the historical literature about conservative political philosophy and organization, student activism and the institutionalization of Black Studies as well as conservative philanthropic investment in American higher education for the purpose of undermining positive discourses on race and multiculturalism. This philanthropic investment in American higher education was shaped largely by modern American conservative grassroots organizing which began in the 1940’s as a response to FDR’s New Deal liberalism. Thus, the analysis of historical literature is a useful method for educationalists, educational policy officials and academic administrators who may be unfamiliar with the historical context out of which this conservative philanthropic investment began.

Using both primary and secondary sources, I provide a detailed historical narrative and critical education studies analysis to address how and why have social conservatives used philanthropy to influence the debate over the legitimacy of Black Studies in the academy. For this project, I have used a number of primary sources
including special collections and archival data retrieved from the J. Paul Leonard Library at San Francisco State University from their San Francisco State College Strike Collection and personnel files on Dr. Nathan Hare. I have retrieved a number of articles and editorials from conservative newspapers, annual reports from conservative foundations, copies of speeches and academic journal articles from conservative scholars as well as programming materials and brochures from conservative think tanks and educational policy institutes such as the Heritage Foundation and the Madison Center for Educational Excellence. All of these materials were found in the Sara Diamond Collection on the U.S. Right at the University of California, Berkeley. Finally, I have retrieved an electronic copy of an original memo entitled “Attack on the Free Enterprise System” written by Lewis F. Powell in 1971 and is said to be the document which set “movement conservatism” into motion. This document was downloaded from the Lewis F. Powell collection at Washington and Lee University in Virginia. It was the discovery of this critical document which gave rise to this research project. An invaluable resource for this project was the Foundation Grants Index which publishes annual tax-free donations from various charitable and philanthropic organizations around the country. In addition to using primary and secondary historical source material, I also conducted four phone interviews with department chairs of Black Studies programs in American universities. I interviewed chairs from two different institutional types: research and comprehensive universities. I purposely chose to use different institutional types as Wilson (1995) suggested that Black Studies was thriving at elite, research
institutions while Black Studies might not have been as deeply entrenched at comprehensive (teaching based) institutions.

For this study, I interviewed chairs from universities in the California and the Midwest. Substantive issues played a role in my selection of chairs to interview. It was in California where the first Black Studies programs were established in the late 1960’s and where one of the nation’s first pieces of legislation mandating a course in ethnic diversity be required for all graduating students in the University of California and California State University Systems was made into law with the passage of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71 in 1982. The Midwest was also an important site for the development and expansion of Black Studies especially within the elite research institutions such as the University of Wisconsin. The Ford Foundation played a critical role in expanding Black Studies throughout the Midwest and knowing Ford’s role in these departments is important in understanding how the elite universities were able to thrive and grow under the Academic Culture Wars.

In doing a critical analysis of the primary sources and a large number of secondary sources along with data derived from four phone interviews with Black Studies department chairs, I examined the debates, questions and positions found in varying interpretations of past events. I used interpretational analysis initially to identify recurrent themes in the primary and secondary sources. Gall, Gall and Borg (2005) describe “interpretational analysis as a systematic set of procedures to code and classify qualitative data to ensure that important constructs, themes and patterns emerge.” In
particular, I used interpretational analysis to help illuminate how conservative philanthropic organizations were motivated by conservative political and social ideology. It is important in this study to understand why conservatives created a network of philanthropic organizations and think tanks. Through a careful reading and interpretational analysis of primary and secondary sources relevant to the development of conservative ideology, I argue that some of the reasons for creation of this philanthropic network as well as the funding patterns of these organizations lie in an understanding of basic conservative political philosophy. Furthermore, interpretational analysis is useful in examining the historical development of Black Studies at predominantly white colleges and universities in this country. Some Black Studies programs came about because of student protests while others developed with less vocal clashes between students and university officials. I hoped to uncover some general patterns in the development of these programs as it is important to know how a discipline that was/is oftentimes viewed as “radical,” “divisive,” or “unscholarly” got its start at American colleges and universities.

Following interpretational analysis of these sources, I then used reflective analysis which is the use of personal judgment to weave together my findings into a coherent story of how specific events, individuals or groups influenced the discourse on the utility and viability of Black Studies as an academic discipline. My research report has made use of narrative and expository writing and incorporated critical analysis using primary and secondary source materials and interview data as evidence to support my analyses.
My report is presented chronologically and thematically.

1.4 Chapter Outline

This work is comprised of an introductory chapter, three data chapters and a concluding chapter. Using educational and historical sources, this work employed both a critical education studies lens and some elements of traditional historiographic methods. Four primary variables form the crux of this study’s scope: (1) conservative political philosophy, (2) the historical origins of the institutional development of Black Studies (3) the uses of conservative philanthropy which give rise to a negative discourse around issues of race, diversity and multiculturalism in the college classroom and (4) Black Studies department chairs reporting of the “material consequences” of the Culture Wars on their programs. These variables when taken together has provided rich data from which I analyzed and examined the question of why conservatives have used philanthropy to dictate what is considered legitimate scholarship and pedagogy.

Chapter one serves as the introduction to the study in which the primary research question guiding the study has been presented as well as the rationale for the selection of research design and methodology was offered.

Chapter two explores the development, refinement and rise of modern American conservatism since 1945. The chapter describes how three seemingly disparate groups – libertarians, traditionalists and anti-Communists – banded together in order to fight their common enemy – New Deal liberalism. The alliance formed by these three groups has
allowed for a relatively small but vocal minority of FDR detractors to work collaboratively to organize themselves philosophically and politically and to eventually amass enough influence to take over control of the Republican National Committee (henceforth the Republican Party). This chapter also provides a look at how conservatives used anti-communism and the hysteria of that period to circumvent addressing the question of civil rights. Furthermore, this chapter explains how Barry Goldwater’s success at winning the Republic Party nomination to run for president represented a major political victory for conservatism laying the groundwork for Ronald Reagan to run successfully for the position of governor of California and later as President on a conservative ticket.

Chapter three, entitled Conservative Philanthropy and the Academic Culture Wars, provides a detailed examination of the scope and context of the Academic Culture Wars of the 1980s and 1990s. It begins with a description of how the first conservative think tank, the Heritage Foundation, got its start in 1973 with a donation from the Coors Family of Colorado. This chapter also analyzes the impact of Lewis F. Powell’s “Attack on the Free Market Enterprise System” memo which established a blueprint for movement conservatism and lead John Coors to invest in the Heritage Foundation. Additionally, this chapter looks at the role that neo-conservatives play in shaping conservative educational policy which would be used to critique liberal education in America, specifically Black studies and other minority studies programs. Morality, the political correctness debates, and funding patterns of major conservative philanthropic
organizations including the Olin, Bradley, Scaife and Heritage foundations are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter four programs a brief overview of the institutional development of Black Studies by describing the historical context out of which Black Studies was developed as a field of study within American higher education. This chapter looks as African American education prior to 1968 when the first Black Studies program was founded at San Francisco State College and examines the controversies surrounding the institutionalization of the discipline at SFSC. This chapter also explores the conservative critique against black studies which may or may not reflect a more general conservative perspective on issues of race, race relations and diversity in America.

The phenomenon of “multicultural conservatives” is explored in this chapter as well. Conservative minority scholars such as Shelby Steele, Thomas Sowell, Dinesh D’Souza and political activists such as Ward Connerly have grown in number, popularity and influence within conservative ranks and have been held up, regardless of their educational and professional experience, as race relations experts. All of the aforementioned have had their publications peer reviewed and propagated by conservative foundations and think tanks including the Olin, Bradley, and Heritage foundations and many serve on the Black conservative speaker circuit called Project 51. The use of multicultural conservatives is but one of several strategies by conservatives to help solicit support for their race-based policy initiatives.

The concluding chapter ends with a discussion of the economics of race and
describes how it maybe economics moreso than race which motivated conservatives to launch the Academic Culture Wars and have Black Studies as one of its primary targets.

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1 Landay (2002) says that “movement conservatism was a power tool formulated by scholars such as Irving Kristol, political organizers like the late Treasury Secretary William Simon, opinion molders and popularizers such as William F. Buckley, and a phalanx of think-tank operatives including Edwin Feulner and Paul Weyrich.” Movement conservatism took conservative political philosophy and transformed it into a blueprint for social action. Movement conservatives sought to move beyond the realm of ideas which had long been negatively associated with liberals who often depended on academicians to formulate economic and political policies.
2.1 The Case against Liberalism 1945-1957

The early impetus for the rise in modern American conservatism primarily focused on defeating its opponent: New Deal liberalism. The three groups which unify under the term “conservative” – libertarians, traditionalists, and anti-communists - banded together largely because it was their goal to undermine the influence that Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s (henceforth FDR) New Deal liberalism had on American culture and politics. It is important to note that the New Deal liberalism that personified FDR’s administration was vastly different from the 19th century liberalism which dominated much of the American political and social atmosphere until the 1930’s. Before FDR was elected president of the United States in 1932, liberalism was associated with laissez-faire economics and limited government.

What FDR offered was a completely different definition of the term associating his New Deal liberalism with “economic individualism with social democratic safeguards” (Siegel, 1991, p. 1). For Roosevelt, the “new deal for the American people” meant there was a “duty and responsibility of government toward economic life” (Roosevelt, 1933). Additionally, this new brand of liberalism was said to be based largely on the use of reason to make political decisions and stood in stark contrast to the
liberalism which personified the presidency of Herbert Hoover. Modern American conservatism absorbed or borrowed much of the political ideals of 19th century liberalism, which was based not only on laissez-faire economics and limited government but also promoted the maintenance of the economic, political and social status quo and strict adherence to religious doctrine. Fred Siegel (1991, p. 1) says that,

“In Europe, conservatism was based on hereditary classes; in America it was based on hereditary religious, ethnic and racial groups. The GOP, a largely Protestant party, looked upon itself as the manifestation of the divine creed of Americanism revealed through the Constitution. To be a conservative, then, was to share in a religiously ordained vision of a largely stateless society of self-regulating individuals. This civil religion, preached by Herbert Hoover, was shattered by the Great Depression and the usurpation of the government by an “alien” power, Franklin D. Roosevelt.”

Overwhelmed by the Great Depression, bankers and businesspeople urged Roosevelt to take extraordinary steps to get the economy back on the road to recovery. Roosevelt responded by initiating a flurry of programs designed to stimulate spending, jobs and trade union membership. In stark contrast to his 19th century liberal predecessors, Roosevelt insisted upon refining democracy in such a way that industrial workers would have a say in the political life of the country through trade unions. The passage of the Wagner Act enabled labor to organize and offered workers a degree of job protection and freedom that was once only given to property owners (Siegel, 1991, p. 1). Such a drastic reform put Roosevelt at odds with bankers and businesspeople that once encouraged him to take decisive action in order to get the nation out of the Depression. Roosevelt’s liberalism very early on was seen by conservative sympathizers as a direct
challenge to American capitalism and individualism and more radical than anything the nation had ever seen.

Libertarians and traditionalists, two of the three groups which banded together to fight against New Deal liberalism in the mid-1940’s, took great issue with the utilitarian overtones inherent in FDR’s New Deal programs. Roosevelt contended that “the man who seeks freedom from responsibility in the name of individual liberty is either fooling himself or trying to cheat his fellow man” (Roosevelt, 1933, p.1). Roosevelt and his liberal supporters believed that the general interest of the masses should take priority over the private interests of individuals. New Deal liberals saw big business elites from the Gilded Age at the turn of the 20th century as representations of “private” interest that were given carte blanche to act with impunity. Roosevelt’s “court-packing” plan (as it was called by its opponents) was one attempt to undermine the power of big business which in the New Deal liberals estimation meant that the average American wage earner would continue to live a substandard existence. Others saw the judicial reorganization bill as an attempt by FDR to sidestep the Constitution and limit the powers of the judicial branch. For libertarians in particular Roosevelt’s utilitarian goals were akin to socialism.

Many of the programs proposed by Roosevelt’s New Deal failed to adequately reform the American economy (Brinkley, 1991). Instead, the value of the New Deal lay primarily with the fact that it offered a new political paradigm aimed at reinvigorating the nation’s economic system. In fact, because of its resemblance to European social democracy, conservative opponents to FDR claimed that New Deal liberalism was
fundamentally un-American. The liberalism that FDR offered reflected progressive ideals including: “an impatience with economic disorder; an opposition to monopoly; a commitment to government regulation of the economy; a belief that poverty was usually a product of social and economic forces; not a personal moral failure” (Brinkley, 1991, p. 1). These progressive ideals were in direct opposition with conservative ideology which placed a high value on limited or no government intervention in the economy, support for big business and a belief that most of the nation’s poor choose to remain in those depressed economic situations because of lack of moral intelligence. In contrast to current assumptions, early 20th century conservatives believed in evolution.

This particular brand of conservatism was heavily influenced by the rise of Social Darwinism as a political and social philosophy which applied Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution to human social groups which became popular in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. In this view, weaker groups will ultimately perish due to their own intellectual, moral and social inadequacies and government should not offer any form of economic assistance which would disrupt that “natural” progression of human life. Social Darwinism had a profound impact on American educational policy, military strategy and business leaders. In education, the field of sociology was heavily influenced by social Darwinist thought as evidenced by the fact that the father of American sociology, William Graham Sumner, was one of its chief advocates (Hofstader, 1959). The Monroe Doctrine came of age and was influenced by Social Darwinism and was used to justify the American colonization of the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico.
Andrew Carnegie and J.D. Rockefeller used Social Darwinian theory to help build a case for the repeal of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act which declared monopolies illegal. Therefore, it is easy to see how a political and social ideology that called for the inclusion of white masses in American political life and sought more government intervention in regulating the economy would be viewed as a direct threat to the ideals and values that conservatives hold dear.

Conservative opponents to FDR’s New Deal liberalism also took great exception with the president’s reliance on a group of academics to serve as his key political advisers. Known as the “brain trust,” this diverse group of scholars including the president’s legal counsel Samuel Rosenman, Raymond Moley, Rexford Tugwell and Adolf Berle of Columbia University, attorney Basil O’Connor and Felix Frankfurter of Harvard Law School, offered Roosevelt a variety of approaches for dealing with the Great Depression (Foner and Garraty, 1991). Although they varied in their overall approaches to economic rebuilding, they also subscribed to the belief that organized intellect could restore the economic, political and social well being of American society. All favored some form of government intervention to bring the economy back from disaster but beyond that, they took divergent paths. Conservative opponents to FDR and the New Deal used the term “brain truster” disparagingly, believing that this group of intellectuals were steering the country toward socialism or communism (Foner and Garraty, 1991).
The year 1945 was a watershed in American history. Franklin D. Roosevelt, president of the United States for a record four terms in office, died in April of that year. The United States military dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and subsequent military conflict between the Axis and Allied powers. World War II ended in August of that year and finally, those groups opposed to many of the programs and legislation proposed by Roosevelt under his New Deal program began to unify collectively in order to create a viable force against the “evils” of liberalism.

Some scholars have noted that liberalism was so deeply woven into the fabric of American political and social thought during the New Deal era that liberal schools of the period believed that any conservative notions were not worthy of discussion. (Trilling, 1950; Schoenwald, 2001) By 1935, American businessmen and bankers were turning their backs on the New Deal, fearing these experiments, such as taking the nation off the gold standard and making concessions to labor, would eventually spell their doom. Yet this group, regardless of how vocal they may have been, was small in number and lacked the popular appeal that FDR had amassed to influence the American public to support the New Deal. Roosevelt’s election to three additional terms in office gave him a mandate to further New Deal legislation, create the Social Security system and establish a “good neighbor” policy which transformed the Monroe Doctrine from a unilateral American manifesto into arrangements for mutual action against aggressors. Furthermore, FDR brought in “liberal” scholars to help in the formulation of New Deal programs. By
ostracizing the business elite, relying on the liberal intelligentsia to help form federal policy and weakening individual state’s rights in economic and political decision-making, FDR unknowingly alienated three distinct groups who would eventually unite against liberalism and become known as the “conservatives.”

2.2 The Three Strands of Modern American Conservatism

Much of the criticism of FDR’s New Deal program attacked the increased power for the federal government to control and plan the U.S. economy. Libertarians found inspiration in the writings of Austrian born economist, Friedrich A. Hayek, who believed that governmental planning of the economy would prove disastrous and he speculated on the consequences of this trend for individual liberty (Nash, 1976). In his book, *The Road to Serfdom*, Hayek argued that “planning leads to dictatorship” and “the direction of economic activity inevitably necessitates the suppression of freedom (Hayek, 1944, p.70). Based largely on his own fears of Nazi Germany, Hayek argued against government intervention in economic matters saying that Nazism and Fascism were responses to socialism in pre-WWII Britain, where Hayek taught at the London School of Economics in the early 1930’s, which was following Germany on its “road to serfdom” by embracing “democratic socialism” (Hayek, 1944). Hayek (1944) did concede that the government should not be inactive but maintained that it should follow the Rule of Law: government should be bound by rules announced beforehand. What is absent from Hayek’s analysis
is any mention of what governments should do when faced with an economic crisis such as the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression.

FDR and his advisors believed that given the nation’s historical reliance on a free market economic system, one that was fundamentally broken at the time of the Stock Market Crash of 1929, the federal government had to use taxation to get the government functioning again and had to orchestrate economic programs that would put the U.S. back on the road to financial recovery (Brinkley, 1991). No matter what criticism libertarians could muster against the assumed “effects” of this economic planning, the U.S. economy did begin to see signs of recovery shortly after FDR’s first 100 days in office. It was an economic necessity that quick and decisive action be taken by the government in order to prevent more hunger, crime and joblessness for the masses of Americans.

Nevertheless, libertarians became much more vocal following the publication of Hayek’s work, believing his ideas best described what many business owners and bankers believed to be true about the New Deal as impinging on the “natural” relations among businesses, employers and employees and the area of supply and demand (Schoenwald, 2001). Likewise, Hayek’s questioning of the residual effects of New Deal economic planning on individual rights appealed to several traditionalists, another element of the conservative political philosophy. Jonathan Schoenwald (2001) says that “traditionalism and libertarianism focused on preventing the State from meddling in individual affairs while simultaneously they promoted a belief system that adhered to a universal moral code” (p. 19).
Traditionalist conservatives concerned themselves primarily with the moral decline of the United States since the liberals gained control of the White House in 1932. One of its most influential figures was Richard M. Weaver, a historian from the University of Chicago. Weaver was deeply influenced by the ideals of agrarianism and claimed that Southern feudalism, as he referred to slavery and subsequent debt peonage during the post-Civil War era, had provided the region with stability which was a condition for positive values (Nash, 1976). The American Southerner, Weaver claimed, viewed urbanites as socially indifferent, rootless and lacking concern for the community because of the anonymity that was a fact of urban living (Nash, 1976). These early ideas about the differences between the American North and South helped shaped Weaver’s later ideas about liberalism and traditionalism. Liberalism was associated with the urban North and was typified by its most popular spokesman, Franklin Roosevelt. Weaver believed that for Americans to preserve its civilization, we all must embrace the universal truths inherent in religion (Nash, 1976). For Weaver, traditional religious doctrine was objective truth. Any deviation from the dictates of the church would have long-term negative repercussions on the new nation.

In his 1948 publication of *Ideas Have Consequences*, Weaver maintained steadfastly that American civilization was on the decline in the post WWI era because of a revolution of ideas which favored the relativism of “man as the measure of all things” (Nash, 1976, p. 40). Weaver argued that civilization has to be based on discipline, hierarchy, order, structure and restraint in order to preserve itself. In his estimation,
Weaver found that America was becoming decadent and rootless, favoring the cult of the mass instead of rewarding individual initiative and ingenuity (Nash, 1976). It seems that Weaver’s ideas about American society were rooted in a deeply felt sense of rugged individualism, tempered by a strong religious conviction which demanded order and submission to universal truths. In order to preserve this individualism, Weaver, much like his libertarian counterparts felt that too much government intervention in the structuring of the economy would undermine an individual’s civil liberties. He called for a defense of the right of private property ownership, claiming that land ownership gave people a refuge from the encroaching state which favored equalitarianism at the expense of personal liberty. (Nash, 1976).

What distinguishes traditionalists from the libertarians is the focus on religious truths as universal truths. It is not that libertarians did not believe strongly in their religious doctrines. They simply believed that too much governmental interference creates a citizenry of dependents whose freedom of choice is severely limited. Traditionalist conservatives, like Weaver, go a step further and argue that all facets of American life must be protected from modern man’s egotism, “hysterical optimism” and aggressive “war against substance” (Nash, 1976, p. 41). Governmental interference in the economy is one example of “hysterical optimism” (Weaver, 1948).

Building on Weaver’s central thesis, Russell Kirk published *The Conservative Mind*, in 1953, in which he contends that there are six truisms for American conservatism
for which these truisms reflect the ideas presented in Weaver’s work. Kirk (1953, p. 7-8) maintains that:

1. Divine intent rules society as well as conscience, and political problems are both religious and moral problems.

2. Conservatives value traditional life calling equalitarianism and utilitarianism radical systems that require uniformity. Kirk further contends that these radical systems are simply guises for totalitarianism and life is not lived best when engineered.

3. Civilized society requires orders and classes and further, society longs for leadership.

4. Property and freedom are inseparably connected, and economic leveling is not economic progress because it does not create economic opportunity.

5. Traditionalism is the only way for an individual to control their anarchist tendencies.

6. Change and reform are not identical.

Kirk’s truisms provide the intellectual content for conservatives who became disenchanted with the promises of the New Deal to repair the American economy and lead the country back to a position of world prominence. Reclaiming or holding firm to traditional beliefs – discipline, order, authority – were the only ways that the
traditionalists believed the nation could ever move forward. Kirk urged traditionalists to disseminate these ideas to a larger audience (Schoenwald, 2001). Kirk believed that these truisms would help explain why conservatives felt that liberalism was the incorrect approach for the American economy and society as a whole. However, in the early stages of the movement, conservative thinkers and writers had to reconcile many different definitions of what outsiders began to believe was a single belief system (Schoenwald, 2001). Thus, it was necessary for the various strands of the conservative movement to join forces, but in order to achieve this unification, each group had to be willing to compromise on some aspect of their belief system. Conservative anti-communism provided the catalyst for the unification process.

Anti-communism was the third component of modern American conservative thought. It dominated American domestic and foreign policy in the 1940’s and 1950’s when it was transformed from a cold war to a right wing to a mainstream ideology (Schrecker, 1991). While conservatives and liberals both worked to prevent any communist forces from infiltrating the United States, the degree to which each group was willing to fight the communist threat was vastly different from the other.

The founding of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and subsequent Bolshevik Revolution of 1919 ushered in the first American wave of anti-communism known as the Red Scare of 1919-1920. Foreigners and labor unions were the primary targets of this crackdown against the spread of Communism in the United States. Employers claimed that labor union members who would strike for better wages and
working conditions were Communist sympathizers. American immigration officials would attempt to deport thousands of “radical” foreign-born citizens based solely on the accusation or assumption that they supported the Bolshevik overthrow of the Czar Nicholas’ reign in Russia. These crackdowns succeeded, at least in the short-term, at neutralizing the power and influence of the American Communist Party (Schrecker, 1991).

The Great Depression in 1929 and the rise of Hitler to power in Germany in 1933 spurred Communist Party growth. The International Communist Party established a policy known as the Popular Front which tried to create a coalition against fascism. When the American Communist Party toned down its revolutionary rhetoric and supported FDR and the New Deal in the mid-1930s, the party attracted several new members, particularly those from the middle classes. Others joined the party in order to organize labor unions.

The tenuous coalition between FDR New Deal liberals and the American Communist Party was seen by some right-wing opponents of the New Deal as nothing more than a Communist plot to take over the American political system (Schrecker, 1991). However, the reality was that most supporters of New Deal liberalism were never tempted to become Communists. Furthermore, the coalition between New Deal liberals and the Communist Party was predicated primarily on their opposition to Hitler’s fascism and in 1939, when the Soviet Union agreed to the terms of the Nazi-Soviet pact, FDR and New Deal liberals turned against the party (Schrecker, 1991). Anticommunism became a
more widespread movement in the United States thereafter and the Popular Front was
destroyed completely.

The Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States that began shortly
after the end of World War II ushered in a new wave of domestic anti-communism where
labor unions, universities, private organizations and governmental agencies purged
Communists from their ranks. Additionally, because the Communist Party was
associated with the Soviet Union, the party was now seen as a threat to national security.
A growing consensus began to emerge which held that: all Communists owed their
primary loyalty to Moscow; that they unblinkingly followed the party line; and they
would work to subvert the American system. These charges gained enough currency to
fuel the demand for the exposure and elimination of all elements of Communism in
American culture and politics. Several domestic policies were enacted for the sole
purpose of ridding the country of any Communist elements (Foner and Garraty, 1991).

The House Un-American Committee (HUAC) was established in 1938 to
investigate disloyalty by fascists and communists. The committee focused primarily on
the latter, especially communist sympathizers within labor unions and New Deal
agencies. Under the leadership of Martin Dies, the HUAC also used a number of tactics
which were questionable in light of the protections supposedly guaranteed by the
Constitution. Among the tactics employed to investigate charges of Communism, HUAC
made sweeping generalizations about labor organizations, held hearings in which being
questioned or even mentioned was an indication of guilt and made assumptions that any
association with a suspect organization proved one’s disloyalty and guilt. The strong-arm tactics used by the committee went unchecked as popular support for anti-Communism grew. In fact, senators and congressional representatives understood that to vote against any measure presented by HUAC would be viewed as support for Communism. The committee continued to act with impunity into the 1940’s especially after the House voted to make the committee permanent in 1945 and a federal appeals court upheld its power to cite uncooperative witness for contempt in 1947. Likewise, the Supreme Court placed few restrictions on the committee which legitimated a witch-hunt and because of the Communist Party’s insistence on secrecy, the exposure of its members became a central feature of the anti-Communist crusade (Schrecker, 1991).

President Harry Truman pushed for the creation of a loyalty-security program that barred Communists or people associated with Communism from governmental jobs. Several academics were indicted and convicted in the late 1940’s for violating the 1940 Smith Act which prohibited the “teaching and advocacy” of subversive doctrines. But the definition of what constituted Communist activity was made more broad as the power and visibility of HUAC grew. A person could be charged as a Communist or sympathizers of the Communist cause for appreciating the paintings of Pablo Picasso or speaking out for the Bill of Rights. Furthermore, anti-Communism served partisan purposes as well (Schoenwald, 2003).

The few cases of Communist infiltration of the New Deal would be used by the Republican Party to bolster the party’s image of being tough on Communism. Joseph
McCarthy, a senator from Wisconsin, alleged that Democrats were “soft” on Communism and “lost” China after the Second World War (Schrecker, 1991). McCarthy seemed more intent on using Communism to embarrass the Truman administration than to provide solid evidence of a Communist threat within the United States. By the 1950’s, the outbreak of the Korean War, McCarthy, supported by Republican Party leaders, made allegations that the leading China expert, Owen Lattimore, was a top Russian spy. Furthermore, McCarthy created an uproar by claiming to have access to a “black book” which lists how the Communist Party had infiltrated Hollywood. He was never able to produce any verifiable evidence of such an infiltration. McCarthy was more opportunist than a man of substance and became a liability for the Republican Party (Nash, 1976; Schoenwald, 2001).

Conservative anti-Communists believed that the 1930’s was a time of “philosophical nihilism, totalitarianism and the disturbing emergence of the mass man” (Nash, 1976, p. 86). Liberals were charged with being responsible for the growth of Communism or “at best, the liberals were ineffectual; at worst, they were duped or infiltrated by Communists” (Nash, 1976, p. 89). Conservatives had long been skeptical of extensive foreign involvement and “liberal” interventionism, says Nash (1976), following the end of World War I which ushered in a period of American isolationism under Woodrow Wilson.

Conservative anti-Communists had leveled charges of responsibility for the growth of Communism against FDR and other New Deal liberals for several years but in
1945, the accusations grew in number. With the “loss” of China, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the near “loss” of Germany to Communism, conservatives maintained that FDR mishandled American foreign policy by building a weak but visible coalition with the American Communist Party (Nash, 1976). The manifestation of this mishandling was the “loss” of additional countries to the “Red Menace.”

Conservative anti-Communists used magazines and books to spread their ideas about the liberals failure to adequately deal with the growth of Communism abroad and domestically. George Nash (1976) claims that three journals in particular, Plain Talk, The Freeman and American Mercury spearheaded the assault against liberals. Nash (1976) also claims that the critiques offered in these journals as well as books on the issue of conservative anti-Communism: (1) alleged that America’s reversals abroad were attributable to the failure of domestic liberal leaders to comprehend the revolutionary nature of Communism, (2) personalized the Communist threat by pointing to individuals of poor judgment and questionable loyalty who had a disastrous effect on American foreign policy including Alger Hiss, Owen Lattimore and others; (3) gave currency to the ideals, scholarship and experiences of exiled European-born hard-line anti-Communists such as Gerhart Niemeyer who would eventually become cold war strategists for the American Right.

By all accounts, libertarians, traditionalists and anti-Communists believed FDR’s New Deal programs and the influence FDR’s brand of liberalism was destroying the very fabric of American values (Siegel, 1991). Liberalism sought too much radical change for
the conservatives, who were comfortable with order, rules, and maintenance of the status quo. However, these groups were unable to mount a viable counter-strategy to liberalism as long as they functioned separately.

The events of 1945 including but not limited to World War II and the power vacuum left by FDR’s death in office provided these groups with the opportunity to not only band together but to also offer the American people an alternative political and social philosophy with which to rally around. Conservatism was not necessarily new or unique to America but what distinguished this modern formulation was that it would become better conceptualized and disseminated than older versions of the political philosophy and it would use many of the same types of organizing principles which helped FDR rise to political power and spread the gospel of liberalism, including establishing philanthropic organizations, as well as making use of the media and grooming charismatic, dynamic leaders.

2.3 The Process of Unification

The three distinct groups which would become synonymous with modern American conservatism – libertarians, traditionalists and anti-Communists – were faced with the task of consolidation and unification by the mid-1950’s, lest they run the risk of allowing liberals to continue to dominate American political and cultural life. Although each group focused on distinctly different issues – libertarians were concerned with the threat of State to private enterprise and individualism; traditionalists believed that
liberalism gave way to the erosion of values in favor of a secular, rootless mass society and anti-Communists were former Communists concerned with growth and spread of international Communism (Nash, 1976). There were not great ideological differences between these groups but without consolidation of their intellectual and financial resources, they remained unable to mount an effective blow against the “Establishment” (Blumenthal, 1986). Conservatives formulated working definitions of their belief system between 1948 and 1955 and sought ways to incorporate Americans who held similar beliefs into the fold (Schoenwald, 2001). Conservatives were particularly mindful of “formulating an assertive rather than reactionary ideology,” one that would “integrate philosophical truisms with politically viable axioms” (Schoenwald, 2001, p.17).

There were two primary methods used by conservatives which helped in the development of their guiding philosophy and political agenda. First, Jonathan Schoenwald (2001) persuasively argues that anti-Communism bridged the gaps between all factions of conservatives. He contends that “since communism represented an antithesis of Burkean conservatism, anti-Communism served to not only to defend America and the West against its encroachment but to also promote conservative values at home” (Schoenwald, 2001, p. 19). The conservative fight against Communism became a rally point around in which all of the factions of conservatism would agree and could draw many new converts from liberalism to the conservative cause. Although Harry Truman issued his Truman Doctrine in 1947 which stated that communism would be opposed on all fronts using economic and military aid, the Korean War of 1950
heightened fears of a Communist infiltration and eventual takeover of the United States. Conservatives were able to take advantage of these fears, thus making the fight against Communism a partisan issue by aligning conservatism with the Republican Party. The process of bringing conservatism to the Republican Party began as early as the 1930’s and was formally completed almost three decades later when Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona won the Republican Party nomination for president on a conservative political platform.

When the Cold War began at the end of World War II, the official policy toward the Soviet Union was one of containment. The policy of Containment, a term coined by State Department official George F. Kennan, held that if democracies of the world could prevent the spread of communism, “red dominion would crumble under its own weight” (Schoenwald, 2001, p.24). The conservative response to containment, however, was the belief that such a policy was akin to cooperating with the Soviets and appealing to other nations to join the United States on an issue which was essentially a matter of national security.

The responsibility to draft a conservative response to containment fell to James Burnham, a philosophy professor at New York University, a former communist labor union leader. Burnham eventually became disillusioned with Stalin’s form of autocratic rule and by 1940, he became a total convert to conservatism. Burnham (1950) believed that using the military to defeat the communists was the only viable solution. In this way, Burnham was opposed to the strictly hands-off approach to government intervention by
libertarians and traditionalists. Instead Burnham was decidedly an anti-Communist who called upon the federal government and the courts to outlaw the American Communist Party and believed in using this country’s resources to guarantee the safety of the majority. Eventually Burnham (1950) came to believe that a preemptive war was the only surefire way to stem the spread of communism. While Burnham did call for the use of government intervention to solve this national crisis, he was able to rally support from the various conservative factions. Anti-communism helped to not only define what conservatives stood for, it also helped to bring their ideology closer to the center because despite their ideological differences, liberals and conservatives did agree that Communism was a threat to the American way of life.

The other approach used to help define and unify the various factions of conservative thought was to establish a conservative scholarly journal which would help disseminate conservative political ideals to a broader cross-section of the academic community. George Nash (1976) contends that from 1945-1955 conservatives had the perfect opportunity to build cohesion and lay the ground work for an eventual rise in popular support for conservatism when he says,

“Whether of not they (conservatives) perceived it, one fact at least should have been encouraging: disillusionment and uncertainty on the left was widespread. Sated with power since the New Deal, blamed for the unsatisfactory postwar settlement in Europe and the disasters in Asia, accused even of complicity in treason, many liberals were afflicted with doubt and by what one observer called “the travail of redefinition” (p. 132).
This liberal disillusionment led intellectuals from all three strands of modern American conservatism to believe that the time was right to merge these ideas into a single political philosophy in order to offer a viable counter-strategy to the dominance of New Deal liberalism in American cultural and political life. Conservative intellectuals such as William F. Buckley Jr. believed that in order to have legitimacy and staying power among the American masses, this modern form of American conservatism that was developing had to emerge from academe as FDR’s New Deal economic and political policies were originally conceptualized by the Brain Trust. Nash (1976) pointed out, “Although Russell Kirk might proclaim that liberalism as an ideology was expiring, William F. Buckley realized that the Left as an intellectual movement was still very much alive and that the Right still lacked sufficient focus” (p.140).

Buckley made a name for himself among conservative intellectuals when in 1951 he published the controversial *God and Man at Yale*. Buckley (1951) argued that a liberal hegemony existed amongst Yale’s faculty and students such that it promoted an anti-Christian and collectivist bias. Using Buckley’s work as a legitimate case study, conservatives considered the dominance of American colleges and universities by liberals as an undeniable fact. Thus, as Nash (1976, p. 141) notes, “conservatives increasingly came to believe that a new journal was needed to combat the liberals, to compensate for conservative weakness in academe, and to focus the energies of the diverse movement.” Although there were a few conservative magazines such as *The Freeman, Modern Age: A Conservative Review* and *American Mercury*, none encompassed the perspectives of all
three groups which made up modern American conservatism. *The Freeman* focused exclusively on economics, thus ostracizing the traditionalist and anti-Communist wings of the movement. *Modern Age: A Conservative Review* was conceptualized by conservative traditionalist intellectual, Russell Kirk. Again, this publication alienated other groups involved in the modern conservative revival and because *Modern Age* was a quarterly publication, too much time elapsed between publications to engage in ephemeral political discussions, says Nash (1976).

It was the *National Review*, a multi-faceted conservative journal, the brainchild of William F. Buckley, that became the unifying voice for all three strands of modern American conservatism. Early on, Buckley put together a coalition of the three disparate groups by making sure that traditionalists (or New Conservatives as they liked to call themselves), libertarians and anti-Communists were represented on the journal’s masthead and gained access to the pages of the magazine (Nash, 1976).

Established conservative thinkers such as Russell Kirk and Robert Weaver had regular columns while many radicals-turned-conservatives such as James Burnham made regular contributions.

What set the *National Review* apart from its counterparts was that its principal themes reflected the various constituencies from which it drew support (Nash, 1976). James Burnham eventually became the journal’s chief global strategist and represented the anti-Communist perspective. The journal also supported a “competitive pricing system” as the only way to protect liberty and material progress; thus the libertarian’s
critique of the State’s influence over the economy was advocated and supported by editors and staff writers. Lastly, journal editors called themselves “conservatives” or traditionalists who struggle against “…The Social Engineers, who to seek to adjust mankind to conform with scientific utopias” (Buckley, 1955, p. 6). Claiming that “conservatives” were “…the disciples of Truth, who defend the organic moral order”, editors of the National Review offered strong support for organized religion, social hierarchy and morality (Buckley, 1955, p.6).

To be sure, by giving all of the strands of modern American conservatism an opportunity to be disseminated in the same periodical, the National Review offered the movement its first viable attempt at ideological cohesion. Furthermore, another distinguishing characteristic of the National Review was its inclusion of two opinion columns which critiqued the liberal intellectual class in America’s universities. Kirk’s “From the Academy” and Buckley’s “The Ivory Tower” sought to expose the excesses of the people who worked as faculty and administrators in the nation’s post-secondary institutions (Nash, 1976). Thus, some of the key conservative theorists of the day were offering an intellectual challenge to their liberal counterparts in the academy. Gone were the days when the conservative would be labeled as a “kook” and sit idly by without defending their philosophical position. With the publication of the National Review, conservatism would become a legitimate political and social philosophy in the marketplace of ideas and by positioning conservatism as an intellectual as well as political ideal, Buckley and his conservative allies had offered a legitimate alternative to
liberalism which, according the Nash (1976) began to lose some of its momentum, at least within the academy, with the onslaught of the turbulent ‘60s which ushered in a period of widespread “radical” student protests, public marches and demonstrations and violent clashes between Blacks and the police.

Shortly after the National Review burst onto the scene and the ideological debate generated by the journal became more widespread, conservatives began contemplating how they would develop and extend their influence in the political realm of American society. Knowing that the only way for a political ideology to have any relevance in Washington was to work through the two-party political system, conservatives were prepared to use the Republican Party as the vehicle by which they sought to consolidate their political power. Certainly, the Democratic Party and its strong allegiance to the ideology of FDR’s New Deal Liberalism was not a viable option for the conservatives. Jonathan Schoenwald (2001) contends that “mainstream or electoral conservatism relied on the Republican Party as its vehicle in the two-party system and depended on time-tested methods for assessing, developing, and entrenching power” (p.4). Furthermore, says Schoenwald (2001) “lifting postwar conservative ideology directly from its creators, these activists (mainstream conservatives) initially altered it only slightly to appeal to voters” (p. 5). The conservative use of the Republican Party was probably the single most important development in bring conservatism to the American public en masse. But how was such a young movement, seen by many in the political establishment as an
aberration of sorts, able to use the GOP in such a way that by 1964, less than 20 years since its founding, that it was poised to take control of the White House?

First, conservatives took extra steps to show their support of Dwight Eisenhower during his campaign and election to the Office of the President of the United States in 1952. Upon the recommendation of Raymond Moley, a former FDR speech writer and head of the New Deal “Brain Trust,” conservatives were urged to “look to President Eisenhower for leadership on all issues” (Schoenwald, 2001, p.30). Moley left the “Brain Trust” when in 1936, he realized that FDR was intent on being re-elected by any means necessary including making political concessions to special interest groups such as African Americans and labor. In Moley’s 1952 publication of How to Keep Our Liberty, he describes how the demographic shifts in America, evidenced by the 1920 census, would favor an urban majority which would mean that the president would have to continue to make additional concessions to African Americans and northern ethnic whites such as the Irish and Italians who depended on the New Deal Coalition (Moley, 1952; Schoenwald, 2001).

Moley’s conversion to conservatism also meant that the Columbia law professor would become one of the most important popularizers of conservatism during the 1950’s. Immediately following the publication of How to Keep Our Liberty, Moley went on a promotional tour for the book and charged that the Democratic Party “…was driving the country into the ground, but that instead of economic downturns periodically endemic in a capitalist economy, the free-market system would be replaced by socialism, resulting
not in immediate failure but in gradual and possibly permanent decay” (Schoenwald, 2001, p.30). Moley’s refusal to build alliances with minority factions also helped to distinguish his brand of “new conservatism” even from moderate Republicans such as Eisenhower who supported the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision.

Yet, Moley understood that conservatives had to consolidate themselves into a single, powerful political group and the GOP was the vehicle in which conservatives placed all of their hopes. Additionally, Moley revised conservative ideology, with the aid of a vast array of conservative intellectuals, so that it could be configured and sold to the mainstream public (Schoenwald, 2001). This packaging of conservatism was aided also says Schoenwald (2001), by the realities of living in the Cold War era. The American public’s exposure to certain ideas was limited under the auspices of protecting national security; however, conservatives also changed some of their ideas, particularly as it pertained to anti-Communism and the possibility of facing Russia in a nuclear war, to suit the needs of an administration or political party (Schoenwald, 2001).

The conservatives’ continued use of anti-Communism to fuel their movement initially backfired in light of the growing student protest movements of the late 50’s and 60’s but would be revisited almost a decade later in 1964 and used as a campaign strategy by conservative presidential nominee Barry Goldwater. The conservatives faced a series of challenges which could have had disastrous affects for the burgeoning new movement. How the conservatives faced these challenges would determine their survival or demise.
The first challenge the conservatives faced was an attack on the legitimacy and constitutionality of the House Un-American Committee which was created in 1938 to investigate charges of communist infiltration in American society. By 1957, however, questions began to emerge as to whether the committee was obsolete and indicated some signs of a deepening chasm between liberals and conservatives over the proper course of action to be taken with regards to a communist threat. The Emergency Civil Liberties Committee held a rally in New York to geared toward the abolishment of HUAC in September 1957. Schoenwald (2001) claims that “the debate over whether HUAC should continue in its traditional form or might instead be subsumed by another House committee spoke not only to the deep divisions between liberals and conservatives but to the fears many conservatives had over America holding its own against the Soviet empire” (p. 53).

2.4 Conservatism & the Hysteria of Anti-Communism

Shortly following the end of World War II, Americans seemed to turn their focus to “a renewed embrace of domesticity which…fueled a baby boom and a focus on consumption” (Dudziak, 2000, p.11). While some middle class, white Americans were able move to suburban neighborhoods and escape the over-crowding of the cities, this “renewed embrace of domesticity” also implied a return to normalcy including the “…racial norms of segregation, disenfranchisement and subordination” (Dudziak, 2000, p. 11) would continue to be ignored. In fact, with the advent of the Cold War, those who
dared to speak out about the living and working conditions facing Blacks in the urban ghettos and in racially segregated areas in the South found little or no support from various local and federal agencies to protect the rights of everyday Black citizens along with civil rights workers who were speaking out on their behalf. Although African Americans should have received their civil rights with the passage of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Constitutional Amendments (1865-1868), the denial of these rights to African Americans was maintained through both de facto racial segregation, as evidenced by the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson “separate but equal” doctrine, as well as de jure daily discriminatory practices such as forcing Blacks to sit at the back of the bus. During the 1960’s, civil rights was probably the most important issue facing the nation, however its impact was not limited to the domestic realm.

As early as 1947, just two years following the end of World War II, the Cold War became a central issue in the American political scene. Then-president Harry Truman focused on the Cold War and the spread of Communism as an international political issue while the conservatives, led by Joseph McCarthy’s radical anti-Communism, claimed that Communism had a profound impact on American domestic issues. Dudziak (2000) further contends that “as the nation closed ranks, critics of American society found themselves labeled subversive,” which meant that civil rights activists, for example, who challenged the notion of a domestic “return to normalcy” following the end of the second World War found it difficult to maintain jobs, the freedom to move about and exercise their right to free speech during the Cold War era (p. 11). High profile Black celebrities
and civil rights activists who were willing to travel abroad to discuss domestic race issues found that their ability to travel to foreign countries was severely curtailed by the FBI in the 1950’s (Dudziak, 2000). Such was the case with actor/singer Paul Robeson, civil rights activists W.E. B. DuBois and William Patterson.iv

Domestic anti-communism’s scope would expand during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations and the fear it generated was utilized by many Southern white segregationists such as former Alabama governor George Wallace, who in 1963 claimed that communism was winning the world and that America was being betrayed by liberals who followed the “false doctrine of communistic amalgamation” (Wallace, 1963; Carter 1996). Arguing that “if we amalgamate into the one unit as advocated by these communist philosophers then the enrichment of our lives…the freedom for our development is gone forever”; Wallace effectively used conservative anti-communism to bring Southern Dixiecrats over to the Republican Party (Wallace, 1963). Wallace’s speech also served to incite fear into the hearts of white Alabamans that if any civil rights legislation proposed by the Democrats in Washington was passed, this also meant a loss of their own personal freedom. The end result would be worse than what the Nazis did to the Jews in which “the international racism of the liberals seek to persecute their international white minority to the whim of the international colored majority” said Wallace (1963). Wallace’s use of domestic anti-communism helped the virtually unknown Alabama governor make an ambitious though ultimately unsuccessful run for the presidency in 1964 on a segregationist ticket.
As a consequence, domestic anti-communism reaffirmed that the “...racial norms of segregation, disenfranchisement and subordination” were characteristic of the early post World War II era, and those who spoke out against segregation, racial violence and institutional racism were effectively ignored, having been linked to communists regardless of whether the allegations were real or imagined (Dudziak, 2000). Even in the face of numerous charges of racial violence, intimidation and political disenfranchisement, domestic anti-communism assured protectors of the economic and political status quo that those who made such charges would not have a domestic or international audience with which to voice their complaints. Liberals in political office were as adamant as their conservative counterparts to stem the tide of Communist domination and win the Cold War even if meant engaging in a propaganda campaign of their own to help neutralize any negative publicity about the American system of government. But a distinction between the liberal and conservative approaches to the handling of the Communist threat was clear: liberals were willing to stem the tide of Communism but not at the expense of a person’s constitutional rights, while the conservatives believed that the government should allow the states to have jurisdiction over these matters and once a person is suspected of having ties to socialism, the government should have broad powers to protect the government and society from a Communist overthrow (Schoenwald, 2001)

An illustrative example of the two varying approaches to the Communist threat was made clear in the “Red Monday” case involving a 1951 Supreme Court ruling over
the legality of the Smith Act, which prohibited teaching or advocating, “the forceful
overthrow of any government in the United States, or…joining an organization bent on
such a course” (Schoenwald, 2001, p. 35; Weaver, 1967). “Red Monday” as it was
known among anti-communist conservatives around the country involved three Smith
Act cases in which the Supreme Court limited the law, narrowing its scope by focusing
on individuals who advocated the violent overthrow of government (Schoenwald, 2001).
Conservatives ran articles in the National Review claiming that liberalism was taking root
within the Warren Court in which “The Supreme Court struts on its drive to subvert
American political institutions” (National Review, 1957, p.3). The new language may
have made it harder to prosecute a person for having membership in the American
Communist Party but Schoenwald (2001) notes that even with this narrow focus, the
Smith Act “…helped destroy the American Communist party, as well as stifle behavior
that could be interpreted as threatening the government” (p. 40). Michael Belknap (1977)
further points out that the establishment and growth of government surveillance agencies,
in particular the FBI’s Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) which was
authorized by former FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, in 1956 was helped by the Smith
Act. These surveillance agencies kept a close eye on both local and high profile political
and social activists and created a climate whereby those speaking out against federal and
state legal and extra-legal policies that violated basic civil rights guaranteed by the US
Constitution were labeled as Communist, which was an effective strategy of silencing
dissent. Dudziak (2000) says that southern segregationists, for instance, “…argued that
efforts to abandon racial segregation were communist-inspired and would undermine the fabric of American society” (p. 28). The primary vehicle by which southern segregationists promoted the idea that Black desire for racial equality was communist-inspired was carried out through organizations such as the White Citizen Councils (WCC) and the Real-political Institute. The White Citizen Councils grew into a regional movement through various southern states whose members directly defended Jim Crow segregation policies. Organized initially to opposed the landmark 1954 Brown versus Board of Education decision, the WCC chapters actively recruited members through direct mailers which used inflammatory propaganda and rhetoric to attract new recruits.

A copy of a 1967 Atlanta Citizen’s Council Bulletin shows a picture of four white teenage girls seated surrounded by a black teenage boy, which appeared in a local newspaper in Haughton, Michigan, with a caption that reads “This is school integration. This could happen in Georgia. Would you like your daughter or sister in a duplicate of this picture? Such will be an every day occurrence in Georgia if those who believe in racial self-respect do not take a stand” (Atlanta Citizens Council, 1967, p. 2).

Referencing the Brown versus Board decision and intimating that the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act represented a backwards step for American civilization, the South Louisiana Citizen Council sent an organization brochure to potential members which claimed the organization “…was your protection against integrated schools, mongrelization and red tyranny” (South Louisiana Citizens Council, 1966, p. 1).

Specifically the publication sought to provide direct “proof that integration was part of
the communist conspiracy” (South Louisiana Citizens’ Council, 1966, p.1) by claiming that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) has advanced the idea that “The Kremlin proposes, the NAACP disposes” to which the NAACP’s link to the Soviet Union became more solidified during the Cold War as the CPUSA became more directly involved in NAACP’s efforts to end anti-miscegenation and other Jim Crow-inspired laws (South Louisiana Citizens’ Council, 1966). Again, by utilizing anti-communist rhetoric, White Citizens Councils hoped to persuade the average white southerner to continue to support segregation not only as a states rights issue but also as a duty to protect America from communist encroachment. However, using charges of communism to oppose to civil rights legislation was not limited to the American South.

The Realpolitical Institute of Chicago promulgated an extremist conservative political and social view of American race relations which represented a departure from the commonly held assumption that only white southerners held racist beliefs and supported racial segregation. Using a similar direct mailer approach as their southern WCC counterparts, Realpolitical Institute’s materials charged that Jews have led a humanist movement which was a “philosophy of parasitism” which is akin to economic and political socialism. Furthermore, the organization called for the deportation of African Americans back to Africa which would give “The white race room to expand and completely expand and effectively develop our natural resources” (Realpolitical Institute, n.d., p. 1). The Realpolitical Institute underwent several name changes during its
approximate three to five year history but during that time the Institute produced a number of research reports aimed at keeping its membership informed of the “political engineering” of liberalism. In a document called the Mullins Report, the director of the RealPolitical Institute (later called Institute of Biopolitics and M&N Associates) Eustace Miller claimed that, “the rapid wane of the United States as a global power will enable Russia to make the American continents into Communist satellites by 1980” (Miller, n.d., p.1). Claiming that once Woodrow Wilson hailed the Russian Communist Revolution of 1917 as a “victory for democracy over the forces of despotism,” he set in motion a “suicidal foreign policy caused by the racial schism of its people. This policy aimed to end all racial injustice, atone for the sins of British imperialism, reprimand French imperialism, stop German imperialism and set up a worldwide protectorate for the colored peoples.” As was the case with the White Citizens’ Council, the Mullins Report implied that liberal politicians such as Franklin Roosevelt who supported extending civil rights and freedoms to African Americans and other non-white peoples were actually promoting communism (Miller, n.d., p. 2).

By the 1960’s, although anti-communism was still strong, the American public was less interested in the ideological debates between conservative anti-Communists like James Burnham and a new administration in Washington that was focused on domestic affairs. The American public was more concerned with jobs, education and the economy and wanted newly elected president, John F. Kennedy to follow a “middle of the road policy.” Kennedy obliged and was rewarded with an 83% approval rating in his first six
months in office. Conservatives saw the HUAC battle and subsequent Smith Act rulings as “…the government abdicating its responsibility to protect the national interests from domestic subversion” (Schoenwald, 2001, p.60). For conservatives, the administration under the leadership of JFK seemed to be encouraging this new wave of subversive activity.

2.5 Goldwater Conservatism

Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign was the critical first step in the evolution and growth of postwar conservatism (Brennan, 2003). Following the defeat of Richard Nixon in 1960, conservatives attempted to capture the Republican Party from the liberal and more moderate members of the party, such as Nelson Rockefeller and former president Dwight Eisenhower, for whom they felt were in part responsible for playing politics with the Democrats and acquiescing to the demands of various minority factions. In fact, Brennan (2003) contends that, “President Eisenhower preached Modern Republicanism that disappointed the conservative Right. Not only did he fail to ‘undo’ the New Deal, but he did not liberate Eastern Europe as he had promised” (pg. 65). Goldwater won support by addressing the issues that were important to the Right in the 1950’s: the necessity for limited government, the growing discontent with the civil rights activism, the evils of communism, and the glories of America (Brennan, 2003.). Conservatives threw their support behind a candidate they believed represented all of the
best elements of conservative thought and who would bring the party to some degree of consensus as to the political direction it should pursue.

As early as 1961, a group of conservative politicians, Republican operators and conservative business leaders met in a series of secret meetings to plan the GOP strategy for capturing the White House in 1964. This group included John Ashbrook, a congressman from Ohio, and William Rusher, the publisher of the National Review. Initially this group met for the purpose of setting up an organizational structure amongst the Republicans across the country who agreed that the Republican Party should be the vehicle by which the conservative movement was forged. By 1962, the group changed its focus and concentrated on persuading Barry Goldwater to run for president.

Goldwater was an unlikely candidate for president of the United States. The Arizona governor was very much an outsider in Washington, preferring to protect the interests of his home state and remaining vigilant about national defense and preserving the free-market system (Schoenwald, 2001). Goldwater was very outspoken about his particular political beliefs and his frankness endeared him to his conservative peers who believed that his candor served as an indication of his moral obligation to do the right thing despite the costs. His Conscience of a Conservative published in 1960 influenced a new generation of Republicans and earned him a reputation as one of the only true conservatives on the Hill. This reputation made it possible for the group led by Ashbrook and Rusher to call on Goldwater to run for the White House, saying he had an obligation to represent the millions of Americans who looked to his leadership (Schoenwald, 2001).
The committee was clever in couching their appeal to Goldwater as duty to the American masses, while disguising their own motives: to unify the party around their notion of conservatism and become governing elites (Blumenthal, 1986; Schoenwald, 2001). The use of Goldwater as an icon that would bring together conservatives from across the country was one of the most consistent themes in 1964. Mary Brennan (2003) says, “Goldwater won more supporters as the African American civil rights movement and the escalating conflict in Vietnam complicated the political scene, causing some Democrats to rethink their traditional loyalties and some Republicans to embrace their party’s right wing” (pg. 63). Following Moley’s insistence that conservatives align with the Republican Party in order to move their political ideology into a national forum, Goldwater’s campaign moved conservatives toward consolidating and securing power within the Republican Party.

Once the draft group selected Goldwater as their candidate, they moved to the next phase of the political strategy, which involved creating a political culture that would work for the candidate’s benefit. Schoenwald (2001) says that “conservatives in the 1960’s realized that without a psychological attachment to the political ideology, few could sustain the motivation necessary to achieve victory” (p. 129). In order to develop this attachment to conservative political ideology, the liberal and moderate hold on the Republican Party had to be neutralized.

The liberal and moderate wings’ dependence on corporate financing to fund the party was severely undermined by John F. Kennedy’s effective courtship of corporate
liberals who gave in record amounts, while the conservatives were able to create “…an alternative financial structure dependent on southwestern and rank-and-file money” (Brennan, 2003, pg. 67). The lack of a steady stream of corporate dollars meant that the “establishment” within the Republican Party would have a difficult time creating an effective counter-offensive to the rapidly growing grassroots organization which would rally behind Goldwater by bringing independent Republican citizen groups together, which included a vocal group of women Republicans.

The Goldwater draft team recognized, though many contend Goldwater did not publicly acknowledge the role of women in the campaign, that without the work of the Republican Women’s Committee (RWC) and the Federation of Republican Women, the campaign would have been without any tangible momentum in the early stages. Clifton White, a Republican political strategist and Goldwater’s chief campaign advisor believed that Goldwater’s ideological stance and physical appeal would influence members of the RWC to work hard for the campaign (Schoenwald, 2001). These women were first introduced to the Arizona Senator in 1963 at their annual convention held in Washington D.C. After the convention, the delegates took their enthusiasm for Goldwater home to their husbands and friends and pledged to work for Goldwater on behalf of the Republican Party.

White also concentrated on gaining influence on behalf of conservatives through the Young Republicans and the Republican National Committee. But instead of focusing on trying to sway national party officials to the cause of conservatism, White urged
conservatives to organize at the precinct, district and state level in order to build delegate strength for the 1964 national convention (Brennan, 2003). Conservatives responded to Goldwater’s challenge for Republicans to “work” to put the party back on track by building from bottom up, which would ensure that conservatives would have a solid foundation throughout the country (Brennan, 2003). Even though Goldwater lost the election, the conservative grassroots operation was solidly in place and demonstrated how conservatives could impact national politics. They only needed to wait for the right moment to enter the White House triumphantly.

Likewise, conservatives capitalized on the opportunities presented by Kennedy’s Cold War policies and the Civil Rights Movement. First, in continuing the Truman’s policy of containment, the Kennedy administration supported anti-communist leaders in Africa and Asia, with whom officials believed would fight against Communist infiltration. However, the administration often backed leaders who would abuse power and misuse American monetary aid (Brennan, 2003). Goldwaterites, as his supporters would later be called, took advantage of the liberals’ missteps with regards to containing the spread of Communism by labeling such leaders as dictators and criticizing Democratic foreign policy as “soft” on Communism. Although conservatives had leveled a similar charge against the Democrats as early as 1932, the use of anti-communist rhetoric during the 1960’s was particularly effective as opposition to American involvement in Vietnam and the expanding civil rights movement were cast by conservatives as attempts to undermine the American social order.
The tensions between the conservatives and other wings of the Republican Party also became very apparent as the 1960 presidential race neared. Conservatives believed that Richard Nixon, the Republican front-runner and Eisenhower’s vice-president, could not be trusted because of his moderate stance on the issue of segregated education, for example (Brennan, 2003). Believing that Nixon would never deliver on Eisenhower’s promise to “undo” various New Deal programs, Goldwater went on the offensive in a 1960 speech in which he challenged the Republican Party to “grow up” and work to put the party back on track using a local, grassroots approach instead of engaging in what Goldwater labeled as “establishment treachery” (Brennan, 2003; Goldwater, 1979).

It was this speech which galvanized and breathed new life into the Republican Party. The speech helped the party gain support in the South, which had been traditionally Democratic but was largely opposed to integrationist policies such as the 1954 Brown versus Board of Education decision. Eisenhower was forced to enforce the Supreme Court decision which put him “…on the side of integrationists and opposed to conservative state’s rightists” (Brennan, 2003, pg. 65). Goldwater would be able to capitalize on Ike’s opposition to state’s rights particularly among white Southerners because southern culture revolved principally around a “…dedication to family, God, and country – values that echoed northern right-wing ideals” (Brennan 1995; 2003). In fact, state’s rights were at the core of Goldwater’s sense of conservative values.

In _Conscience of a Conservative_, Goldwater (1960) claimed that “An attempt has been made in recent years to disparage the principle of State’s Rights by equating it with
the defense of the South’s position on racial integration” (p. 32). Maintaining that while he agreed with the idea of racial integration, the federal government had no business interfering in what Goldwater (1960) perceived to be a state’s rights issue, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Tenth Amendment which states that “The powers not relegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the States are reserved to the States respectively or to the people” (p.33). Goldwater further argued that what constitutes civil rights, such as the ability to receive an integrated public education, is often seen as a “natural” right, which in his estimation is incorrect, “As often as not, it is simply a name for describing an activity that someone deems politically or socially desirable” (Goldwater, 1960, p. 33). Thus says Goldwater (1960), it should not be left to the federal courts to determine what is a civil right but that determination should be put before the legislative branch of government or through the amendment process of the Constitution. However, until such a time when Congress does put forth a constitutional amendment, the issue of civil rights shall remain an issue for the states to decide and it was this logic which led Goldwater to break with many of his GOP colleagues and vote against passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For Goldwater and his supporters, especially those in the segregated South, a policy of gradualism was advocated such that African Americans were urged to wait until southern whites were ready to embrace them as full citizens. Such was the position of Robert Welch, the ultra-conservative founder of the John Birch Society (JBS). Welch, a native southerner, argued that African Americans were simply asking for too many rights too soon, and
opposed the Civil Rights movement of the 1960’s because he believed that the movement
was backed and supported by the Communist Party (Schoenwald, 2001). However,
Blacks disagreed with Goldwater, Wallace, Welch and other conservatives’ position on
civil rights, effectively arguing that it was African Americans who had neither federal nor
state protection under the law, and that given the South’s history of racial inequality and
segregation, it was not in white southerners’ best interests, economically or politically, to
change a policy of racial segregation which helped to ensure white Southerners’
hegemony over black Southerners.

For this reason, the Civil Rights Movement worried many middle class white
Americans, particularly those in the South, who saw “the increasingly vocal and visible
demands of black Americans” as shocking, confusing and frightening (Brennan, 2003,
p.65). Conservatives did make some early attempts to appeal to African Americans and
break through the Democratic Party hold on this group by denying that the “kook”
constituency of racists and conspiracy theorists such as the members of the John Birch
Society would play a significant role in supporting Goldwater and his grassroots efforts
(Schoenwald, 2001). However, conservative appeals to African Americans fell on deaf
ears when Goldwater voted against passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Realizing that
the Republicans had no chance to capture the African American vote, they decided to
instead bring disaffected whites to the party who were trying to escape the
“encroachment of the civil rights movement” (Schoenwald, 2001).
Civil Rights was a key issue in the 1964 election and conservatives hoped that estranged Democrats, upset by the perception of Kennedy as having orchestrated his own brand of social engineering by extending civil rights to African Americans and his “appeals” to communists, would play a major role in helping them capture the White House (Schoenwald, 2001). After passage of the Civil Rights Act, Black activists nationalized the movement which was borne out of several local grassroots efforts, and confronted northern white racism (Brennan, 2003). White resistance to the end of de facto segregation in schools, housing and employment exacerbated tensions and led to race riots across the country. Brennan (2003) argues that “many northern whites joined southern whites in thinking the federal government was doing too much for ‘those people’” (p. 68).

Middle and working class whites were becoming incensed that their tax dollars were going to support rioters and protestors through Lyndon Johnson’s “war on poverty” which he initiated after Kennedy’s assassination in 1963 and this would eventually lead to a “backlash” against the civil rights reform. Furthermore, out of the chaos of the various ‘rights revolutions,’ antiwar protests and emerging counterculture, many Americans would seek out candidates who promised a return to ‘traditional values’ (Roche, 2003). It was the vast amount of cultural changes in American political and social life during the 1960’s which had the greatest impact in propelling conservatism out of relative obscurity into the national limelight as a rational solution to a society which had seemingly lost its sense of tradition and values.
Ironically, even as the Goldwater draft committee worked diligently to develop a strong grassroots organization which would work on behalf of the Arizona senator, Goldwater himself rejected White’s group because he feared he could never pull off a victory against the widely popular president, John F. Kennedy. However, the assassination of JFK in 1963 forced Goldwater to reconsider, especially in light of his realization that several young people volunteered and worked hard for him (Brennan, 2003). Goldwater reluctantly accepted the Republican nomination enough though he believed he could not win for three reasons: (1) Lyndon B. Johnson’s reputation as a southerner with a conservative reputation posed a significant challenge to Goldwater’s candidacy in his own assessment (2) Kennedy’s death in a southwestern city caused many people to blame the Right for the murder and (3) sympathy over Kennedy’s death had swung the pendulum of momentum decidedly to LBJ (Brennan, 2003; Goldwater, 1979). Goldwater (1988) wrote in his memoirs that after Kennedy was killed he knew, “We’d lose the election but win the party.” It was the conservative capture of the GOP through the campaign of Barry Goldwater which paved the way for electoral conservatism vi to gain momentum, allowing for Goldwater’s heir apparent Ronald Reagan to first take over the governorship of one of the most populous and politically influential states in the country and then to become the first modern American conservative president of the United States.
2.6 Race and Reagan’s Ascent in California

The white middle and working class “backlash” against the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements would intensify and reach its zenith in the second half of the 1960’s. Until this point, conservatives faced a formidable opponent in New Deal liberalism, which would continue to enjoy a strong hold on the American political landscape at virtually every level well after the death of its dynamic leader, Franklin D. Roosevelt. The presidencies of Truman, Kennedy and Johnson would continue and expand upon FDR’s New Deal legacy by enlarging the nation’s commitment to social programs for the working class, less fortunate and minorities, and even as the lone Republican president in the immediate post-New Deal era, Eisenhower found it difficult to scale back or eliminate any of the social programs initiated under FDR. Liberalism was so deeply entrenched that “…conservatism might be seen as forever illegitimate” (Schoenwald, 2001, p. 42). Despite rabid conservative attacks on liberal policies regarding the Cold War, labor unions and civil rights movements, liberals were able to remain in power and remain relevant for over 30 years with virtually no interruption.

However, liberals failed to anticipate how the volatile issues of race and morality in the latter part of the 1960’s would impact American voters who, by and large, clung to a strong belief in tradition, values and order. Liberals readily assumed that their traditional base of support would always remain firm – labor, blacks and white ethnics. But, historian Lisa McGirr (2002) has pointed out that the “issues they (liberals) championed were not the traditional economic majoritarian bread-and-butter New Deal
ones that had ensured the loyalty of lower-middle-class white ethnics voters to the party, but a rights-based liberalism that championed the interests of African Americans and the poor” (p. 199). These white ethnics, including the Irish and Italians, were deeply religious and favored traditional family values. When Ronald Reagan made the charge that “…urban rioters, ‘radical’ protesters against the Vietnam War, and civil rights activists [were] the greatest threat to freedom and civility…” this voting bloc of “white conservative Democrats,” as they were labeled by Reagan’s campaign staff, were swayed throw their support behind the former Democratic actor-turned-Republican gubernatorial candidate of California in 1966 (Schuparra, 2003, p. 102).

Ronald Reagan’s conversion to conservatism followed a trajectory similar to other prominent liberals such as Raymond Moley and John Burnham in that anti-communism became the critical factor in their change in political party and perspective. Reagan admired FDR and often imitated him for his friends, even helping several Democrats pursue bids for political office, including Herbert Humphrey who ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate (Schuparra, 2003). However, Reagan’s transformation began in the 1950’s, in earnest, as he came to believe that Hollywood was being taken over by communists who sought to use the film industry as a world wide propaganda vehicle (Reagan, 1965). Reagan’s involvement in Hollywood politics as the president of the Screen Actor’s Guild (1947-1953) convinced him that the New Deal was akin to the “planned economy” element found in socialism (Schuparra, 2003). His discontent with the state grew as his anticommunism grew, as Schuparra (2003) contends,
“His objections to the government bureaucracy and “encroachments” of freedom in the aftermath of the Roosevelt and Truman years were not unusual, but by the early 1960’s, the vehemence of that opposition put him squarely in the ranks of the Goldwater conservatives, who were often derided as “extremists” by their liberal and moderate opponents” (p. 94).

The degree to which Reagan sided with the political philosophy of Goldwater inevitably led to his ascent as the torchbearer of the Goldwater conservative legacy and gave conservatives across the country hope that their ideals regarding the best course of action for America would eventually make their way to the White House. But, unlike Goldwater, Reagan was able to put his acting skills and natural speaking ability to good use during his campaign against Democratic incumbent Pat Brown. Goldwater tended to shy away from the spotlight and disliked the media, whereas Reagan put the media to good use at every occasion. Biographers and historians have noted that Reagan had a calming effect on California voters, who were appalled by campus radicals, lawless rioters, and their liberal sympathizers, because “Reagan inspired where Goldwater tended to terrify” (Schuparra, 2003, p.95). Additionally, Reagan’s political persona was shaped around an image of a self-made man who was not only made for leadership but who would fight at all costs to protect the American way of life. Relying heavily on American’s infatuation with nostalgia and a desire for the reclamation of a glorious American past, Reagan “…exuded boy next door charm without cynicism, while touting simple virtues in an increasingly complex world” (Schuparra, 2003, p.95). Schuparra (2003) has noted, however, that Reagan’s romanticism with the great American past often
meant that he “…glossed over and distorted both disturbing historical events and controversial current affairs” (p. 96). But to the growing number of California voters who were shocked and dismayed over the radical changes in American society, Reagan offered stability and order in a world which appeared to have succumbed to moral decay. It was the social upheaval of the 1960’s which drew enough middle and working class white voters to side with Reagan’s views on civil rights in particular and conservatism, in general, that for the first time, modern American conservatism would have a firm foundation in the American political landscape. Reagan, as the chief opponent of the “radical politics” of the Students for a Democratic Society, the Black Panthers and anti-war protestors offered liberalism its first significant challenge.

In order to solidify his nomination as the Republican candidate, Reagan did what his idol, Goldwater, could not—unite all factions of the Republican Party. In speeches throughout the state, Reagan would argue that all members of the Republican Party should fight against the “enemy at our gates.” Instead of polarizing the more liberal and moderate factions by accusing them of having “socialist” inclinations, Reagan said, “this is the time for every Republican to look very deep into his own heart and say ‘is there possibly any difference I have with another Republican more important than the responsibility of the challenge that faces us in this day?’”(Reagan, 1965, p. 686). Such speeches put Reagan in an optimal position to gain support from Republicans who were still upset by the conservative take-over of the party during the Goldwater campaign. By the time Reagan formally declared his intention to run, he was poised to once and for all
heal the fractures among all Republicans, including the extremists members of the John Birch Society, so that they would work as a unified force against the folly of liberal economic and social engineering.

Reagan, like Goldwater, believed that the liberals had crossed the line into dangerous social engineering with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Like most conservatives, Reagan believed that the act “…conferred privileges to minorities at the expense of the rights of others” (Schuparra, 2003, p. 98). Reagan vehemently denied liberal charges of racism because of his opposition to the act saying it was simply a bad piece of legislation, and when his Republican challenger for the gubernatorial nomination, George Christopher, said he supported the bill and in that by not supporting the bill, Republicans would lose the election to Pat Brown, Reagan responded saying, “I resent the implication that there is any bigotry in my nature. Don’t anyone ever imply that I lack integrity” (Boyarsky, 1968, p. 148-49). Reagan clearly did not want to be seen as a racist.

However, Schuparra’s assessment of Reagan’s romanticized notions of the American way of life, predicated on the American ideal of individual freedom, gives some insight into how Reagan naively believed that his opposition to the Civil Rights Act of ’64 would not be mistakenly perceived by blacks and other minorities as a sign that he held racist beliefs. Further adding to the perception that Reagan supported racist ideology was the fact that he had displayed awards from Arkansas governor Orval Faubus, the (in)famous governor, who called in the Arkansas National Guard to prevent
black children from attending Little Rock Central High School after the Supreme Court declared school segregation unconstitutional in the 1954 Brown versus Board of Education case (Schuparra, 2003). Reagan could have viewed school desegregation as a state’s rights issue but “he proved smilingly resistant or oblivious to anything ignoble about individuals or causes he liked when these undesirable realities threatened the foundations of his worldview and politics” (Schuparra, 2003, p. 98).

When Pat Brown’s advisers released documents showing that Reagan had signed a “Caucasian-only” race covenant for the home he purchased in 1941, Reagan retaliated, saying he denounced the “sickness and prejudice and discrimination” but maintained in a free society that people have “a basic and cherished right to do as they please with their property. If an individual wants to discriminate against Negroes or others in selling or renting his house he has a right to do so” (Schuparra, 2003, p. 100). Reagan clearly intertwined civil rights with property rights in answering Brown’s charges that his signature to a restrictive covenant agreement reflected the actions of a bigot. By doing so, Reagan was able to appeal to white voters, both Republican and Democrat, who wanted to maintain a “lily white suburban life.” a life that was threatened by the Democratic controlled California legislature’s passage of the 1963 Rumsford Fair Housing Act. This legislation was drafted by Byron Rumsford, a Black businessman from Oakland which called for extending the ban on discrimination in the sale and rental of private property.
Next, Reagan turned his attention to civil unrest and called for law and order. His primary focus was the student unrest at Berkeley, but that quickly gave way to the 1965 Watts Riots, which left thirty-four people dead and destroyed several homes and businesses. Images of the riots were exploited by Reagan, who connected the lawlessness with the liberal social policies enacted by Brown (Schuparra, 2003). Though Reagan claimed he never used the tragedy of the Watts riots for political gain, he routinely publicly condemned Negro unrest, lumping all blacks into a monolithic group. When dealing directly with the Black Panthers, Reagan would later distinguish between the Black Power movement and more gradual approaches to black civil rights when “...he expressed his hope that the ‘more responsible elements of the Negro community’ would repudiate African American leaders who had abandoned the “orderly process of appealing wrongs through legitimate means” (Dallek, 2000, p. 128). Though Reagan may have professed to not be racist or bigoted, he clearly had strong views on acceptable behavior for blacks with regards to pressing the nation for greater civil rights protection. Blacks were not supposed to demand civil rights through direct action or more radical forms of civil disobedience. In fact, a national Harris poll taken in 1966 found that the number of whites who believed that blacks tried to “move too fast” grew from 34% in 1964 to 85% just two years later (Dallek, 2000, p. 128).

Reagan took advantage of the perception, whether real or imagined, that liberal social programs such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 enabled and encouraged blacks to make even greater demands and would result in “arson and murder” as the final act of
civil disobedience run amok. Schuparra (2003) says that “due to the broad Democratic support for the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, both of which were touted by Lyndon Johnson, the ‘race issue’ was now clearly tied to the Democrats which would ultimately cause division within the Democratic Party base” (p. 101). Not only were Democratic white ethnics growing increasingly frustrated with the chaos and confusion of the tumultuous sixties, labor unions members, long time supporters of the Democrats, also became tired of “Brown’s tolerance of ‘the filthy long-haired scum at Berkeley’ and his “whitewash of Negroes” arrested for rioting (Schuparra, 2003, p. 101). As a result, Brown, who won 78% of the labor vote in 1958, only received 57% of that vote in 1966 (San Francisco Chronicle, 1966).

Brown could never mount a strong counter-offensive against Reagan, not because he was not adept at fielding questions or lacked experience in dealing with a complex political infrastructure like that in California, but because “he seemed to be caught in the undertow of liberalism’s waning current, as social upheaval in California (and elsewhere in the country) cast doubt and scorn on liberal programs and politicians” (Schuparra, 2003, p. 99). Likewise, Reagan was aided by a strong grassroots political foundation laid by Goldwater and his draft committee which would work to build on the promise of 1964 (Brennan, 2003). The conservatives who worked on behalf of Goldwater “…understood that a broader base of support could be built by changing the conservative rhetoric to fit the issues of the 1960s: anti-New Deal became anti-Great Society; a dangerous labor movement morphed into a rioting civil rights movement; and anticommunism
transformed into a call for a stronger military response in Vietnam as well as an
indictment of antiwar protestors at home” (Brennan, 2003, p.77). Reagan utilized this
rhetoric during his campaign to exploit white Californians’ fears of a violent clash
between freedom loving, law-abiding citizens and lawless rioters, protestors and trouble
makers threatening to send the state into anarchy in order to see that their demands were
met. Many voters turned to Regan for protection of the status quo that had rarely been
threatened in their lifetime and Roche (2003) contends that “it meant defending-
Christianity, family, whiteness, capitalism, and tradition” (p. 85). Reagan had been able
to ride the wave of conservative public opinion which had initially been shaped by the
Cold War and “pushed liberalism, which had reached its apex in the 1960’s, to the
margins of American political life” (Schuparra, 2003, 107). The great cultural and social
change which has long been associated with America in the 1960’s also provided
conservatives with the greatest opportunity to put forward their ideas about government’s
role in protecting the economic, political and social order of American society.
Furthermore, toward the end of the 1960’s conservatives realized that they needed access
to centralized financial and research support if they were to sustain and build upon the
success of Reagan’s bid for the governorship of California. In an ironic twist of fate,
conservatives would covet and then mimic the liberal’s use of policy analysts and
philanthropic organizations to provide the research and financial assistance needed to
keep conservative politicians aware of new proposed legislation, fund programs to groom
new conservative leaders and to disseminate their message to a wider cross section of the
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American public. While conservatives were busy mobilizing these economic and intellectual resources, the rest of the nation was pre-occupied by a civil rights movement whose scope and tone began to shift from one of assimilation and gradualism to one that boldly demanded that African Americans, in particular, take control of their own communities and collective destiny. Black Studies came about as the modern American civil rights movement of the 1960’s started to move away the idea of Black accommodation to white racism to embrace a more “radical” political ethos based on the idea of Black self-determination.

iii For this study, civil rights is defined as personal rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the U.S. Bill of rights that include but are not limited to freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom from discrimination.

iv For detailed information on the impact of anti-communism on Robeson’s ability to continue working as an internationally acclaimed actor/singer see Mary L. Dudziak (2000) and Robeson (1958). William Patterson’s We Charge Genocide, documented 153 killings (usually in the form of lynchings) and 344 acts of violence committed against African Americans, and other human rights abuses committed in the United States from 1945 to 195. The most damaging charge leveled in the document was that Blacks “suffer from genocide as a result of the consistent, conscious, unified policies of every branch of government” and “history has shown that the racist theory of government of the U.S.A. is not the private affair of Americans, but the concern of mankind everywhere” (Patterson, 1970). Patterson, along with W.E.B. DuBois (who also signed the CRC petition to the UN that was prepared by Patterson), had his passport revoked and his Civil Rights Congress was placed on the U.S. government’s list of subversive organizations.

v The Warren Court refers to the appointment of Earl Warren as the Supreme Court Chief Justice in 1953 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Conservatives viewed the Warren Court as “freewheeling” and “Ike’s worst appointment” because of Supreme Court decisions which that were viewed as enlarging the role of the federal government at the expense of the states and to favor individual rights instead of protecting the entire society. For a discussion of the Warren Court see Jonathan A. Schoenwald’s (2000) A time for choosing: The rise of modern American conservatism and John D. Weaver (1967), Warren: The man, the court and the era.
Schoenwald (2001) defines electoral conservatism as mainstream conservatism which resonates with a broader cross-section of the American voting public thus allowing for a greater number of conservative candidates to receive more of the popular vote and secure political offices.
CHAPTER 3

CONSERVATIVE PHILANTHROPY AND THE ACADEMIC CULTURE WARS

3.1 Introduction

A modern rendering of American conservatism became a permanent fixture in the nation’s political and social landscape by the 1970’s, owing much success to the fact that “liberals tended to dismiss warnings of right-wing ascendancy as ‘conspiracy theory’” (Messer-Davidow, 1992, pg. 6). However, while liberals dismissed the idea of a conservative assault on the academy, conservatives established over 55 think tanks in 22 states for the purpose of influencing state government for which one report calls this phenomenon “one of the sleeper trends in American government” (National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 1997, p. 7). From this network of conservative think tanks, philanthropic organizations and policy institutes, “…the Right has instigated the PC (political correctness) controversy, defended conservative nominations to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) council, promoted core curricula and common culture, opposed affirmative actions, decried sexual harassment charges, attacked multiculturalism and demonized academic feminism” (Messer-Davidow, 1992, p. 4).

This chapter goes into explicit detail as to how conservative philanthropy has been used to launch a broad-scale attack on the “liberal” domination of higher education. I specifically point out that conservative academic change organizations were aided by the participation of a group of disaffected liberal scholars who would later become known as the neoconservatives who would lend their knowledge of the academy to challenge liberalized higher education. The academic culture wars of the 1980’s and 1990’s were initiated by conservative and neoconservative scholars who played key roles in the Reagan administration and formulated...
educational policy which reflected the values of modern American conservatism – libertarianism, traditionalism and anti-communism. Furthermore, the culture wars ushered in an intense debate over politically correct speech and public morality and eventually led to a critique of all academic programs that came about as a result of student activism in the 1960’s. Black Studies was a favorite target of conservative scholars and students. Certainly all academic programs come under scrutiny from time to time as critique generally lends to self-improvement. However, in the case of Black Studies, conservative philanthropic monies was used to not only provide a critical review of specific Black Studies programs but instead sought to dismantle the discipline altogether. Conservative scrutiny of Black Studies based on the work of individual scholars in the field may have indeed been warranted but to lambaste the entire discipline as lacking conceptual and scholarly rigor speaks to a much larger issue than simply the quality of Black Studies departments; it speaks to a greater interest in controlling what ideas and values are transmitted within the academy.

Though ultimately unsuccessful in actually ridding the nation’s colleges and universities of such programs, the Culture Wars which were instigated and financed by conservative academic change organizations and philanthropic foundations did, at least for a time, led to the popular charge by Shelby Steele that Black Studies was a “sundry” manifestation of the liberal welfare state and was further accused of being nothing more than a divisive, feel-good program that placed more emphasis on politics than academic rigor. Such characterization of Black Studies led to the loss of institutional resources and support and a decline in student enrollment in some colleges and universities (Steele, 1992). The purpose of this chapter is to identify how conservative philanthropy has been used to influence the discourse over the legitimacy of Black Studies as well as race and multiculturalism in American society.
3.2 Early Conservative Philanthropy and the Neo-Conservatives

By the 1970’s, social conservatives would eventually turn their attention to the creation of nongovernmental organizations to do their political and social legwork. Stefancic and Delgado (1996) claim that while the nation was focused on issues such as race relations and student protest rallies, conservatives flew “under the radar” and quietly created a vast network of interlocking political organizations in the form of think tanks, policy institutes and philanthropic organizations that would work behind the scenes to advance the goals of this modern conceptualization of conservatism. These organizations served as ends in themselves, realizing that they could not wait any longer nor use any more energy to change the political system. The conservatives who headed and supported these organizations did not concede to their liberal opponents. Instead, they focused their energy on building a strong ideological apparatus by which conservatives could function more freely. Furthermore, by shifting the focus from the public to private arenas, conservatives could build upon their own “coalition of the willing” who not only shared similar ideological beliefs but were willing to donate time and substantial monies that would work toward the dismantling of the remnants of the New Deal coalition.

The Brookings Institution had long served as a repository for up-to-the-minute policy analysis data for liberal politicians. Lee Edwards (1997) says the Brookings Institution was “the catalyst for many of the legislative successes of the liberals during the 1960’s and early 1970s” (p. 7). Even with Reagan’s success in the California gubernatorial race, conservatives had no equivalent to the Brookings Institution. In fact, conservatives had a long tradition of being suspicious of academics dating back to their distrust of the “brain trust” during FDR’s tenure as president.
Most conservative politicians relied on their instinct when casting votes in favor or against various forms of proposed legislation because the two conservative think tanks in existence prior to the 1970’s, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), had been criticized by a congressional committee for presenting only the perspective of big business in its materials (Edwards, 1997). AEI served as a conservative think tank on domestic issues while CSIS focused on foreign affairs. Furthermore, AEI’s president’s, William Broody Sr., connection to the Goldwater campaign in 1964 was noted by Lyndon Johnson’s political operatives as being too close to the political process to offer any type of objective, balanced research regarding legislation proposed by Democrats. The fallout from this relationship between AEI and Goldwater was that the think tank would conduct research on various policy initiatives and provide that material to conservative politicians after the votes had been cast.

The Brookings Institution, by comparison, was not connected to any political campaign and was able to provide its clients with research well before the deciding votes had to be cast. This gave Democrats the competitive edge against “envious conservatives (who) watched the powerful liberal coalition of academics, think tanks analysts, members of Congress, White House aides, interest group officials and journalists run much of the business of the nation’s capital and wondered: why can’t we put together an operation like that?”(Edwards, 1997, p. 8). As a response to this need for a conservative think tank that would be on par with the Brookings Institution, Paul Weyrich and Edwin J. Feulner Jr., made plans in 1968 to create such a think tank that would help conservative politicians mount a successful counter-offensive to Democratic successes in the House and Senate.
Weyrich and Feulner created a business prospectus to aid them in securing much-needed start up monies for their new venture which was originally called the Analysis and Research Association (ARA). Initially, the two young conservative staffers were unable to locate any potential donors until their prospectus landed in the hands of Jack Wilson, who had become an assistant for political affairs to Joseph Coors, the president of the largest brewery west of the Mississippi and an outspoken conservative. Edwards (1997) says that Coors was “determined to have his company more involved in the political process,” and told Wilson to “conduct a nationwide search for the right ‘investment’ in the conservative movement” (p. 15). It was by pure chance that the arrival of the ARA prospectus coincided with Coors’ growing interest in the political process on behalf of the conservative cause. However, Coors’ desire to be more actively involved in politics was heavily influenced by his receipt of a confidential 5,000 word memorandum by Lewis F. Powell, a prominent Democratic lawyer in Virginia and Richard Nixon’s nominee to the Supreme Court.

Edwards (1997) says that “Powell detailed what he called the ‘broad attack’ on the free enterprise system, criticized the general ‘apathy and default’ of American business and urged business executives to take ‘effective action’ against the threat” (p. 17). However, upon closer examination of the document which is currently housed at the Washington and Lee University Archive in Virginia, Edwards (1997) failed to adequately demonstrate the far-reaching implications of Powell’s prescription for saving American business, in particular, from encroachment and expansion of the liberal welfare state. Powell’s memo targeted academe (as well as the courts and public media) as a site for conservatives to challenge the expansion of liberalism. Black Studies and other non-traditional academic programs such as women’s studies
were viewed as part and parcel of liberal efforts to expand the welfare state, thus becoming targets for conservative critics of American higher education in the 1980’s and 1990’s.

In 1971, just one month prior to Richard Nixon nominating him to the U.S. Supreme Court, Lewis F. Powell, a former corporate lawyer and Virginia Board of Education member, sent a private memo entitled “Attack on the American Free Enterprise System” to various members of the business community in which he outlined the assault on big business and what should be done about it (Landay, 2002). This memo, also known as “The Powell Manifesto,” specifically focuses on how big business was attacked from within academe. Powell (1971) says, “Although origins, sources and causes are complex and interrelated, and obviously difficult to identify without careful qualification, there is reason to believe that the campus is the single most dynamic source. The social sciences faculties usually include members who are unsympathetic to the enterprise system” (p.6). Powell goes on to suggest the various ways in which members of the business community can halt the attack on the enterprise system by financing and sponsoring what Blumenthal (1986) has termed a “counter-establishment” to the Left. Powell clearly articulates a number of suggestions for how this “counter-establishment” campaign should be waged within academe: through the creation of endowed professorships of scholars who believe in the enterprise system, the establishment of a speaker’s bureau reflecting the views of big business, through the evaluation of textbooks, through the balancing of conservative and liberal faculty, through the publication of scholarly journals which objectively examine the free enterprise system and by sponsoring action programs in secondary schools (Powell, 1971). Additionally, Powell (1971) says that American businessmen needed to use the media, local and state court systems, and local, grassroots politics to dissuade the American politicians from being influenced by liberal criticism of big business. Stefancic and Delgado (1996) have noted that the use of the
media has been one of the single most important vehicles conservatives have utilized to disseminate their political philosophy and agenda.

Jerry Landay (2002) further suggests that upon receiving Powell’s memo, Joseph Coors, the brewery magnate and grandson of Coors founder Adolph Coors, donated $250,000 to finance operations of the Analysis and Research Association in Washington D.C. in 1973, a conservative organization that funded research projects geared toward establishing radical right policy initiatives which would later be renamed the Heritage Foundation. The Coors family has been an influential force in American politics and business using their wealth to support neo-Nazi, anti-environment, anti-labor and ultra religious causes. Adolph Coors was said to have allowed Ku Klux Klan meetings and cross burnings on the property of his Colorado brewery (Bellant, 1991). His son, Bill, fought against passage of the Civil Rights Act, telling an audience of black businessmen that blacks do not succeed because they "lack intellectual capacity." After encouraging them to go back to Africa, he said that one of the best things slave-drivers did to American blacks "was to drag your ancestors over here in chains" because blacks in America have greater opportunity than those in Africa (ActionPA.org, 2006). The Coors family is also a major contributor to the Moral Majority and similar Christian fundamentalist groups which call for an authoritarian, gender based social order based on “traditional family values.”

According to Landau (2002) many conservative think tanks and foundations received start-up monies from business leaders like the Coors Family who were recipients of Powell’s memorandum. In fact, Richard M. Scaife, a prominent banker and supporter of conservative and anti-communist initiatives would soon join Coors in providing financial resources for the fledgling think tank (Edwards, 1997). Scaife, a descendant of the Mellon family of industrial, oil, and banking tycoons, inherited $800 million dollars from his mother, Sarah, and used his wealth
to create and control the Sarah Scaife, Carthage and Allegheny Foundations which provide grants to conservative policy and research institutes such as the Heritage Foundation. Powell’s memo helped to galvanize conservative business leaders into action, setting up a network of interlocking and overlapping organizations that would work collaboratively to provide financial support to conservative think tanks and policy institutes.

Edwards’ (1997) explanation of how the Heritage Foundation got its start, neglects to mention just how controversial Powell’s memo was in 1971 because only one month prior to President Nixon’s nomination of Powell to the Supreme Court, news of the memo was leaked to the Washington Post and the resulting expose article undermined Powell’s chance of being confirmed as the next Supreme Court Justice to replace Hugo Black (Landay, 2002). Although Powell’s political career was severely tarnished, the memo would provide movement conservatives with a blueprint for social action. Movement conservatives realized that to maintain power and control in Washington, they had to push the movement beyond the rhetoric because they could not ride out the successes of Reagan in California forever. They realized they needed an intellectual and financial apparatus on par or greater than any network of think tanks, policy institutes and philanthropic organizations ever created by liberals. Just as the conservatives were looking to build upon their success in getting Reagan elected governor of California and establishing the Heritage Foundation as the premier conservative think tank, a group of American academics and journalists began moving toward the Right as they became “…dissatisfied with black power politics, and finally, critics of what became known as ‘counterculture’ all disengaged from the Left” (Blumenthal, 1993, p. 130). This group, known in many academic and political circles as the “neo-conservatives” provided this growing
conservative movement with the expertise and guidance it needed to “shift the parameters of conservative respectability toward the center” (Gottfried, 1993, p.7).

With the development of a conservative ideology and grassroots movement, conservative supporters were able to mount a legitimate challenge against what they perceived to be the “radicalization” of American politics which seemed to be an assault on patriotism, educational standards and family values (Gottfried, 1993). The establishment of Johnson’s Great Society program including the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights act helped to solidify a liberal sentiment within American society. Protests over the Vietnam War, the rise of Second Wave Feminism and the emergence of the Black Power movement helped to create an atmosphere of liberal thought that the conservatives could not assemble a viable counter-offensive to until well into the following decade with the ascent of the neo-conservative movement.

Just who are these neoconservatives and what do they believe? A highly simplistic description would say that neoconservatives are a group of Jewish intellectuals with former strong ties to liberalism who over a period of decades shifted the philosophical perspective and political affiliation toward the right. However, Mark Gerson (1996) claims the neo-conservatism defies labeling because “neo-conservatism insists on the liberal idea that involuntary ideas such as race, rank, and station should never restrain an individual (p. 8). Likewise, while neoconservatives reject the traditional conservative emphasis on the authority of tradition and glorification of the past, it shares conservative concerns with ‘order, continuity and community’ (Gerson, 1996, p. 9). In other words, the limitations of the categories used in contemporary American political discourse – liberalism and conservatism - do not adequately address all of the salient features and perspectives of neo-conservatism.
Neoconservatives, using a republican virtue tradition as its philosophical foundation, maintain that individual liberty is not peculiar to liberalism nor is the idea of community and virtue peculiar to conservatism. Instead, neoconservatives believe that individual liberty is predicated on a virtuous community thus there is an essential interdependence between the two political philosophies. Gerson (1996) further stresses that “all the antagonists of neo-conservatism have negated their vision by either stressing freedom at the expense of community or stressing community at the expense of freedom” (p.10). In a neoconservative formulation of democracy, the individual exercises their freedom in a community which is created by a commitment to maintain those freedoms by a virtuous group of individuals. Thus, “there is nothing inherently repressive about shared values and common goals and nothing inherently decadent in diversity and pluralism” (Gerson, 1996, p.10). For the neoconservatives, both liberals and conservatives are guilty of offering simplistic, either/or conceptualizations of American society and what is needed, according to neoconservative style of thought, is a more nuanced analysis which looks at the world in totality, rather than in disconnected segments.

Neoconservatives, by their own admission, claim that their work in spreading their ideas about society and government in particular is an elitist enterprise. Gerson (1996) says, “They have no intention of reaching the vast majority of people. They want engaged readers especially those who have intellectual and political influence” (p.15). This admission of elitism is important because neoconservatives often charge liberals and conservatives with making sweeping generalizations and simplistic recommendations for changing society. Instead, neoconservatives believe that life is infinitely complex and tend to be suspicious of sweeping policies or blueprints to remake society such as many affirmative action programs offered by liberal academicians and politicians. However, they support a minimal welfare state, the
legitimacy of labor unions and the justice of civil rights putting them at odds with many staunch conservatives who viewed these programs as an infringement on personal liberty by the state. Neoconservatives argued that one jeopardizes individual liberty for all citizens when the community does not seek protection for basic economic and civil rights for all its citizens.

Instead, the neoconservatives maintained an opposition to liberalism based on their familiarity with the mind-set, lure, aspirations and background of people on the left. What this means is that as former members of the left, neoconservatives believed they knew the left well enough to critique it from the inside out. David Horowitz, for example, is one of the country’s leading neo-conservatives and also one of the most prominent American New Left defectors. As a former anti-Vietnam War veteran and writer for *Ramparts*, the leading white propaganda agency for the Black Panther Party, Horowitz has now been able to utilize his knowledge of the American Left to launch critiques against the very group of people he once supported and worked with (Browning, 1987). Horowitz’s conversion to neo-conservatism came about after a series of disagreements with Black Panther Party officials and by what he claims was the Panthers’ over-reliance on violence to take out their political enemies (Browning, 1987). Another contributing factor in Horowitz’s conversion was his Jewish heritage. Horowitz claims that anti-Semitism was rampant among the black radical activists he worked with and he has gone on the record to say,

“I do have a certain bitterness toward blacks because my parents taught Negro history in the ‘40s and I and my friends, all Jews, dedicated our lives, the main aspect of our political lives….for black people in this country. And when (expletive) Jesse Jackson gets out there with this black Ku Kluxer Farrakhan, praising Hitler and attacking Jews, not one (expletive) black leader came out and condemned it. That to me is disgusting” (Browning, 1987, p. 34).

The manifestation of this bitterness toward blacks can be seen in Horowitz’s relentless critique of affirmative action and blacks’ fight for reparations for slavery and most recently, in his proposal
of an Academic Bill of Rights, which he claims uses the American Association of University Professors’ concept of academic freedom to base his proposed legislation. According to Horowitz (2004), “The bill’s purposes are to codify that tradition; to emphasize the value of ‘intellectual diversity,’ already implicit in the concept of academic freedom; and, most important, to enumerate the rights of students to not be indoctrinated or otherwise assaulted by political propagandists in the classroom or any other educational setting” (p. 1). Horowitz (2004) claims that liberals as well as conservatives should embrace the Academic Bill of Rights because it seeks to “remove partisan politics from the classroom” (p. 1). Yet by Horowitz’s (2004) own admission there is some concern raised about one particular provision that calls for faculty in the humanities and social sciences specifically to “foster a plurality of methodologies and perspectives” (p. 1). In Horowitz’s estimation many of these critics are reading this provision as a mandate that restricts academic freedom instead of promoting it. Horowitz (2004) claims that these critics are purposely misinterpreting the intent of this provision “…because I am a well-known conservative and have published studies of political bias in the hiring of college and university professors, critics have suggested that the Academic Bill of Rights is really a “right-wing plot” to stack faculties with political conservatives by imposing hiring quotas” (p.1). Whether or not his intention was to impose hiring quotas for political conservatives, Horowitz’s suggestion that humanities and social science faculty “foster a plurality of methodologies and perspectives” ignores the fact that it is usually within the humanities and social sciences where students get the most exposure to a variety of political and social viewpoints, ideologies and methods of inquiry.

Neoconservatives have criticized liberalism for some of its failures – ignoring the complexity of human action and the wisdom of human systems (specifically addressing the
failure of affirmative action to redress hundreds of years of economic disenfranchisement for African Americans), a lack of resolve in confronting evil (specifically referring to a socialism and the spread of communism within the United States), a laissez-faire attitude toward human virtue (referring to the liberal refusal to view the 1960’s counterculture movements as destructive), and an unwillingness to defend the critical ideas of American civilization from its discontents (Gerson, 1996). One of the most prominent neoconservative thinkers, Norman Podhoretz claimed that during the 1970’s liberals ushered in a “culture of appeasement” which triggered a failure of nerve in addressing Communism and through this culture of appeasement failed to “accumulate the moral capital” needed to ensure the longevity of capitalism, democracy and the American way of life (Gerson, 1996, p. 22). This culture of appeasement was also played out on the domestic front where the “neoconservative defense of American society was launched in response to student radicalism and the tepid reaction of liberal faculty” (Gerson, 1996. p. 23).

Irving Kristol (1995), another prominent neoconservative scholar, maintains that this “culture of appeasement” brought on an “aggressive form of multiculturalism” in the nation’s institutions of higher learning such that, “multiculturalism is a desperate – and surely self-defeating strategy for coping with educational deficiencies and associated pathologies of young blacks” (p. 50). Kristol (1995) further attacks the academic integrity of Black Studies by maintaining that such programs violate “traditional ideas about the substance of liberal education, and represents a deplorable deviation in the way our young Americans, so heterogeneous in their origins, are to be educated to live together” (p.50). Kristol’s commentary resembles the same critique Lewis Powell leveled at humanities and social science faculty in the nation’s colleges and universities through his “Powell Manifesto” in that both men charge that programs that promote diversity and multiculturalism and critique capitalism are destructive manifestations of the liberal
welfare state, whereby the “culture of appeasement” of the 1960’s and early 1970’s, influenced university administrators and faculty to succumb to political pressure brought on by protesting and rioting students.

While neoconservatives claim to have had their start well before the student radicalism of the 1960’s, the chaos within the nation’s institutions of higher education presented the opportunity for neoconservatives to present their approach to various social and political questions about the state of American society. During this “counterculture” period, neoconservatives defended the besieged institutions believing that the ideas which emanate from the academy should be protected at all costs. In order to do so, this defense necessitated making alliances with conservatives such as Reagan (Gerson, 1996). However, Blumenthal (1986) would counter saying neoconservatives needed to actively participate in the Republican Party, despite their skepticism over anti-Semitic beliefs held by many members of the “Old Right,” in order to move from being intellectual elites to becoming governing elites. In order to amass political power and influence, one must function within a two-party political system.

Therefore, neoconservatives, disillusioned with the Civil Rights Movement when it became more “radicalized” in the late 1960’s/early 1970s, began to adopt more sophisticated approaches to political conversion by setting up think tanks, hiring statisticians, and producing and disseminating position papers and forged a tenuous relationship with conservatives. Henry Giroux (2004) offers a more scathing commentary as to the aims of neo-conservatism when he argues that “the goal of the post-civil rights era (for neo-conservatives) has been to roll back the gains made by social movements of the Sixties and radically restrict immigration in the interests of cultural nationalism and the consolidation of white political and economic power, while
silencing any discussion of race in mainstream national politics by insisting on colorblind public policy” (p. 179).

The alliance between conservatives and neo-conservatives proved quite beneficial for both groups as the neo-conservatives were able to enter American politics on a national scale because of their association with the Republican Party, and the “Old Right” benefited from the neo-conservatives’ familiarity with the liberal intelligentsia. Gerson (1996) says “the richness of neo-conservatism is at least partially due to the fact that the neoconservatives bring individual expertise in a variety of fields to bear” (p. 24). For example, Michael Novak is an internationally recognized Christian theologian and conservative news critic; Daniel Patrick Moynihan was an influential figure in American politics; Norman Podhoretz is an expert on Israel and Communism and Peter Berger is a distinguished sociologist. This is but a small sampling of the number of distinguished intellectuals that make up the neoconservative ranks and due to their distinguished reputations in their chosen fields, Gottfried (1993) was correct when he claimed that neo-conservatives “shifted parameters of conservative respectability to the center.” Once the neoconservatives become involved with the Republican Party, they used their experience in directing liberal think tanks and policy institutes such as the Brookings Institution and Ford Foundation to help create a political and social policy platform that would eventually influence American educational, media and political systems based on conservative political and social values.

One example of the neoconservative influence on American social and political policy is the drafting of Mandate for Change which became Reagan’s educational policy plan in 1980. Authored largely by neoconservative political analyst William Bennett, Mandate for Change called for the use of school vouchers and high stakes proficiency testing in public schools which
later gave way to the No Child Left Behind (2002) educational plan during the presidency of George W. Bush. Bennett, along with Charles Finn and Diane Ravitch, cofounders of the Educational Excellence Network, which has received substantial financial support from conservative philanthropic organizations, believed that free market economics and the necessity for government standards would improve the state of American public education (Spring, 2002).

Neoconservatives believe that traditional government programs such as health care and education should be privatized when the local, state or federal governments fail to adequately provide children with quality education. Thus, poor performing schools, under the dictates of Mandate for Change and later No Child Left Behind, are faced with the possibility of surrendering state and federal monies for education if a parent elects to send their child to a charter or parochial school. They have the choice to remain in the district or to take their public dollars elsewhere. School choice and vouchers became a controversial and popular issue of debate during the 1996 presidential campaign thanks in part to the work of neoconservative educational policy strategist William Bennett during the Reagan administration.

Following the establishment of the Heritage Foundation, a large number of conservative philanthropic organizations and think tanks including the Coors, Bradley, Olin and Scaife Family Foundations were created by wealthy American business leaders. Neoconservative thinkers helped shaped the mission, goals and programming activities for a number of these organizations. These organizations will come to play a vital role in setting the conservative/Republican educational policy under the Reagan administration and would play a pivotal role in financing conservative scholars who actively participate in the “Culture Wars” of the 1980’s and 1990’s in American public education. The “Powell Manifesto” galvanized American businessmen into action by encouraging big business leaders such as Joseph Coors and Richard Scaife to use their
money to support conservative causes. Working in tandem with the level of sophistication that the neoconservatives brought to bear within the Republican political machine, big business helped conservatives to broaden their scope of influence in academia, politics, the media and the legal system.

### 3.3 The Context and Scope of the Culture Wars

While Black Studies became as a formally recognized academic department on the campus of San Francisco State and other major colleges and universities throughout the country in the 1970’s, the battle over who controlled the nation’s higher educational system was far from over. Jean Stefancic and Richard Delgado (1996) say that, “The conservative surge began quietly in the late 1960’s. While the rest of the country was marching for civil rights, protesting war in Indochina, and experimenting with drugs and freedom from convention, small groups of conservatives were meeting to plan their long-range agenda and deciding what to do when they returned, as they knew they would, to power” (p. 3). Richard Nixon was elected president in 1968 on a moderate conservative ticket but most conservatives who supported Goldwater’s presidential campaign felt that moderate conservatism lacked the innovation to influence policy decisions and move the country into another direction, one that was diametrically opposed to the political philosophy of New Deal liberalism.

The call for a change in how conservatism could usher America into a new era, came in 1978, says Stefancic and Delgado (1996), who claim that William Simon, secretary of the treasury under Nixon and Ford called for a radical reformulation of conservative principles. In his book, *A Time for Truth*, Simon “…urged the right to rise above the homilies of both classical liberalism and Goldwater-era conservatism and forge a new set of institutions capable of leading
America into a new age” (Stefancic and Delgado, 1996, p.3). Similar to Lewis F. Powell in the early 1970’s, Simon urged corporations to support counter-intellectuals in their struggle that lay ahead (Stefancic and Delgado, 1996). Furthermore, the conservative elite, aided by neo-conservative intellectuals, began making preparations to bring conservatism to the national scene. In order to do so, conservative elites began looking at the governor of California, Ronald Reagan, as a strong contender to run for the White House.

Reagan’s willingness and popularity in challenging the rising tide of liberalism in California’s public higher educational system caught the eye of conservative elites. With a large proportion of white Californians solidly behind Reagan’s zero-tolerance policy against the student protesters, a consensus was building among the conservative and neo-conservative elite that liberal-supported academic programs such as Black Studies and Women’s Studies were undermining the quality of academic scholarship and teaching in the nation’s institutions of higher learning and resulted in a reliance on cultural relativism which eroded away at students and faculties’ ability to use moral reasoning (Schultz, 1993).

The charge of “cultural relativism” led to highly politicized debates within the American academy, loosely termed as “The Culture Wars,” which began in the mid-1980’s when former chairman of the National Endowment of the Humanities, William Bennett, articulated the framework for the political correctness debates of the late 1980s and early 1990s in two separate yet related controversies concerning issues affecting America’s institutions of higher learning. First, Bennett published a report in which he defended the literary and philosophical canon in To Reclaim a Legacy”: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education in 1984. In the report, Bennett claims that “The humanities, and particularly the study of Western civilization, have lost their central place in the undergraduate curriculum” (Bennett, 1970, p.1). He further argues that
“because our society is the product and we the inheritors of Western civilization, American students need an understanding of its origins and development, from its roots in antiquity to the present” (Bennett, 1984, p.9). Interestingly enough, Bennett and other academic conservatives such as Diane Ravitch and Lynne Chenney go a step further than to merely suggest that Americans students need to learn about Western civilization to offering a suggested list of “classic” Western texts which include Greek philosophy, literature from medieval, Renaissance, seventeenth and twentieth century Europe as well as American historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers and the Gettysburg Address and American literature by Hawthorne, Melville, Twain and Faulkner (Bennett, 1984, p.9). Noticeably absent on Bennett’s list was more than a singular mention of one female author (Jane Austen) and one person of color (Martin Luther King Jr.). There was no mention of Gwendolyn Brooks, Pearl S. Buck, Alice Walker, or Sylvia Plath not to mention Langston Hughes, Richard Rodriquez or August Wilson. It would seem apparent even to the casual observer that Bennett’s selection and promotion of “classic” Western texts was predicated on the belief that the author must be either white and/or male. Thus, for these prize winning minority and women authors, Bennett held the belief that their works were not good representations of what constituted Western Civilization. “Bennett claimed that curriculum reformers in higher education were denying students a timeless legacy by replacing ‘classic texts’ of Western civilization with the works of lesser quality and significance” (Schultz, 1993, p. 9).

Claiming that the sixties radicals were now deeply entrenched into the nation’s colleges and universities, they were “…threatening a precious American heritage in the name of a more inclusive curriculum” (Schultz, 1993, p 10). Giroux (2004) further contends that through the Culture Wars initiated by conservatives and reframed the political revolution of the 1960’s in
terms of a cultural revolution emphasizing permissiveness, lack of work ethic, moral relativism and utter contempt for mainstream values.

Secondly, less than two years after the publication of *To Reclaim a Legacy*, Bennett launched a public attack against Stanford University for replacing a freshmen undergraduate course entitled “Western Culture” in which students read fifteen works in Western philosophy and literature, with a course entitled “Culture, Ideas and Values” which included works by women, minorities and persons of color (Bennett, 1992; Spring, 2002). Bennett argued that students should be required to take a course in Western civilization and culture because it forms the basis of American democracy and government. Claiming that Western culture “…set the moral, political, economic and social standards for the rest of the world,” Bennett (1992, p. 170) further claimed that the Stanford University faculty who approved replacing such a course were critics of Western culture and had a difficult time in seeing the West in any type of positive light. However, Bennett’s attack fails to point out that the new “Culture, Ideas and Values” course did not dismiss the influence of Western civilization and culture on American society nor did they faculty seek to “replace” readings by Western philosophers, novelists and playwrights but simply sought to add additional voices from women and people of color in order to provide a more comprehensive examination of how American cultural values and social institutions were formed.

In his essay, *Multiculturalism and Neoconservatives*, Robert Stam (1997) delineates popular conservative and neoconservative misrepresentations about multiculturalism including Bennett’s charge that “the West is under attack” (Williams, 1995, p. 69). Stam (1997) contends that neoconservatives consistently claim that multiculturalism is “…systematically, reflexively anti-European. Neoconservative tracts portray multiculturalism as calling for the abrupt jettison of European classics and of western civilization as an area of study” (p. 530). However, Stam
(1997, p. 531) counters arguing that multiculturalists are not anti-European but are opposed to Euro-centrism pointing out that “an anti-Eurocentric multiculturalism ‘relativizes’ Europe seeing it as a geographical fiction that flattens the cultural diversity of Europe itself.” In other words, Euro-centrism seeks to make Europe and Europeans the center of the world and associated with all that is good which has the unexpected negative repercussion of creating a monolithic Europe in which everyone subscribes to the same beliefs about community and country. Stam (1997) points out the extra-ordinary lengths Western scholars (European, American and Australians) go to in order to propagate the idea of a “pure” Europe by ignoring, for example, the great deal of cultural contact and exchange with non-Europeans in classical Greece. By ignoring the cultural exchanges between ancient Greeks and various groups of African, Semitic and Asian peoples, proponents of the conservative version of Western Civilization fail to see the West as a collective heritage which took in a mélange of cultures (Stam, 1997). Stam’s explication of the neoconservative misrepresentation of multiculturalism is useful because it offers a critical examination of how conservatives and neoconservatives arrived at their various conclusions about the validity and utility of multiculturalism in the college curriculum.

However, with access to highly visible political posts and financial support from newly formed conservative philanthropic organizations, Debra Schultz (1993) says that, “Critics of multiculturalism and other educational reforms who enjoyed high profiles in the late 1980’s were part of well-funded, well-coordinated efforts to focus the national political agenda on issues of culture, especially education and the arts” (p. 9). Shortly after the formation of the Heritage Foundation in 1971, several American business leaders began establishing conservative philanthropic foundations that would provide the majority of the financial support to various think tanks, policy institutes, faculty associations and conservative student newspapers which
would work to directly challenge liberalism and multiculturalism in the academy. William Simon (1979, p. 230) reiterated Powell’s call for American business leaders to take a more active role in shaping American colleges and universities when he said, “‘Funds generated by business...must rush by the multimillions to the aid of liberty...to funnel desperately needed funds to scholars, social scientists, writers and journalists who understand the relationship between political and economic liberty. [Business must] cease the mindless subsidizing of colleges and universities whose departments of economy, government, politics and history are hostile to capitalism.”

According to the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, an independent non-profit organization whose goal it is to ensure that non-public sector funds are being used responsibly, the conservative monies given to higher education in the late 1980s and early 1990s have been targeted and multi-dimensional (NCRP, 1997). They report that from 1992-1994, twelve of these conservative philanthropic foundations provided over $88.9 million dollars in grant monies to individual scholars, research institutes, academic study programs and public policy centers with the aim to “support and extend the theoretical and philosophical basis for free market economics and limited government” (NCRP, 1997, p. 14). A secondary goal of this conservative investment in American higher education was to establish a network of faculty, students, alumni and trustees who would oppose and reverse progressive curricula such as ethnic and gender studies programs. To achieve this particular goal, members of this network of academic conservatives launched a successful attack on “liberal” higher education, claiming that it eroded academic standards and denied conservative faculty and students their right to academic freedom. With the erosion of standards and the silencing of dissent by liberal faculty and administrators, this network of academic conservatives called for changes in American higher education policy with regards to admissions, curricular decisions and faculty hiring (NCRP, 1997).
To this end, academic conservatives utilizing financial support from conservative philanthropic organizations, established an “ideological apparatus” made up of conservative faculty and student organizations such as the National Association of Scholars (NAS) which was founded in 1985 by Stephen Balch, professor of government at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. The NAS is one of the largest conservative academic change organizations whose primary goal is to combat perceived “liberal bias” on college campuses by uniting conservative faculty against politically correct multicultural education and affirmative action policies. From 1988 through 2005, the NAS has received over $10 million dollars in grants from different conservative philanthropies, most notably the Olin, Bradley, Scaife, Coors and Smith Richardson foundations to support a wide range of programs (Foundation Grants Index, 1988-2005). The NAS gained notoriety in 1990 when the English department at the University of Texas at Austin voted to revise a required freshmen English course that would focus on social issues. Alan Gribben, a UTA English professor and NAS member opposed the plan arguing that the committee’s selection of Paula Rothenberg’s Sexism and Racism would contribute to the “politicization” of basic skills courses (Weisberg, 1991). Gribben solicited assistance from other NAS members who joined him in a vigorous letter writing campaign to Austin and Dallas newspapers, made guest appearances on talk shows and collected signatures from colleagues opposing the content of such a course. Shortly after the NAS campaign began, the dean of the College of the Liberal Arts overrode the curriculum committee and suspended the class. NAS had won its first major victories which would lead to more ambitious projects.

Former NAS chairman, Herb London, who also ran as the conservative Republican candidate for Governor of New York in 1990 claims that NAS members want to “recapture the spirit of reasoned argument” (Weisberg, 1991, p. 35). Furthermore, members “defend traditional
analytical methods and scholarly standards against politicization and ideology. They are opposed to all ‘trendy methodologies’ and have no truck with Marxism, feminism, new historicism or deconstruction” (Weisberg, 1991, p. 35). The initial NAS budget of $500,000 annually went to support the operation of a research center which keeps track of campus curricular trends, a faculty search service, small two-year post-doctoral fellowships and the publication of Academic Questions, a scholarly journal publishes articles and book reviews which critique liberal higher education and offers recommendation for educational change (Weisberg, 1991; Foundation Grant Index, 1985).

Building upon the successes of NAS as a premier conservative academic change agency, the Madison Center for Educational Affairs, through a merger of the Institute for the Educational Affairs and the Madison Center, serves as a major funding intermediary and technical assistance provider developing the next layer in the conservative ideological apparatus which is to train a new generation of conservative leaders. The MCEA was charged with continuing the work of the Institute for Educational Affairs that was founded by Irving Kristol, often called the godfather of neo-conservatism, and William Simon in 1978. The goal of the IEA was to seek out promising Ph.D. candidates and undergraduate leaders, help them establish themselves through grants and fellowships and then help them get jobs with activist organizations, research projects, student publications, federal agencies or leading periodicals (Wilayto, 1997). Following the merger of the IEA and the Madison Center which was founded by William Bennett, the MCEA became the premier funding and training provider for conservative student newspapers and right-wing research projects about the academy. The MCEA supervised the Collegiate Network until 1996 which linked over 70 conservative newspapers and provided grants, fellowships and summer institutes for conservative student newspaper staff. The first member of the Collegiate Network
was the Dartmouth Review, a conservative student newspaper founded by Dinesh D’Souza, the controversial author of *Illiberal Education* and *An End to Racism* (Wilayto, 1997).

In a financial report to members of the MCEA in 1990, the organization gave over $300,000 to the Collegiate Network and used over $120,000 in philanthropic donations to support the publication of the *Common Sense Guide to American Colleges* which “…evaluates these schools using old fashioned standards of academic excellence, social decency and community spirit” (Madison Center for Educational Affairs, 1991, p. 13). The MCEA developed a 20 page set of questions that were used in the creation of the *Common Sense Guide* and included questions dealing with campus faculty, general education requirements, campus ideological diversity, campus party affiliation, campus intellectual climate, social life and diversity on campus (MCEA Questionnaire, 1990). Some sample questions include: Is there a campus controversy about Euro-centrism in the curriculum (that is, are some arguing that there is an excessive emphasis on Western civilization)? Does the campus have a prevailing ideological or political tone? Are many courses used for indoctrination; that is, are many courses used by instructors to instill their ideological or political beliefs in the students? Do instructors tend to apply different academic standards to minority students? (MCEA Questionnaire, 1990). Given that the questionnaire was only circulated among the MCEA and Collegiate Network membership, it is hard to imagine that the responses would be any different from the prevailing conservative views about the liberal academy. Nonetheless, what is more important than the responses to this questionnaire was the rationale behind the creation of such a project. As the MCEA’s Collegiate Network grew, other organizations were formed to support the mission of the conservative campus newspaper. Accuracy in Academia (AIA) was established in 1985 by Reed Irvine, founder of Accuracy in Media, to “root out disinformation and misinformation in the college classroom” (Ridgeway,
Irvine, a conservative educational activist and former foreign service officer authored the Parental Consent Letter, a form letter in which parents must give their consent to local school boards before the curriculum can include any one of 35 issues including evolution, family income, sex attitudes and world hunger which was widely distributed by The Moral Majority, Phyllis Schafly’s Eagle Forum and Pat Roberson’s 700 Club. With his Accuracy in Media organization, Irvine had over 35,000 subscribers to his newsletter and planned to use that success to recruit students to monitor courses from the AIA. Specifically, Irvine used $30,000 in grants from the Olin Foundation to train students to identify professors with Marxist leanings by evaluating their reading lists for ideological balance (Foundation Grants Index, 1998-2001). The AIA had less of an impact on higher education because “…universities are less concerned with public broadcasting of them than media organizations” (Krueger, 1985). Furthermore, many academics, whose political affiliations ranged from liberal to conservative found the AIA tactics objectionable and endangering academic freedom (Krueger, 1985, p. 2-3). The fact that conservative philanthropic groups donated so much for all of these ambitious projects – NAS, MCEA and the AIA - speaks to the growing confidence of academic conservatives, believing they were slowly but surely amassing enough social capital to take their critique of liberal higher education to the masses under the auspices of the political correctness debates.

3.4 The Political Correctness Debates

Working in tandem with these conservative activist and philanthropic organizations, key officials in the Reagan and Bush (Sr.) administrations worked to bring attention to what they perceived as the liberal domination of higher education (Spring, 2002). The “liberal domination of higher education and culture” (Spring, 2002, p. 24) became strong populist rhetoric among
the conservative wing of the Republican Party. Believing that liberal elites dominated American cultural and government life, conservatives led by William Bennett (1992) argued that the culture wars were a manifestation of a clash between most Americans and “the beliefs of liberal elite that today dominates many of our institutions and who therefore exert influence on American life and culture” (p. 26). Spring (2002) says that conservatives believe that the liberal elite who occupy influential positions in universities, the media and the artistic and literary worlds, “…is different from former bourgeois elite, who valued the importance of the family, public morality, hard work and individual entrepreneurship” (p.24).

The emphasis on public morality becomes especially important during the Culture Wars because of the rise of the religious right in the late 1980’s. The Christian Coalition, led by televangelist Pat Robertson is the largest political organization representing the religious right. Robertson’s unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 1988 signaled a very different political landscape, one in which the devoutly religious were beginning to take a real interest in the political affairs of the country. Using the web to disseminate their justification for blending religion and politics, the group says “During the 20th century many Christians vanished from the public policy arena. Post World War II prosperity along with a desire to avoid becoming ‘worldly’ lured many Christians into political complacency. President John Adams said, ‘Our Constitution was made only for moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.’ Clearly, our nation’s founding fathers expected people of faith to participate in the political process” (Christian Coalition cited in Spring, 2002, p. 11). The Christian Coalition boasted a membership of 1.5 million people spread across 1500 chapters in 2001 and was described by Robertson as “a coalition of pro-family Roman Catholics,
evangelicals, and other people of faith working together to become the unified voice of families with children in middle class America” (Christian Coalition cited in Spring, 2002, p. 11).

The organization became associated with the Republican Party following shifting political alliances. The Republican Party was able to successfully make inroads with southern Whites and northern white ethnic groups of the Democratic Party in the 1970s and 1980s when the Democratic Party supported affirmative action with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights acts. The student protests against the Vietnam War and the growing Black Power Movement also led many of these former Democrats (made up largely of white Southerners and northern white ethnic groups including Irish and Italian Americans) to turn to the Republicans. Spring (2002) says that,

“Underlying these racial politics were religious politics. This combination of racial and religious politics had a profound impact on Republican policies regarding schools. After U.S. Supreme Court rulings in the 1960’s prohibiting officially conducted school prayers and Bible readings, many evangelical Christians declared the public school system an enemy of Christianity and began sending their children to newly created private Christian academies. Fears of racial integration and godless classrooms resulted in the rapid growth of private Christian schools” (p. 8).

The rapid growth of private Christian schools eventually led to the School Choice Movement, which was first established by evangelicals and eventually became part of Reagan’s educational policy platform. The School Choice Movement later came to be known to the public as the school voucher program in which the state and federal government would provide financial assistance so that parents could make a choice for their children between public and private schools (Spring, 1994). This merger of race politics with religious politics is also noted in the religious right’s condemnation of multicultural education.

Joel Spring (2002) says that “Evangelical Christians do not believe in teaching tolerance of other religions. The religious right believes that the Judeo-Christian foundation of American
culture makes it superior to other cultures. Therefore, instruction should emphasize the inculcation of Judeo-Christian culture and not tolerance for other cultures” (p. 21). In To Reclaim a Legacy, William Bennett argued for the use of the Bible as a primary text in the teaching of Western Civilization because “it is the basis for so much subsequent history, literature and philosophy” yet he never advocates for the use of other religious texts such as the Torah, Koran or any other non-Christian text even though America was supposedly founded on that basis of religious freedom and tolerance (Bennett, 1984, p. 9). Bennett’s attack on Stanford University’s “Culture, Ideas and Values” course provides a clear example of the religious right’s critique of American higher education in which the “liberal elite supports ideas that are anathema to the religious right, such as multiculturalism, sexual freedom and gay and lesbian relationships” (Spring, 2002, p. 24). The religious right places the blame for violence in the media and the erosion of the family values on promotion of educational programs that teach about birth control, homosexuality and AIDS. Ironically, the conservatives (including members of the religious right) and neo-conservatives began to utilize the media as a mechanism to promote their ideas about the moral decay of American society brought on by liberal educational and political policies. Long-time critics of the “liberal media,” the conservatives found it necessary and useful to bring these debates directly to the American public through television, public radio and through the publication of a large collection of monographs, policy analysis reports and news articles for academic journals.

This media blitz, also know as the “political correctness or p.c.” debate was actually a term used by the New Left, feminists and progressives throughout the 1970’s and 1980’s “…as a guard against their own orthodoxy in social change efforts” (Perry, 1992, p. 16; Schultz, 1993, p. 9). The term was appropriated by right wing activists and the popular press in the 1980s as Ruth
Perry (1992) points out, “insofar as the accusation of ‘political correctness’ restrains or embarrasses anyone inclined to point out social inequities…the phrase is now successfully forestalling discussion of anything it ever stood for” (p. 16). Under this new appropriation by the right, critics of “p.c.” attacked multiculturalism, women’s studies, ethnic studies, curriculum reform, affirmative action and other efforts to create inclusive campus climates (Schultz, 1993).

To the conservative critics of American higher education, “the furor symbolized a long overdue protest against subversive radicalism, misplaced egalitarianism; and the moral bankruptcy of academic institutions allegedly brought about by a wholesale politicalization of higher learning” (Lucas, 1994, p. 272). However, as Debra Schultz (1993) points out “there is a myth that the academy can remain untouched by the politics of the larger society.” The academy is a microcosm of the wider society and is simultaneously influencing and influenced by political and social concerns of the wider society. Thus, when Schultz (1993) makes the assertion that public perceptions of the “p.c.” debates saw scholars engaging in virulent attack on both sides, this led to the false conclusion that these debates were purely academic which obscured the connections between these scholars attacking “p.c.” and conservative philanthropic groups, activist organizations, think tanks and government officials.

The “p.c.” media coverage dramatically increased following the 1986 publication of Allan Bloom’s *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students*. Bloom (1986) maintained that faculties across the country had abandoned liberal education because it was too difficult to conceptualize or administer and instead gave into intellectual fads with which he lumped Black studies, women’s studies and other interdisciplinary non traditional fields. Furthermore, Bloom (1986) attacked these programs claiming that they had forgotten or ignored the idea of a shared
general culture which promoted divisiveness among the races. It should be noted that the
discussion over “p.c.” debates took place primarily within the nation’s colleges and universities
through much of the late 1980’s. The public was not aware of the “war” brewing in the country’s
institutions of higher learning until the early 1990’s when a plethora of articles and books meant
for mass production and intellectual consumption were published.

Following Bloom’s lead, other critics of multiculturalism joined the debate and went as
far as to suggest that, “Having come to positions of influence and authority in academe, John
Searle claimed, campus radicals were now engaged in promoting an ideology informed by a
conviction that all of Western civilization was hopelessly oppressive and reactionary” (Lucas,
1994, 272). Among these critics was John Searle, a professor of philosophy at Berkeley. In
1990, Searle authored a detailed article in the New York Review of Books which maintained that
once ‘60’s radicals became part of the academy, they sought to dismantle the influence of
conventional scholarship. Claiming that these “campus radicals” drew from radical feminists,
gays and lesbians, Marxist ideologues, and a diverse group of scholars committed to the
epistemological foundations of deconstructionist thought, Searle said this new breed of scholars
claimed their work was aimed at exposing the façade of objectivity and detachment found in
conventional scholarship which often pushed minority cultures to the periphery of the academic
enterprise. Instead of promoting an intellectual environment in which multiculturalism served as
a vehicle by which minority cultural capital was retrieved from the marginality to which it had
previously been assigned, Searle argued that campus radicals, particularly those who subscribed
to a belief in postmodernism, “…generated an atmosphere of fear and repression. In the name of
sensitivity to others, under pain of being denounced as a sexist or racist, radicals were forcing
everyone to adhere to their own codes of politically correct speech and behavior” (Searle, 1992, p. 85).

Christopher Lucas (1994) and Debra Schultz (1993) have both contended that the “p.c.” debate garnered little attention beyond academia until the 1991 publication of Dinesh D’Souza’s *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*. Using over $1.6 million dollars in individual grants from the John M. Olin and Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundations administered by the MCEA, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, D’Souza has written several controversial books and articles about the liberal “corruption” of the American higher education system. In *Illiberal Education*, D’Souza (1991) argued that at the base of the bitter divisions and controversies surrounding issues of race and gender on college campuses was a lack of academic standards of excellence and justice. Specifically, D’Souza (1991) said that preferential treatment of minorities in American postsecondary education through affirmative action “…involves displacing and lowering academic standards in order to promote proportional representation for racial groups” (p. 42). By exploiting national concerns over the quality of the American educational system, D’Souza’s indictment of affirmative action, ethnic and gender studies and campus hate speech codes gave the unsuspecting American public a diagnosis for the malaise of the nation’s schools and universities.

D’Souza and other like-minded conservative critics such as Shelby Steele, Thomas Sowell and Allan Bloom of the nation’s colleges and universities claimed that affirmative action programs and ethnic studies courses thwarted any genuine attempt made on the part of institutions of higher learning to maintain standards of academic excellence and integrity. Conservative critics of affirmative action, for instance, claim that the problem with academic standards grew
out of the campus turmoil of the 1960’s and 1970’s. Henry Rosovsky (1990) has said of the period that,

“In an era when authority was suspect, when all standards and constraints were under attack, and everything traditional was assailed as undemocratic and elitist, academic administrators and faculty were anxious to sidestep confrontations with angry students. In the face of unrelenting pressure to relax requirements, professors ultimately capitulated.” (p. 93).

The end result of this capitulation, according to the opponents of affirmative action admission policies, was radical egalitarianism which opened up access to higher education at the expense of establishing national standards of academic achievement and the growth of open admissions campuses (Lucas, 1994). Colleges and universities that had enacted open admissions programs saw dramatic increases in students with no or mediocre ability which was bound to affect the rigor of collegiate education (Lucas, 1994). While there have routinely been complaints that academic standards had been dropped or discarded, the frequency and force with which they were appearing during the eighties and nineties seemed to have grown exponentially and what accompanied these new complaints was a rhetoric being disseminated through sheer volume of articles and opinion columns lamenting about the ‘diseased’ American higher education system.

Debra Schultz (1993) has tallied the increased number of articles covering the “p.c.” debate noting that in 1988, 101 articles appeared; in 1989, 306 articles and in 1990, 656 articles were published in over various general magazines and articles. By 1991, that number exploded to nearly 4,000 articles addressing the political correctness controversy, which represents a 600 percent increase from the previous year (Schultz, 1993). This upsurge in the amount of print media concerning the “p.c.” debates afforded conservatives an opportunity to codify a new language or rhetoric which helped to shape public opinion about the “decline” of American
higher education. Terms like “academic standards” or “the canon” became an emotionally and politically charged way for conservatives to blast the liberals for turning away from conventional or traditional scholarship and teaching. Although there exists some general confusion as to what is meant by these terms, conservatives readily evoke them claiming that without “academic standards,” colleges and universities threatened the integrity of the entire academic enterprise. Some conservative commentators claim that academic standards means to have a predictive standard such as proficiency test scores or college admission examination results which indicate whether a student has the ability and skills to succeed in college. Others suggest that academic standards reduce the possibility of a student taking an “easier” course as opposed to an intellectually rigorous one. Of course, there is a general disagreement among scholars and academic administrators as to who is allowed to determine which courses are intellectually rigorous and which courses are easier. Newer, more interdisciplinary disciplines such as Black studies and women’s studies are labeled by some conservative academic critics such as D’Souza, Steele and Sowell as less intellectually rigorous and serious than traditional disciplines such as history, philosophy and mathematics (Lucas, 1994; Wilson, 1995). Conservative critics of the liberal arts curriculum also charge that university professors are allegedly failing to teach the classics of Western civilization or the “canon” (Wilson, 1995).

Wilson (1995) says it is important to note, however, nearly 53.2 percent of faculty in 1995 agreed that “Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the undergraduate curriculum.” However, there is some confusion and disagreement as to how the “canon” is being defined and who is able to make decisions as to what are considered the “classics.” In 1992, Michael Berube (1992) published a study of the Modern Languages Association online bibliography and found that Shakespeare was the most popular author studied followed by Bard,
Joyce, Chaucer, Faulkner, Dickens, T.S. Elliot, Melville, Lawrence and Pound, all of which are traditional white males. So while new scholarship from non-white males was being introduced into English classes, it is clear that the “traditional” authors remain dominant. Yet, throughout much of the early nineties, “the charge has become common in traditionalists attacks on the state of higher education: the classics were being discarded, replaced by ideologically motivated works by Guatemalan socialists, radical feminists and minority authors” (Wilson, 1999). Christopher Clausen, chair of the English Department at Penn State, created instant media frenzy over the “canon” when he claimed that “I would bet that The Color Purple is taught in more English classes today than all of Shakespeare’s plays combined” (Clausen, 1988, A52). However, nothing could be more further from the truth as suggested by limited and anecdotal evidence provided Wilson (1995) which suggests that Shakespeare is read by more students in college than Alice Walker, perhaps by a ratio of a hundred to one. D’Souza (1991) reported Clausen’s statement was indicative of “an emerging consensus” in Illiberal Education and in Academic Standards, a conservative academic journal writer Thomas Short wrote that “It is possible that Walker’s black lesbian saga is now assigned more often in college courses than all of Shakespeare’s plays combined. These two works indicate a pattern by which the writings of conservative critics of American higher education went unchallenged or were based on faulty assumptions and/or evidence” (Wilson, 1995).

A large percentage of the articles and books published by conservative pundits, such D’Souza, Short, and Bennett among others, regarding the state of American higher education often used anecdotal evidence of cases in which faculty and students who expressed non-politically correct behavior opinions faced public condemnation and/or suppression (Stefancic and Delgado, 1996). Many of these claims could not be substantiated and by using catchy
phrases such as “reverse racism” or “balkanization” or “dead white males,” conservatives were able generate a rhetoric which evoked an emotional response from the unsuspecting American public who rarely challenged the claims made by conservative critics of higher education. Schultz (1993) even claimed that journalists repeated references to the controversies which appeared initially in books by conservative writers such as Dinesh D’Souza. The reuse of the same controversies gave the false impression that all of the nation’s 3500 colleges and universities “…were engulfed in the “p.c.” debates and experiencing conflict over diversity in exactly the same way” (p. 10).

Stefancic and Delgado (1996) point out that during the culture wars, conservatives used a similar technique when the media blitz over the “p.c.” debates moved from the print media to electronic media. They say that “the right also capitalizes, consciously or not, on double or even triple feedback loops that give its media efforts even greater success than they would otherwise command” (Stefancic and Delgado, 1996, p. 143). To use a double or triple feedback loop, an organization such as the Heritage Foundation, as an example, will send a report or position paper to Congress and to the leading newspapers simultaneously (Stefancic and Delgado, 1996). Then the newspapers will publish a media “bite” or shortened version of the report or position paper and the organization will clip the article and send it to the members of Congress it targeted earlier. The busy congressperson will get the idea that once the proposal has gotten to the major newspapers, a consensus is growing in the nation behind the idea. Again, the result is that the public is given the false impression that certain issues or measures are being discussed, challenged or supported with equal fervor across the country when in fact there was little public awareness and support of these issues.
To give a projection of how often campuses experienced controversies over course texts or what material was presented in college classrooms, the American Council of Education’s 1991 report Campus Trends devoted an issue to the “p.c.” debates and found that across the country only three percent of campuses reported controversies over course texts while only four percent reported controversies over information presented in classrooms (El-Khawas, 1991). By comparison, however, journalists ignored and failed to report that thirty-six percent of all institutions and seventy-four percent of doctoral institutions reported incidents of intolerance on the basis of race, gender, or sexual orientation (El-Khawas, 1991). What these numbers suggest is that incidents of intolerance on campus are more likely to occur outside of the classroom and are often the result of social interactions of students who have confronted diversity directly for the first time in their lives. Likewise, it is important to note that these journalists in discussing the “p.c.” debates often failed to address the increase of these incidents of intolerance which may have been a direct result of the 1980’s cutbacks to financial aid and a national climate which legitimated racism (Schultz, 1993).

The liberal response to the conservative critique of American higher education countered conservative claims about the lack of academic integrity in the educational process and the charge that multiculturalism undermined the academic and intellectual rigor of the liberal arts curriculum stating that “the controversies and debates over “political correctness” lacked much sense or substance, amounting to little more than an intellectual tempest in an academic teapot, an exercise in overblown rhetoric soon to be forgotten” (Lucas, 1994, 272). Michael Lind (1996) has even suggested that conservatives launched the culture wars against public schools and higher education as a method of diverting “the wrath of wage-earning populist voters from Wall Street and corporate America to other targets: the universities, the media, racial minorities, homosexuals
and immigrants” (p. 16) Lind’s assessment of the reasons for the launching of the culture wars begs important question which he poses in his book, *Up from the Right: Why the Right is Wrong for America*. Are the culture wars and subsequent political correctness debates a smoke screen for growing economic inequalities? (Lind, 1996).

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i Landay (2002) says that “movement conservatism was a power tool formulated by scholars such as Irving Kristol, political organizers like the late Treasury Secretary William Simon, opinion molders and popularizers such as William F. Buckley, and a phalanx of think-tank operatives including Edwin Feulner and Paul Weyrich.” Movement conservatism took conservative political philosophy and transformed it into a blueprint for social action. Movement conservatives sought to move beyond the realm of ideas which had long been negatively associated with liberals who often depended on academicians to formulate economic and political policies.

ii Gerson (1996) argues that while neoconservativism does not fall neatly into narrow categories, it is still grounded in “a distinctive important current of social and political thought – republican virtue tradition.” The republican virtue tradition says Gerson (1996) is based largely on the ideals of Alexis de Tocqueville as espoused in his writing of Democracy in America and was fundamental to the Founding Fathers conceptualization of the type of government and society they hoped to create. Republican virtue tradition “…has always stressed that political liberty requires the moral foundation of a virtuous citizenry; that political virtue includes both the capacity for association and an active concern for the common good; and that these virtues are, in turn, nurtured by participation in a free community.”

iii According to Gerson (1996) a style of thought refers to a mode of thinking or ways of analyzing the social world without distinctive political positions. Style of thought is said to be distinctly neoconservatives because it cannot be placed into a “box” like liberalism and conservatism.


v According to the Foundation Grants Indexes from 1988 to 2002, D’Souza has received over $1.6 million dollars in grants from the three major foundations: the Olin, Bradley and Scaife Family Foundation. The noted purpose for each of these grants was to support the research and written of D’Souza two most popular books, *Illiberal Education* and *An End to Racism*. 
CHAPTER 4
THE CONSERVATIVE BACKLASH AGAINST BLACK STUDIES

4.1 The Historical Development of Black Studies

Black Studies is part of a larger African American tradition of pursuing educational access and equity within America’s institutions of higher learning. Private historically black colleges were first established as early as 1837 with the founding of Cheney University in Pennsylvania. African Americans established and operated their own institutions of higher learning such as Wilberforce University in Ohio that was established by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in 1856 and in 1868, Hampton Institute was first established as a normal school for the training of Black teachers which was founded by Samuel Armstrong in Virginia and would become the first private Black college in the South (Anderson, 1988). These private black colleges were established and funded largely by various northern missionary groups, Black religious organizations and private northern white businessmen and philanthropists (Anderson and Moss, 1999; Watkins, 2001). African Americans sought to utilize these educational institutions as a means to gain full American citizenship following emancipation (Goings, personal communication, 2005). The modern Black Studies movement sought to not only amend and repair the systematic omissions of the Black
contribution to American history but also seeks to use the discipline to make tangible, verifiable change in the lives of African Americans as a whole (Bobo et. al, 2004).

The institutionalization of Black Studies in the academy during the 1960’s was not the first attempt by African Americans to systematically record, study and discuss the contributions of African Americans to American history. Robert Harris Jr. (2004) says that “there have been four stages in the intellectual and institutional development of Africana studies as an area of scholarly inquiry” (p. 15). The first of these stages began in the 1890’s and lasted through the Second World War. During this first stage, Harris (2004) contends that “numerous organizations emerged to document, record and analyze the history, culture and status of African peoples” (p. 15). These organizations included the Bethel Literary and Historical Association of Washington D.C., Philadelphia’s American Negro Historical Society, the Washington D.C. American Negro Academy and the New York Negro Society for Historical Research (Harris, 2004). These early organizations were only superseded by the Association for the Study of Afro-American (formerly Negro) Life and History (ASALN) which was formed in 1915 which continues to exist today. During this stage of development, noted scholars such as Carter G. Woodson, W.E.B. DuBois, Charles Wesley, E. Franklin Frazier, Ralph Bunche and others produced a large body of scholarly works that sought to correct the errors, omissions and distortions of black life (Hall, 2000; Harris, 2004). Thus, in its formative stages, “Black Studies, as a socially engaged field of scholarly inquiry, is the progeny of centuries of
research that seek to redress long-standing misconceptions of Black inferiority, African heritage and cultural significance” (Bobo, Hudson and Michel, 2004, p. 1).

The second stage in the development of Black Studies, according to Harris (2004) began with the 1944 publication of Gunnar Myrdal’s, two volume study entitled, *An American Dilemma: Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. Myrdal argued that Black migration to northern urban areas which began in the 1890’s inevitably caused ethnic and racial conflicts and eventually Blacks would have to assimilate and be absorbed into the dominant society. Harris (2004) says that Myrdal’s work had a profound influence on white scholars during this period who were looking for bio-genetic rather than environmental explanations for Blacks inferior status. This second stage lasted until roughly the mid-1960’s and works such as Daniel P. Moynihan’s 1965 publication of *The Negro Family: the Case for National Action* attributed the break down of the Black family to female headed households and neglected to consider how Black men were often victims of severe economic discrimination, police brutality and political disenfranchisement, thus weakening their ability to serve as strong, stable heads of households.

The landmark 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson case re-affirmed the nation’s commitment to a “separate but equal” policy with regards to public facilities including schools. Attempts to defeat the policy of segregated educational systems were first made as early as 1849 and while the courts did strike down racial segregation in graduate and professional schools in the McLauren and Sweatt cases in the late 1940’s, the Supreme
Court refused to challenge the “separate but equal” doctrine until 1954 with the ruling in the Brown v. Board of Education case which outlawed racial segregation in public elementary and secondary schools. Brown v. Board of Education was actually a group of five cases challenging the constitutionality of the “separate but equal” philosophy in public schools.

Although the primary focus of this series of cases was to affect changes in the elementary and secondary schools of the South, in particular, eventually the precedent set in Brown would have a lasting impact on Black participation in American higher education. The Brown decision opened the door to the integration of the nation’s public colleges and universities and meant that Black and White students as well as faculty and staff would come into direct contact with one another. The Brown decision came at a pivotal time in American history. The period of the late 1950’s through the mid 1970’s was a time of constant change, conflict and flux brought on initially by the surge in the American economy following World War II. By the early 1960’s, Blacks in the South and in urban centers in the North became restless for change particularly retaliating against the segregationist policies of the Jim Crow South, against the violation of Blacks civil rights and by the lack of substantive change in Blacks’ economic and political status within American society. By the late 1960’s, two key leaders in the fight for Black equality were assassinated, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. America was immersed in the Vietnam War, a war highly contested and protested by student activists within American colleges and universities in particular. It is out of this volatile, highly
charged environment that Black students attempted to create a “space” for themselves within America’s predominantly white colleges and universities. Robert Harris (1990) contends that “The civil rights revolution, the black power drive and the black consciousness movement initiated a third stage of Africana studies.”

The development of Black Studies coincided with the rise of the Black Power Movement of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. Johnetta Cole (1991) has referred to the Black Studies Movement as the intellectual arm of the Black Power Movement. The establishment of various Black Studies courses and programs within predominantly white colleges and universities occurred just as American higher education experienced phenomenal growth in terms of increased expenditures for post-secondary education, building of more facilities, and the dramatic influx of more diverse groups of students seeking college degrees (Gordon, 1992). It is amidst this political and social backdrop that Black Studies as a field of study was institutionalized in the nation’s colleges and universities.

The formalized study of Black history and culture did not reach the academy until the mid-1960’s and the pivotal Brown versus Board of Education decision in 1954 played a key role in the institutionalization of Black Studies in the academy. Unlike traditional disciplines that are created and supported by academia, Black Studies received its impetus through protest marches against segregation and police brutality against Black people. The revolutionary, counterculture spirit of the 1960’s undoubtedly reached American colleges and universities and the Black Studies movement was just as much a
political revolution as it was an intellectual one. The political nature of Black Studies impacted how college administrators viewed this emerging discipline. White universities might have had a few courses dealing with the Black experience but few had committed resources to create actual degree granting majors and departments until 1968 with the establishment of the first Black Studies program at San Francisco State College (now university).

Black Studies also served to help Black students, “…alleviate their alienation, facilitate their resiliency, increase their retention, enhance their chances of school success and make education more relevant to the Black experience” (Williamson, 1999, pg. 95). Black students were actively involved in not only the development of the first Black Studies program in the country, they also demanded several other measures to help promote their psychological and emotional well-being and academic success while attending predominantly white colleges and universities during the 1960’s and 1970. Williamson (1999) says that Black students called for the creation of Black Student Unions, separate campus facilities for Black students as well as tutorial services, department organizations such as the Black Pre-Law Society and academic advising services such as the Minority Advising Program at The Ohio State University which began in 1970.

However, the impetus for the creation of a Black Studies program at San Francisco State College needs to be viewed in a larger context of black student activism that began as early as 1960 with the lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina
and Nashville, Tennessee which were initiated by four black college students whose actions ignited one of the largest of all African American protest movements. This simple act of defiance was not a product of “radical intellectual ferment” but rather grew out of “bull sessions” involving black college students who were politically unsophisticated and socially conventional (Carson, 1981). In fact, as Carson (1981) points out the four students that initiated the sit-ins did not belong to any political or civil rights organizations so their initial sit-in was a tentative challenge to Jim Crow and the pace of change but not a challenge to the direction of racial reform in the United States. Nonetheless, as news of the sit-ins spread more people became involved as both participants and onlookers which led students to become more assertive and vocal eventually leading to the perception that the sit-ins were a threat to the social order.

Floyd Hayes (1994) claims that African American high school and college students began looking for an alternative to the civil rights movement and found it in the more militant social movements of the 1960’s, particularly SNCC and later with the Black Panther Party. Hayes (1994) further contends that “these powerful, and in some ways anarchic, tendencies served as the crucible for the turbulent appearance of African American Studies” (p. 154).

Not only were the students threatening the system of Jim Crow, they were also challenging the hegemony of moderate black civil rights leaders “…who concentrated on eliminating overt southern racism by portraying it as anachronistic and irrational, contrary to the American creed, and damaging to the interests of the nation” (Carson,
1981). Moderate black political leaders rose to prominence as a result of the persecution of leftist or “radical” black leaders during the Cold War including Paul Robeson, W.E.B. Dubois and William Patterson. African Americans had few political alternatives to moderation until the 1960’s. Since most of the nation’s institutions such as schools, the court system and mass media were controlled by whites, it was important for African Americans to practice moderation in order to better their lives and to ensure some degree of safety from white physical and psychic violence. Even in planning to go forward with the sit-ins, the decision to engage in such a protest was an outgrowth of guilt and frustration to the students’ failure to take a decisive stance against the Jim Crow system rather than the existence of radicalism on black college campuses, says Carson (1981). In fact, Reverend James Lawson, a proponent of nonviolence and drafter of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee’s (henceforth SNCC) Statement of Purpose had trained the young students in tactics of non-violence and prepared them for possible violent reaction to their symbolic gesture. Regardless of what led the four students – Izell Blair (later known as Jibreel Khazan), Franklin McCain, David Richmond and Joseph McNeil – to engage in this simple act of defiance, their actions set in motion a chain of events that would galvanize black student activism across the country and lead to the formation of the SNCC in April 1960. SNCC workers, both black and white, would use their experiences with the Freedom Rides and the Freedom Summer Project to help them organize the Free Speech Movement at UC Berkeley, campus protests over America’s involvement in the Vietnam War which would eventually lead to the establishment of the
Black Student Union, an organization instrumental in the establishment of Black Studies at San Francisco State College (henceforth SFSU).

The SFSU Black Student Union’s initial foray into Black Studies was initiated through the campus’ Experimental College in which students could offer non-credit courses on topics which were not being offered through the traditional curriculum at SFSU. This program represented an educational playground for students who were bored or alienated from the regular curriculum and it inadvertently absorbed much of the growing political and social discontent with local and national politics as well as university administration (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971). Floyd Hayes (1994) notes that the push for Black Studies “…converged with mass movements of protests against the brutalizing effects of social injustice, socio-economic inequality, racial antagonism, the Vietnam War and university paternalism” (pg. 154). Black students were actively engaged in such protests as noted in a 1968-1969 American Council on Education study which found that Black students were involved in 57% of all campus protests (Bayer and Astin, 1971). SFSU’s Black Student Union felt sensitive enough about the virtual lack of courses which dealt specifically with the Black experience that they utilized the Experimental College as the vehicle to create the Black Arts and Culture series which enrolled over 200 students in the 1966 fall semester (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971). Made up of a series of seminars on topics ranging from “Black Psychology” to “The History and Social Significance of Black Power”, Orrick (1969) argues that the Black Arts and Culture Program sought to “reeducate Black students along more black oriented lines” by
using Carter G. Woodson’s 1933 publication of *The Mis-Education of the Negro* as the principal text for the program because it takes the position that Blacks have been educated to perpetuate a racist power structure which is destructive to Blacks rather than to fight against it as a community. Copies of the spring 1968 Black Studies curriculum included a statement on the historical development of the program. The statement noted that when the Black Studies curriculum began in spring 1966, there was only one course offering that specifically dealt with Black history and culture. This course was entitled *Black Nationalism* and was taught by Aubrie LaBrie and was said to be different because “…it was uniquely designed to meet the then awakening appetites of black college students for more black oriented courses in the college curriculum.” (SFSU Black Student Union, 1968, p.1). Apparently, this course was successful in recruiting a large number of black students because in the following semester, the Black Student Union sought to expand its course offerings in the Experimental College through the Black Arts and Culture Series. By Spring 1968, seventeen courses were taught under the newly named Black Studies program through the Experimental College and included course offerings such as *Mis-education of the Negro, Ancient Black History and Sociology of Black Oppression* (SFSU Black Student Union, 1968). It is through the Experimental College that the initial idea of creating a comprehensive Black Studies curriculum originated.

The demand for an autonomous Black Studies program came about due to a series of conflicts between the BSU and Associated Students legislature over issues of funding
for the tutorial program and the Black Arts and Culture series. Eventually one of the
confrontations between BSU members and the Associated Students legislative board
turned into a free-swinging brawl which became known as the Gater incident in 1967.
BSU members alleged that members of the Daily Gater staff (the SFSC student
newspaper) began running a series of articles and opinion columns which were
slanderous and intended to portray the BSU as having misappropriated ASI funds
(Whitson, 1977; 1999). Relations between the BSU and the ASI legislature were
permanently damaged as a result of the incident, yet it did open the door for the BSU to
enter into direct talks with university administrators instead over the possibility of
establishing a separate, autonomous Black Studies program (Orrick, 1969).

Word of the conflicts between the BSU and ASI legislature resulted in a series of
open meetings between the BSU leadership, select faculty and college administrators in
1966 (Orrick, 1969). It was during these meetings that talk of establishing a formally
recognized Black Studies program first began after the administration had taken notice of
the extraordinary growth and popularity of the BSU-led tutorial program and the success
of the Black Arts and Culture series through the Experimental College (Orrick, 1969).
These initial meetings did not result in a solid commitment to develop a Black Studies
department, however. Instead it was the university administration’s handling of the
Gater incident, in which nine black students were placed on temporary suspension while
white students who were involved in the brawl were never suspended or given a
disciplinary warning, as well as the delays in approving the initial Black Studies

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proposal\textsuperscript{iii} that led to the dissemination of a press statement charging that SFSU President Summerskill found BSU members involved in the incident to be guilty without due process (SFSU Black Student Union, 1968). Summerskill was so sensitive to the BSU charge that he became more directly involved in the day to day operations of the campus. As campus tensions involving the BSU grew, Summerskill began making promises to different groups regarding the establishment of a formally recognized Black Studies Program without necessarily having the full support of the Council of Academic Deans or the faculty (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971; Orrick, 1969).

At the BSU’s urging, Summerskill put his credibility and reputation on the line when he pushed through the BSU recommendation to hire Dr. Nathan Hare as the Special Curriculum Supervisor for the Black Studies program at the rank of lecturer despite unfavorable recommendations from Devere Petony, Dean of the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences and the sociology department faculty (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971). Hare had the requisite academic credentials for the job but his dismissal from Howard University due to his “radical” racial politics\textsuperscript{iv} raised concerns for many search committee members. Despite this, Hare arrived on campus in January 1968 and he was assigned to the staff of the Academic Vice President Donald Garrity. Hare began drafting the second Black Studies proposal in hopes of addressing two of the most pressing questions that faculty and administrators had about the proposed program – why was Black Studies necessary and would the program perpetuate “racial separatism” (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971). On April 29, 1968 after being at SFSC for nearly four
months, Hare submitted “A Conceptual Proposal for a Department of Black Studies” to both the Instructional Program Committee of the Academic Senate and the Council of Academic Deans.

The proposal was written to address the need for the Black Studies curriculum and outlined Hare’s vision for the implementation of such a plan. Divided into six sections, the proposal dealt with issues of community involvement, admissions criteria and course scheduling but focused primarily on why such a program was necessary (Hare, 1968). In the final section of Hare’s proposal, he outlined his implementation plans which he entitled “The Black Studies Curriculum – A Five Year Plan”. Hare (1968) described two phases of program implementation beginning with pulling together all of the Black Arts and Culture series courses offered through the Experimental College into a single Black Studies department by September 1968. The second phase would take place in a year later and involved the “the inauguration of a major consisting of an integrated body of black courses revolving around core courses such as black history, black psychology, black arts, and the social sciences” (p.6).

By the summer of 1968, Hare came to realize what the BSU already knew that the administration had no real intention of honoring the “commitment” to “…help him (the Negro student) find his place in American society” (Orrick, 1969. p.137). After three years of promises and politicking along with countless hours drafting his conceptual proposal, Hare allied himself completely with the students and attended their BSU
Central Committee meeting in August 1968 (Barlow and Shapiro, 1971). It is suspected that from this meeting, the idea of organizing a massive strike of the college was born.

On September 17, 1968, immediately prior to the start of the fall term, the CAD and IPC of the Academic Senate approved the establishment of a Black Studies program at SFSC based on the conceptual proposal and timeline proposed by Nathan Hare. The new program would be implemented in September 1969. Given the nature of how colleges and universities function, it is quite an extraordinary feat that the Black Studies program was approved by the Academic Senate and Council of Deans as quickly as it did. Academic Vice President Garrity said that the steps that SFSC had taken “moved with unusual speed in the implementation of the Black Studies program” (Orrick, 1969, 122). Yet, if we delve a bit deeper into the politics of establishing new academic programs, we will see why the Black Student Union with the aid of Dr. Hare, the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) and eventually members of the California Faculty Association joined in a five-month long protest at SFSC beginning in November 1968.

Beyond merely getting the approval of the faculty, department chairs and deans of the college, academic programs had to be approved by the Trustees of the State College System, faculty and staff had to be hired, and the department needed an operating budget with which to run the day-to-day affairs of the program. Since there was no infrastructure in place when the Black Studies program was finally approved in September 1968, the courses that Nathan Hare had set-up with other departments could not be transferred to Black Studies as they had no funds with which to maintain the
faculty already teaching these courses for other departments. By September 30, 1968, Academic Vice President Garrity made an oral agreement with Nathan Hare to commit 1.2 faculty positions for immediate use but in order for Black Studies to operate as a program, Hare needed a minimum of 3 positions (Orrick, 1969). Now that Black Studies was formally recognized at SFSC, the next obstacle that had to be overcome was the issue of budgeting and personnel. However, involvement of the Trustees and then Governor Reagan would delay Black Studies getting the resources needed to become a fully functional program by September 1969.

One of the major hurdles that the BSU and Nathan Hare faced in trying to establish a fully autonomous Black Studies program lay in the fact that SFSC had serious problems with structure and governance. From 1960 to 1968 the college had seven presidents which is akin to having no presidential leadership at all. The problems began when Glenn Dumke took over as president in 1960 and intended to increase the share of college governance given to the faculty but because he was engrossed in developing the master plan, he was absent a great deal of the time and proved to be an ineffectual campus leader. The California Master Plan also in effect weakened the authority of the college president by making this person accountable to not only faculty, staff and students but also to the chancellor, trustees and governor who often used education as a political tool. Paul Dodd was said to have not asserted the power of his office (Orrick, 1969). John Summerskill became SFSC’s seventh president in 1966. Robert Smith took over for Summerskill when he resigned in February 1968 but left before his official
September resignation date. Lastly, S.I. Hayawaka, though serving as acting president, was handpicked by the trustees, chancellor and the governor which lent little credibility with the faculty and students who viewed these entities as meddling in the day-to-day operations of the college for their own political gain.

This heavy turnover, coupled with the weakening of the presidential authority under the California Master Plan, made it difficult for any campus leader to enact change. Academic program decisions now had to be approved by the board of trustees which meant that Academic Senate approval was only one step in a long, arduous process to get new, innovative academic programs on the books. Furthermore, the California Master Plan also strengthened the power of the governor to hold the state colleges accountable to the interests of California taxpayers who were now supporting a large state college system through taxes by making the governor an ex-officio member of the board of trustees (California State Department of Education, 1960). Ronald Reagan was elected governor for the state of California in 1966 just as SFSC was faced with several challenges brought on by changes in American society including civil rights, the Cold War and the Vietnam War.

Reagan became directly involved in the day-to-day operations at SFSC in 1967 after a campus demonstration against the suspension of a student newspaper turned violent and the president closed the campus. Summerskill was forced to defend his actions before the board of trustees while Glenn Dumke, now chancellor of the California State College System, issued a statement meant to quell trustee fears that the state
colleges were headed toward a state of emergency. Additionally, since recently elected governor Ronald Reagan was in attendance, his tough stance on crime and lawlessness dictated the content of the speech. The chancellor assured him that –

“…force will be met by special force on any of these 18 campuses without hesitation; that the day is past when ANY student, professor or administrator will be asked to operate in a climate of fear and intimidation; or when any of our overwhelming majority of serious, responsible students cannot face the school year with an absolute guarantee of uninterrupted, undisturbed study” (Orrick, 1969, p. 25).

Summerskill’s appearance before the trustees is important for two compelling reasons. First, the speech ultimately undermined CSU presidential authority in which the trustees appointed a task force of five to evaluate Summerskill’s “stewardship” and handling of the December 6 incident (Orrick, 1969) and secondly, this appearance and more specifically the speech delivered by Dumke, gave Reagan the political currency he needed to attack “liberal” policies regarding higher education.

On February 22, 1968, John Summerskill announced his resignation as president of SFSC effective in September of that year. In his statement, Summerskill charged “the Reagan administration with political interference and financial starvation of the State college system” (Orrick, 1969, p.27). Two months later, Summerskill’s words seemed almost prophetic when in April 1968, Reagan used a line-item veto against a proposed increase for the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) programming budget by $250,000 and further ignored a trustee recommendation of $2,472,000 to be included in the state budget for 1969-1970. With the help of the trustees and other state college
presidents, Summerskill had attempted to relieve some student discontent by admitting minority students under the newly formed program, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). This program was created to deal with one of the shortcomings of the California Master Plan – the reduction of minority student enrollment at the state colleges through its admissions policy of limiting spaces to the upper one-third of the high school graduating class. The EOP program sought to increase the number of students admitted under these special guidelines from 2 to 4 percent. The EOP was grossly under-funded and therefore unprepared to handle the some 4,000 students admitted through EOP statewide. This action further drove a wedge in already strained relations between the governor and the faculty and students at the state colleges.

Furthermore, as the nation became more deeply involved in the Vietnam War and race riots across the country became more numerous, the governor and the trustees attempted to tighten their hold on the California campuses, making it nearly impossible for any SFSU president to establish credible leadership. Summerskill predicted what would happen to the college should the trustees continue with its hardliner course of action to student and faculty protests saying,

“This whole system is going to break down if the trustees and politicians are going to hire and fire professors. I couldn’t say what I’m saying now as president, but somebody had better start saying something about these problems. The issue is: are we going to let the educational establishment be taken over essentially by people who are running for political office?” (Orrick, 1969, p.27).

Summerskill’s assessment was amazingly accurate insofar as his successor, Robert Smith faced similar challenges in working under the directives of the California Master Plan.
Robert Smith assumed the presidency of San Francisco State College in June 1968 and faced not only a group of restless student activists but also a board of trustees that were hostile to faculty governance and presidential leadership. Smith was ordered by the trustees to fire George Murray, a black graduate student and teaching assistant in the English department who was a participant in the 1967 Gater incident, for comments he made upon his return from a trip to Cuba that was sponsored by the Black Panther Party. Upon his return, “he was quoted as saying that every American solider knocked out by the Vietcong in Vietnam meant ‘one less aggressor’ to deal with here at home” (Orrick, 1969). Smith refused to honor the trustees’ request citing that Murray had a contract with the university which could not be broken without following proper procedures. Furthermore, he maintained that “the public statements and political philosophies of faculty members are not grounds for punitive action” (Orrick, 1969, p. 32).

Though Smith won this round with the trustees, Murray’s October 24, 1968 speech at Fresno State College ended any further restraint on the part of the chancellor, governor and trustees in the local affairs of the college. In this speech, Murray was quoted as saying, President Lyndon B. Johnson, Chief Justice Earl Warren and Governor Reagan were ‘slave masters’. He called on third world peoples to organize “…an old fashioned black-brown-red-yellow-poor white revolution. That’s the only way we’re going to change things in the U.S. Political power comes from the barrel of a gun. If you want campus autonomy, if the students want to run the college, and the cracker administrators don’t go for it, then you control it with a gun” (Orrick, 1969, p.33). Even
after this speech, Smith refused to take any action on Murray despite being ordered to
suspend him by the trustees and the chancellor claiming that, “I decided I wasn’t going to
act until the following week for the good of the college, for the community, and because
of the politically laden operation” (Orrick, 1969, p. 36). Smith’s decision to wait a week
only made the trustees more anxious for him to take swift and decisive action against
Murray and made the faculty more wary of the trustees’ involvement in the daily
operations of the college. By the time Smith was ready to take action on October 31,
1968, the decision was taken out of his hands as the BSU announced their intention to
stage a campus-wide strike on November 6, 1968.

A delegation of black faculty, students and staff met with Smith on November 5,
1968 to present him with their list of ten non-negotiable demands. Chief among these
demands was that all Black Studies courses being taught through various departments be
immediately made part of the Black Studies Department and all the instructors in this
department receive full time pay (SFSU Black Student Union, 1968b). This particular
demand was most likely conceived of by Dr. Hare as the Black Studies department was
approved in theory but due to lack of financial and personnel resources, the department
was functional in name only. At the beginning of the BSU strike, Hare was the only
person authorized and financed to teach a course in the Black Studies department and his
teaching appointment only constituted 25% of his total job duties. In order to gain
program status, Black Studies needed 3 full time hires and to be considered a department,
eleven full time positions were needed. The staffing and financing of the Black Studies
program was the primary reason for the BSU call to strike. Among these other issues that the BSU sought to redress was the trustees’ involvement in deciding which Black programs and personnel would be retained at SFSC. In explaining this demand to the wider campus community, the BSU claimed that,

“On November 22-24, the California State College Trustees will meet at the request of Pig Dumke to dissolve the Associated Students on all State College campuses throughout the state. This means that we cannot create and maintain programs on and off campus. Everything we do will be controlled by the Pig Dumke. All programs such as the Associated Students, CSI, EC, etc., will have to have Pig Dumke’s o.k. If the Trustees destroy our creativity on and off campus, we will use our creativity in a prolonged and protracted war against them.” (SFSU Black Student Union, 1968b).

Though Black Studies in more recent years have been charged with being heavy on political aims and weak on academic and conceptual rigor, it is interesting to note how much politicians such as Reagan with little or no collegiate administrative or teaching experience used the fight for Black Studies at SFSU to take advantage of California white voters fear that the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act gave blacks license to commit random acts of civil disobedience in an effort to have their demands met (Schuparra, 2003). The California State College trustees with the aid of Governor Reagan undermined the authority of the office of the president at SFSC, abused political power by involving themselves directly in curricular decisions for the college and used the situation at SFSC to scare voters away from supporting the process of institutionalizing the nation’s first Black Studies program.
The student strike at SFSU which began on November 6, 1968 was one of the longest strikes in American higher educational history. Although the violent clashes with the police and college administrators, arrests and firings of students and faculty due to the strike, threatened to break the resolve of students seeking fundamental change in the nation’s higher educational system, eventually their persistence paid off and the SFSU Black Studies Program gained the financial and staffing support it needed in order to become a fully functional program in fall 1969. The strike represented a watershed moment in American educational history where students were actively involved in educational reform and used their collective voice to enact change. However, this hard-won victory to establish the nation’s first Black Studies program would face a new series of challenges in the mid-1980s as a result of the Academic “Culture Wars”. Conservative opponents of Black Studies may have lost this initial battle but the struggle for control over the discourse on race and multiculturalism was far from over.

4.2 Philanthropy and the Backlash against Black Studies

The Culture Wars of the 1980s and 1990s gave rise to a virulent attack against curricular changes that occurred in the academy during the 1960s and 1970’s which resulted in the formal institutionalization of Black Studies, women’s studies and other new interdisciplinary academic programs. The tortured birth of Black Studies at San Francisco State College in 1968 provided conservatives with a platform with which to
lament the discipline’s purpose as being primarily political in nature as opposed to having a solid intellectual foundation.

The conservative critique of Black Studies benefited first from the highly publicized clashes between Black students at San Francisco State and the campus and police officials and drew on Ronald Reagan’s popularity as a no nonsense politician who refused to acquiesce to the demands of Black “radicals”. McEvoy and Miller (1969) claimed that “The [SFSC] Board and Trustees, now openly led by Reagan, was determined to clamp down on radicals at any cost” (p. 14). While Ronald Reagan was able to take advantage of the perception that, in acquiescing to the demands of Blacks through the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 liberals opened the door for Blacks and other minority groups to make even greater demands on the government, which led to a greater disregard for authority, eroded public morals and resulted in attempts by these radicals to take control of the state’s public institutions through violent means if necessary. Likewise, it is important to place the history beginnings of Black studies within its proper political context. Says Julius Lester (1979),

“Black Studies carries the burden of its beginnings. It was not invited into the curricula of colleges and universities because it was thought to have something new and vital to offer the humanistic body of knowledge. Indeed, it was not invited into the curricula at all. It fought its way through demonstrations in the sixties and seventies. Black Studies was born because a man named King was assassinated” (p. 34).
By the early 1990’s conservative critics such as James Pierson, executive director of the Olin Foundation, a major funding source for conservative scholars charged “the things that happened in academia in the 1960’s, 1970’s and 1980’s led to dangerous politicization that is inimical to what colleges and universities should be doing. This is an attack on the very idea of meritocracy, objectivity and neutral principles” cites Radin (1990). The claim that liberal arts education should be an objective, value free exploration of human history and activity conflicts with “the reality [is] that this education is based on a Eurocentric perspective of the world, reflecting a racial, gender, and class bias that distorts African and African American experiences” says Cole (1991, p. 134). Johnetta Cole (1991) further argues that Black studies is fundamentally a critique of educational institutions in American society and the critique explicitly addresses the shortcomings, omissions and misrepresentations of Blacks in the liberal arts curricula, academic journals, popular articles and in other forms of print and electronic media. As a result of these distortions and omissions, charges Cole (1991) American colleges and universities have failed to “correctly educate white youth” which enables the continual perpetuation of stereotypes and erroneous assumptions about the contours and complexity of Black life. Echoing Cole’s sentiments, Hayes (1994) says that “African American Studies represented a bold movement that undertook to unmask the power/knowledge configuration of Euro-centrism and the White cultural domination characteristic of the American academy” (p. 155).
However, conservative critics of Black Studies such as Dinesh D’Souza (1992) charged that Black studies courses “...degenerate into a kind of ethnic cheerleading, a primitive romanticism about the Third World, combined with a systematic denunciation of the West” (p.31). Chief among the complaints against Black studies by conservatives was the charge that much of what is taught in these courses is an attack on all things associated with Western civilization and by extension American values. These defenders of the Western “canon” claim that “studying Western civilization as the appropriate core for general and common learning was justified, if by nothing else, by the ineluctable fact that contemporary American society is the product of the Western intellectual and cultural tradition, extending from classical antiquity down to modern times” (Lucas, 1994, p.275). Curricular conservatives\textsuperscript{ix} such as Thomas Short (1988) claims that “Black Studies seemed a small exception to the principle that the curriculum should not be determined by political objectives; but before we knew it, feminism was also establishing its claim to be part of the curriculum, and then to all of it” (p. 6).

During the height of the culture wars, Black Studies became a particular target of conservative university programs and academic associations including the National Association of Scholars, the Madison Center for Educational Affairs, the Collegiate Network and the Institute for Educational Affairs. Utilizing the more than $20 million dollars in annual monetary support from conservative foundations, David Callahan (1995) says that, “By strategically leveraging their resources, conservative foundations have engineered the rise of a right wing intelligentsia that has come to wield enormous
influence in national policy debates” (p. 1). Organizations like NAS with over 4,000 members and an operating budget of over $1.05 million dollars in 1994 alone, took aim at Black studies and women’s studies, in particular through their quarterly journal, *Academic Questions*; through organized letter writing campaigns to protest bringing “radical leftist” scholars like Noam Chomsky to Berkeley; through successfully organizing campaigns at the University of Texas at Austin in 1990 to protest inclusion of an English course of civil rights readings and to defund the university’s Chicano newspaper (Diamond, 1991a/b). Members have also published a list of the top liberal arts colleges in the United States by a quality they call “university community,” measured primarily in terms of an institution’s resistance to the new academic orthodoxy (Weisberg, 1991). This new academic orthodoxy is based on what NAS member Thomas Short (1988, p. 6) claims is “…an enormously damaging lie, namely, that the traditional curriculum “excludes” blacks and women.” Short (1988) further contends that authentic omissions should be added to the standard curriculum however, “housing those omissions in black studies or women’s studies is exactly the wrong thing to do; it institutionalizes bias” (p. 10-11). Black Studies scholars, on the other hand may take issue with Short’s qualifier of “authentic” especially in light of comments such as this,

“There is a familiar charge that the traditional curriculum unjustly neglects the contributions of women, black Americans and other ethnic groups. This charge is much weakened by the current celebration of inferior works chosen simply on the basis of the race and sex of the authors” (Short, 1988, p.10).
Short’s accusation that “inferior works” by minority and women authors are replacing the “great books” is actually a repeat of a similar unsubstantiated claim made by Christopher Clausen, presented in Chapter 3, that Alice Walker’s The Color Purple was taught in more English classes today than all of Shakespeare’s work combined (Wilson, 1995). Yet the question remains: who is allowed to determine which omissions are authentic and worthy enough for inclusion into the standard curriculum?

In response to curricular conservatives, Black studies scholars, in turn, challenged the defenders of the “canon” charging that they were “…advocating for a narrow and specific aggregation of cultural capital” and holding this particular aggregation up as normative for everyone (Lucas, 1994). At a 1989, MCEA conference in Washington D.C., Black Studies scholars, Houston Baker of the University of Pennsylvania and Jonathan Culler of Cornell University took issue with curricular conservative claims that Black Studies classes and other efforts to broaden the curriculum were nothing more than consciousness-raising sessions that politicized the undergraduate curriculum and led to the general feeling among those in the academy that Americans could not transcend their differences (Heller, 1989). Baker, however, said of the majority’s charge of a crisis in the humanities “Such willful disregard and lamentable ignorance may serve the moment but, finally they offer the surest path to white cultural illiteracy” (Heller, 1989, p. 2).

In writing about the Culture Wars, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1992) echoes much of the same sentiment as Baker when he says that “Ours is a late-twentieth century world profoundly fissured by nationality, ethnicity, race, class and gender. And the only way to
transcend those divisions – to forge, for once, a civic culture that respects both
differences and commonalities – is through education that seeks to comprehend the
diversity of human culture” (p. xv). To Gates, the conservative charge that Black
Studies is primarily a political enterprise is troubling given that conservatives routinely
provide a ready political defense of what they consider to be the traditional curriculum
and the attendant civic virtues one should acquire from this curriculum, even when those
virtues are a matter of vigorous dispute (Gates, 1992). The question of who holds the
power to tell the American story and to determine which civic virtues are the most
important for a person’s proper integration into American political and social life,
contradicts conservative claims that Black Studies is a fertile breeding ground for radical
students and faculty who want to politicize the academic enterprise (MacMartin, 1991).
Barbara Harlowe, a professor of comparative literature at the University of Texas at
Austin, maintains that while multiculturalism as a philosophical concept is little more
than pluralism, “Once you unpack the sloganeering….you quickly realize that it was
conservative forces on campuses who politicized the classroom. The systemic exclusion
of certain constituencies from literature and from history is not considered ‘political’.
Once those constituencies began to speak, now that’s called ‘politicizing the classroom’”
(MacMartin, 1991, p. 9).

Conservative critics of Black Studies also benefited from the establishment of
conservative think tanks, policy institutes and philanthropic organizations which began to
appear in the early 1970’s as these organizations began to provide financial support to
individual scholars and campus organizations that publicly questioned the legitimacy of Black Studies. During the Culture Wars of the 1980’s and 1990’s, conservative researchers and scholars were able to amass millions of dollars in grants from these philanthropic organizations to fund research projects and the publication of books (Stone, 1981). The Institute for Educational Affairs was established by Irving Kristol and William Simon in 1978 with over $100,000 in grants from the Olin, Smith Richardson, Scaife and J.M. foundations. The institute was the realization of what William Simon espoused in his book, *A Time for Truth*, in which businessmen needed to pay more attention to where their philanthropic dollars went since, he said, “most universities were anti-business and left leaning” (Stone, 1981, p.232).

D’Souza, author of the popular and controversial *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*, served as a John M. Olin Foundation fellow through the Madison Center for Educational Affairs until 2005 (People for the American Way, 1996). Prior to the publication of Illiberal Education, D’Souza was the editor of the Dartmouth Review and received $5000 operating grants from IEA. Currently a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, D’Souza has also served as a fellow for the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI) which was founded in 1943 and helped launch the publication of Charles Murray’s *The Bell Curve* along with D’Souza’s 1995 publication *The End of Racism*, which essentially says that African Americans are pathological and white racism is a response to this “pathology” instead of an irrational bias against people of a different race and cultural heritage. D’Souza (1995)
says that racism will end when, "...blacks as a group can show that they are capable of performing competitively in schools and the work force...If blacks can close the civilization gap, the race problem in this country is likely to become insignificant" (p. 526). Marketed largely to those in business, he further states that segregation was designed to "...to assure that Blacks, like the handicapped, would be...permitted to perform to the capacity of their arrested development" (D’Souza, 1995, p. 526). D’Souza received $100,000 per year from AEI while serving as a fellow (People for the American Way, 1996).

AEI continues to receive funding from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation (henceforth The Bradley Foundation) which is the nation’s largest and most influential right-wing foundation with over 700 million dollars in assets gives away more than 30 million dollars away annually to various local and national organizations which are often political in nature (Wilayto, 1997). In addition to providing support for D’Souza and Murray, the Bradley Foundation has supported right-wing public policy initiatives such as anti-affirmative action, welfare reform and school voucher programs.

Phil Wilayto (1997), author of The Feeding Trough: The Bradley Foundation, "The Bell Curve" & the Real Story Behind W-2: Wisconsin’s National Model for Welfare Reform is also the coordinator for the A Job is a Right Campaign, a Milwaukee-based, all-volunteer organization of labor and community activists that works around a number of issues affecting poor and working people. Organized in 1994, A Job is a Right Campaign began keeping track of the activities of the Bradley Foundation which
culminated in the publication of *The Feeding Trough* which describes many of the varied projects funded by the foundation including: (1) over $100,000 in financial support of the National Association of Scholars (NAS) which played a key role in the successful passage of California’s anti-affirmative action referendum known as the California Civil Rights Initiative; (2) providing indirect financial support for Project 21, which identifies and features the research of African American conservatives, through the National Center for Public Policy Research (3) regular financial support in excess of $160,000 annually for Murray’s research on the supposed intellectual inferiority of lower-class African Americans and the use of this research as an ideological blueprint in the formulation of Wisconsin’s W-2 program, a welfare reform initiative aimed primarily at Milwaukee’s poor African American residents (Wilayto, 1997, Spring 2002). Many of the education based projects funded by the Bradley Foundation have had racial implications. However, through continuous financial support of Project 21 and similar black conservative organizations, The Bradley Foundation along with the Castle Rock Foundation (founded by Joseph Coors) have established an effective way to train and sponsor conservative scholars and policy analysts in communities of color. By doing so, conservative philanthropic organizations hope to secure African American voter support for their various initiatives such as welfare reform and school voucher programs while simultaneously avoiding charges of racism.

One such prominent black conservative who is currently leading the charge against Black Studies is Shelby Steele, a research fellow specializing in race and
multicultural issues for the Hoover Institution. Following the publication of The Content of Our Character, Steele was regularly featured as a guest columnist for some of the nation’s most prominent news media organizations to share his views on affirmative action and Black Studies programs that grew out of the student protests of the 1960’s. In 1992, Steele wrote that following the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, that, “Black Americans and their supporters tapped into the moral power inspired by a 300-year history of victimization and oppression and used it, to help transform society, to humanize it, to make it more tolerant and open. They realized, moreover, that the victimization and oppression that blacks had endured came from one "marriage" - a marriage of race and power” (Steele, 1992). However, Steele (1992) claims that the Black Power Movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s encouraged “a permanent state of rage and victimhood” which led to the failure of the civil rights experiment designed to break up the “marriage of race and power” (p.1-2). Steele (1992) further contends that this permanent state of rage and victimhood lead to grievance identities which in turn lead to the formation of Black Studies programs in the nation’s colleges and universities.

There are black studies departments, Hispanic studies departments, Jewish studies departments, Asian studies departments. They all have to have space, staff, and budgets. What are they studying that can't be studied in other departments? They don't have to answer this question, of course, but when political entitlement shifted away from citizenship to race, class and gender, a shift in cultural entitlement was made inevitable. Those with grievance identities also demand extra entitlements far beyond what should come to us as citizens. As a black, I am said to "deserve" this or that special entitlement. No longer is it enough just to
have the right to attend a college or university on an equal basis with others or to be treated like anyone else. Schools must set aside special money and special academic departments just for me, based on my grievance. Some campuses now have segregated dorms for blacks students who demand to live together with people of their "own kind." Students have lobbied for separate black student unions, black yearbooks, black Homecomings dances, black graduation ceremonies—again, all so that they can be comfortable with their "own kind." (Steele, 1992, p. 2).

Like D’Souza, Steele’s comment reduces the discipline to simply a “feel-good” gesture on the part of the nation’s educational institutions to pacify hostile Black students. First, Steele’s analysis neglects the plethora of relevant and rigorous scholarship that has been produced by Black Studies scholars in nearly four decades since the establishment of the first Black Studies department at San Francisco State College in 1968. Next, Steele fails to adequately address the fact that although traditional departments such as history, English and psychology have made improvements in its offerings of courses that address issues of race and multiculturalism, the process of opening up the traditional disciplines to new scholarly insights involving race and multiculturalism has only begun recently as noted by Henry Louis Gates (1992b). Furthermore, Black scholars in traditional disciplines, as noted by several Black women professors who participated in the 1999 University of Michigan - Women of Color in the Academy video project entitled, Through My Lens, often times they feel as though they are viewed as the “ghetto appointment” meaning the only person in the department who does “race work” and thus all students of color are referred to this small group of minority faculty. Thus, the traditional disciplines are still very slow to recognize the need
to incorporate a rigorous analysis of race and racism as it pertains to particular fields of study. Henry Louis Gates (1992b) offers a more scathing critique of traditional disciplines within the academy when he says, “In the most spirited attacks on the movement toward multiculturalism in the academy today, there’s a whiff of this: We are the masters of this college / What we know not is not knowledge” (p. 5). Lastly, Steele’s commentary on the purpose and utility of Black Studies does not take in to account that “minority studies (so called) are not “for” minorities, any more than “majority studies” (let’s say) are for majorities” and fails to consider how strong ethnic studies programs help in the recruitment of minority faculty which has had a positive effect on Black student retention and graduation not to mention helping white students challenge faulty assumptions about the complexities of Black life (Gates, 1992b, p. 6).

More recently, Steele has claimed that Black Studies came about as a result of liberal white guilt for the institution of slavery as well as legalized segregation. In an online interview with the American Enterprise Magazine, Steele claims that white paternalism and guilt is behind the formation of Black Studies departments which, “allows whites to effectively take credit for our advancement. Just like slavery, affirmative action (with Black Studies as so-called a “sundry” manifestation of affirmative action) allows blacks to be used and bestows on us a stigma of being inferior” (Robinson in an interview with Steele, 2006).

Similar to Steele, California businessman and former University of California regent, Ward Connerly, believes that Black Studies programs promote the self-
segregation of African Americans whereby these students miss the opportunity to utilize their college experience to integrate fully into the academic community. Arguing that ethnic studies programs and ethnic graduation ceremonies promote the “balkanization” of the nation, in 1998, Connerly called for a review of the UC Ethnic Studies programs in order to determine their “educational value” (Lempinen, 1998). As one of the country’s leading opponents of affirmative action, Connerly successfully led a ballot referendum in California known as Proposition 209 or the California Civil Rights Initiative which sought to end all affirmative action programs in California state government. Connerly used his American Civil Rights Institute to run the Proposition 209 campaign through generous financial backing from the Bradley Foundation in excess of nearly $2 million dollars alone. In addition, since 1997, ACRI have received over $4 million dollars in philanthropic support from the Bradley as well as Olin ($775,000), Scaife ($925,000), Hickory ($250,000) and Randolph ($140,000) foundations with most of the monies going directly to the general operating fund with a few notations made about explicit donations for race-based initiatives in California. However, with the passage of Proposition 209 in 1996, it seems that Connerly has moved onto other “sundry” manifestations of affirmative action as Shelby Steele describes Black Studies and ethnic graduation ceremonies. Proposition 209 only affected college admissions and state agency hiring but with the success of the ACRI in defeating affirmative action in California, Connerly gained the legitimacy (at least in conservative circles) to speak out on all issues involving race even if those issues involve curricular decisions which are the right and
responsibility of the faculty. Stefancic and Delgado (1996) call this the “multiplier effect” – a strategy used by conservatives to focus on a smaller number of issues than do most liberals thus giving conservatives better chance at success now and in the future. They argue that “conservatives seem better able than liberals to select issues that will pay off in the future – by bringing benefits, not so much to humanity at large, but to the conservative movement itself, strengthening it in preparation for the next campaign” (p.141). Utilizing both his success with Proposition 209 as well as having secured good financial backing from several conservative philanthropic organizations, Connerly has been able to use the fight against affirmative action to shape public opinion about the educational value of ethnic studies programs and more recently call for the closure of all historically Black colleges and universities claiming that he is “…Directly opposed to the diversity ideal are historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). An HBCU’s entire reason for being is to not be diverse” (Curry, 2004). What we see with the whole HBCU debate is that Connerly, like Shelby Steele, has made gross oversimplifications about realities of Black college life. Absent from Connerly’s summation about the lack of diversity in HBCUs is statistical data which shows that white students make up approximately 13 percent of the total student population at HBCU’s and that 85% of African Americans attend predominantly white universities which mean that HBCUs are not to blamed for a lack of diversity (Curry, 2004).

Stefancic and Delgado (1996) maintain that conservatives often refuse to engage in dialogic politics even in the face of overwhelming support for the other perspective.
Such appears to be the case with Connerly because he simply ignores statistical data and other forms of evidence which prove his conclusions wrong. Stefancic and Delgado (1996) say that conservatives like Connerly

“…are always ready to tell the story of someone they heard of, usually a white male, turned down for a job because an affirmative action program awarded it to a less-qualified minority. Liberals, by contrast, base their arguments on statistics, which are of course less emotive and rhetorically effective. The conservative’s anecdote capitalizes on the listener’s fears that the outrageous event – the discrimination suffered by the innocent, highly qualified white – will generalize so that one day he or she, too will be a victim” (p. 149).

Both Steele and Connerly are adept at using singular cases of “reverse discrimination” to base their particular charge against supporters of affirmative action, Black and ethnic studies and historically black colleges and universities. Furthermore, both share a belief in the whole notion of individual or personal responsibility and are almost unilaterally dismissive of the “pervasive racism” explanation for the lack of Black economic and political progress since the 1980’s (Carnoy, 1994). While the personal responsibility explanation does has merit, Carnoy (1994) maintains that,

“We Americans do not like to hear that equal individual efforts in the marketplace do not produce equal results. We do not like the idea that government – which we tend to mistrust – is needed to set things right. But in this case, the argument is logical: economic possibilities for African Americans have always been set in the context of politics and government intervention, from the days of slavery to Emancipation to Reconstruction to disenfranchisement at the end of the past century to the civil rights movement to the recent days of white backlash” (p. 25).
So in other words, politics has always played a key role helping or hindering Black economic and social equality and the personal responsibility as well as the pervasive racism explanations both attempt to “de-politicize” racial economic and social inequality. The progress that African Americans made during the 1960’s would have not made a significant impact on the Black community had it not been for government involvement. The reality is that African Americans as a group did not have the economic or political capital necessary to enact such broad, sweeping social programs without the assistance of the federal and state governments. Presently, however, affirmative action and Black Studies are coming under attack because the political climate has changed such that policy makers are using the race problem against blacks and whites for political purposes and legitimizing existing inequality using a personal responsibility explanation for these economic and social inequities. An analysis of what the conservative financing of the Academic Culture Wars meant for the survival of individual Black Studies departments is explored in the next section.

4.3 Case Studies of the Conservative Attack on Black Studies

This section provides case studies of a representative sample of individual Black Studies programs and how the Culture Wars ultimately affected their access to human and financial resources and institutional support to continue and develop additional course offerings in Black Studies. These particular programs were selected for both substantive and convenience reasons. I selected two Black Studies programs at research institutions
to study to test the theory presented by Wilson (2005) that Black Studies was thriving at research institutions as opposed to their teaching-based counterparts. Both of the research programs I selected were based in the Midwest and I utilized my personal contacts from graduate school to gain entry with the department chairs at the University of Wisconsin and Northwestern University. I chose two California teaching based institutions for case studies because again I wanted to test Wilson’s theory about decline of Black Studies at teaching-based universities and since I am faculty at one of the California State Universities, I utilized my professional contacts with faculty there to secure phone interviews.

A qualitative case study research design was selected because case studies provide an in-depth analysis of a given social phenomena while simultaneously allowing for some degree of generalizability between cases (Creswell, 2003). For this particular research project, all of the cases are unique although there are some points of commonality between each of them. Institutional type seemed to have the greatest impact on commonality between cases followed by geographic location. The degrees of institutional support (measured in terms of internal funding for curriculum development and faculty hiring as well as protection from outside forces that seek to undermine the viability of these programs) differ from institution to institution however, it does appear that the elite, research universities share more in common while the teaching based institutions have cases that somewhat mirror one another.
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Founded in 1974 in response to the National Black Arts Movement, the Afro-American Studies department at the University of Wisconsin has steadily grown in terms of student enrollment and faculty hiring. Since 1983, the faculty of the Afro-American Studies program has nearly doubled from six to twelve full-time, tenure track professors and according to Dr. Craig Werner, chair of the Afro-American Studies department, most of this faculty growth occurred during the Culture Wars of the mid-1980s and early 1990s (Werner, personal communication, April 24, 2007). This type of growth at the height of the Culture Wars would seem unusual given the virulent attacks against the field of Black Studies from conservative scholars and educational critics. However, as Craig Werner points out, two factors allowed for this particular Afro-American Studies program to “run counter to the tide” of the Culture Wars whereby (1) generous financial support from the Ford Foundation and (2) strong institutional support from top level administrators allowed the Afro-American Studies department at Wisconsin to flourish (Werner, personal communication, April 24, 2007).

The Ford Foundation has long served as a funding and resource support organization for the emergence and growth of Black Studies programs. As early as 1968, according to Noliwe Rooks (2006), “The Ford Foundation began to craft and then fund a strategy aimed at ensuring a complicated free birth and life for African American Studies on college campuses” (p.1). Rooks (2006) contends that the reasoning behind the Ford decision to fund Black Studies programs was the brainchild of McGeorge Bundy, former
national security advisor to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, who at the helm at Ford viewed Black Studies

“…as a means to desegregate and integrate the student bodies, faculties, and curricula of colleges and universities in ways that would mirror the public school systems that had been ordered by the Supreme Court to free themselves from “separate but equal” racial educational systems” (p. 1).

This rationale from the institutionalization of Black Studies programs reinforces the notion that the Brown versus Board of Education decision had more far-reaching implications for higher education than was originally intended when this case was decided. Nevertheless, the Ford Foundation would become and, to a less extent today, remains one greatest sources of philanthropic support for programs and scholars in Black Studies. In its initial funding period from 1969 to 1971, Ford funded over twenty grants to expand undergraduate curricular offerings in Black Studies; establish graduate programs in Black Studies; sponsor a conference and publish a magazine in the field (Rooks, 2006). Recipients included Stanford University, Howard University, and the National Endowment for the Arts, Yale and Lincoln University to name a few. By 1989, the Afro-American Studies Department at the University of Wisconsin would receive its first of three grants from the Ford Foundation under the leadership of former chair, the late Nellie McKay and with support from the former chancellor of the University of Wisconsin system, Donna Shalala (Werner, personal communication, 2007). According to Werner, it was Donna Shalala’s total support of Nellie McKay’s efforts to grow Afro-American Studies coupled with McKay’s success at securing a Ford Foundation grant
that helped Wisconsin fight off any outside interference in plans to expand the program. Shalala’s political clout as the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Research Department for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during the Carter administration may have helped Afro-American Studies not only secure Ford Foundation monies but also avoid direct conflict with Black Studies critics.

The Wisconsin Association of Scholars (a regional division of NAS), says Werner, was the vocal minority who argued against the expansion of the Afro-American Studies department but ironically, even with a low number of majors, in the spring of 1985 the Board of Regents gave McKay and the rest of the Afro-American Studies department time to put their expansion plans into effect which included seeking out external sources of funding (Werner, personal communication, April 24, 2007). However, the early 1990’s, says Werner who has been on the faculty at Wisconsin since 1983 and chair since 2003 says that during the 1990s, not only did the number of faculty lines increase but so too did the number of students majoring in Afro-American Studies. In 1990, McKay along with Darlene Clark-Hine of Northwestern University and Robert Harris of Cornell University had written one in a series of reports about the state of Black Studies for the Ford Foundation entitled *Black Studies in the United States: Three Essays* in which McKay wrote extensively about the development and growth of Black Studies in the mid-western part of the country. By 1995, McKay had secured another Ford Foundation grant of $625,000 to support establishment of a Black Studies consortium between Wisconsin, Carnegie Mellon, University of Michigan, and Michigan State.
University which would bring Black Studies scholars and students to these respective campuses for quarterly lectures and conferences (Wolff, 1999). Finally, in 1999, McKay secured Wisconsin’s third Black Studies grant from the Ford Foundation totaling $600,000 to expand the work already being done by the Black Studies consortium including the development of outreach initiatives for K-12 education in the area of theater, music and art as well as expanding the number of lectures and seminars open to the public through the development of a Black Studies consortium web portal (Wolff, 1999). Indeed, Shalala’s support of Afro-American Studies and McKay’s recipient of three Ford Foundation grants allowed for Wisconsin to circumvent much of the talk of dismantling ethnic studies programs that came from curricular conservatives. However, Werner does point out that this occurred primarily at elite, research institutions whereas at comprehensive, teaching based institutions, Black Studies departments faced a greater uphill battle to survive. Werner says that the elite institutions such as Wisconsin are in fact “liberal evasive” in which these institutions have had protection from campus leaders with strong ties to politics and business and access to financial and human resources that often masks issues of white supremacy on campus (Werner, personal communication, April 24, 2007). Thus, says Werner, the teaching based institutions bore the brunt of the backlash against Black Studies.

Wisconsin’s pattern of growth during the Culture Wars may seem extraordinary to those who are unfamiliar with the role that the Ford Foundation played in providing nearly $20 million dollars from 1969 to the late 1990s to graduate and undergraduate
departments of Black Studies (Rooks, 2006). A great deal of these funds went to support Black Studies programs at elite, predominantly white institutions even though on a national scale student interest in Black Studies began to wane by the late 1980s (Rooks, 2006). If we accept this assessment of the field for the given time period, what we find is that interest in Black Studies grew at specific types of institutions – usually those with greater financial resources, more innovative curriculum, nationally and world renowned scholars and special programs that encourage student research. Yet, access to external philanthropic support is not enough to foster departmental growth as we shall see in the case of Northwestern University’s African American Studies Department.

Northwestern University

Northwestern University provides an exceptional case study in which the pattern of growth for its African American Studies department did not mirror the pattern found at its peer, elite research institutions. According to the chair of the department, Dwight McBride, African American Studies at Northwestern grew and thrived under the leadership and tireless efforts of Dr. Leon Forrest who served as chair for the department from 1987-1997 (McBride, personal communication, April 25, 2007). With Dr. Forrest’s death in 1997, the leadership for the department became less sure and the program diminished in size and stature dwindling down to only three core faculty. According to McBride, there was institutional support to “re-grow” the program as campus
administrators looked at the growth and popularity of Black Studies at their peer institutions such as Harvard and Yale (McBride, personal communication, April 25, 2007). Furthermore, McBride says that institutional plans to reinvigorate the African American Studies Department coincided with the “height of public intellectualism among Black scholars” which helped to generate hundreds if not thousands of published works by Black scholars. As a sign of its commitment to African American Studies, Northwestern put additional financial and human resources into place such that, according to McBride, Black Studies is experiencing a sort of renaissance that began in 2002 with his own appointment as chair of the fledging department. Currently, Northwestern has 14 core and 20 affiliated faculty in the African American Studies Department; sponsors a postdoctoral fellowship program; recently celebrated the opening of a Center for African American History and sponsors a weekly speaker series (McBride, personal communication, April 25, 2007). Despite this amazing growth, McBride still says that “Why Black Studies?” continues to be an ever-looming question despite the Black Studies scholars participation in the dialogue of the Culture Wars to answer their critics. (McBride, personal communication, April 25, 2007).

Northwestern’s African American Studies renaissance represents a slight departure from the path followed by institutions like Wisconsin, Harvard, Yale and Cornell where both strong administrative support and external funding from philanthropic organizations like Ford were used to solidify and strengthen their programs. Northwestern did not have access to Ford monies like their peer institutions. Instead,
their African American Studies department benefited from strong institutional support in the form of additional faculty hires and internal monies to support additional course offerings. The university’s commitment of resources and support helped to fend off critics of Black Studies and allowed for the period of growth the department is currently experiencing (McBride, personal communication, April 25, 2007).

In the case of both Wisconsin and Northwestern, institutional support from top level administrators, coupled with increased publication of research produced by Black Studies scholars in these institutions helped stemmed the tide of curricular conservative backlash against the field. Access to external funding and strong institutional support from top level administrators gave the Black Studies departments at these elite institutions, such as Wisconsin, gave them a competitive edge over their teaching-based counterparts that rely most heavily on student enrollment for their departmental survival. The cases that follow demonstrate how these teaching-based institutions were subject to greater scrutiny internally and from outside critics as to the legitimacy and necessity of their Black Studies programs. They bore the brunt of the conservative critique of Black Studies during the Culture Wars due to lack of access to external funding for research and additional faculty appointments which would have helped secure new faculty, aided in the creation of new courses and allowed these departments to finance special curricular programs aimed at promoting student retention. Additionally, due to these institutions reliance on student enrollment as a primary indicator of department legitimacy and
viability, these particular Black Studies programs often found themselves in a fight to defend not only their individual departments but also the entire field if their enrollment numbers fell below a predetermined threshold.

*California State University Fullerton*

It was in California where the nation’s first Black Studies program was established at San Francisco State College in 1968. Despite California being at the forefront of the ethnic studies and even women’s studies movements (the first women’s studies program was established at San Diego State University in 1970), by the early 1980’s, Dr. J. Owens Smith of Cal State Fullerton says there was a broad-scale attack aimed at getting rid of Black Studies brought on by the academic Culture Wars of the early 1980’s (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007).

Prior to coming to Cal State Fullerton, Dr. Smith was an assistant professor of Black Studies at San Diego State University and says that the president of the university was skeptical about the legitimacy of ethnic studies. In an effort to save ethnic studies, Dr. Smith along with California State Senator Teresa Hughes from District 25 introduced a bill into the California State Legislature to establish an ethnic studies requirement of all California public institutions of higher education including the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU) and California community college systems (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007). The initial bill was automatically rejected in its original form because it lacked a $100,000 dollar appropriation as
mandated by California law. Instead, Hughes reintroduced the bill as a resolution that did not require a monetary appropriation and it was passed on April 28, 1983 as ACR-71. The chancellors of the UC and CSU systems gave the universities until February 1, 1985 to fully implement the system wide ethnic studies requirement. Dr. Smith, a professor of political science and Black Studies says when he authored the bill, he “utilized the political philosophy of Jay Madison who maintained that minority rights cannot be protected by their adversaries” in order to save Black Studies from administrators, faculty and outside critics that questioned the value and utility of Black Studies courses. (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007). Dr. Smith further claims that putting ethnic studies into the general education curriculum saved those departments from extinction. By 1984, Dr. Smith left his post at San Diego State and went to Cal State Fullerton, assuming this chairmanship in 1992.

Smith says that during his term as chair that several attempts were made to dismantle the Black Studies department. First, he noted a proposal by Cal State Fullerton’s former Vice President for Academic Affairs, Mary Kay Tetreault, to combining all the ethnic studies programs into one department and reduce all of the department chairs to coordinators (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007). Second, notes Smith, while Chicano, Native American and Asian American studies were being added to the curriculum, Black Studies has to scramble for what little resources they had. Smith calls this “increasing the pool without increasing the pot” where all funding for ethnic studies at Cal State Fullerton came from one source and it forced each
individual department to work with less resources (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007). Next, during a statewide budget crisis in the early 1990s, the interim dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chris Cozby openly refused additional hires for Black Studies citing a lack of funding. Smith says that during this meeting, however, that the interim dean remarked “a critical mass says your program [Black Studies] shouldn’t exist” as if to imply the real reasoning for denial of additional hires was not due to budget constraints but to questions over the legitimacy of the field itself. When Smith asked “who is this critical mass?” the interim dean could not answer. Lastly, Smith recalls a departmental review that was conducted by a friend of Dr. Tetreault from Washington State University who suggested collapsing all of the ethnic studies programs together. Smith says he and another one of his colleagues walked out of the meeting in protest (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007). Smith said the faculty looked to the administration for support but often felt that the department was “saddled with the disability of race” (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007).

During the early 1990’s, some of the most virulent attacks against the field gained national headlines all of which were not produced exclusively by political and social conservatives. In 1991, Arthur Schlesinger’s *Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* was one of the first books by political and social moderates to blast Black Studies for promoting separatism. Also in 1991, Dinesh D’Souza’s *Illiberal Education* was published lambasting the field as nothing but “ethnic cheerleading”. Using monetary support from the Olin Foundation, D’Souza went on a national book tour and
lecture circuit promoting his ideas that not only were Black Studies problematic but so too were affirmative action admission policies. When Leonard Jeffries, former chair of Black Studies at City College of New York made national headlines for what was said to be anti-Semitic comments in 1991 about "rich Jews who financed the development of Europe also financed the slave trade", the entire field of Black Studies was placed under a microscope and picked apart by people like Ward Connerly who are not at all familiar with the academic enterprise much less Black Studies. Even those in academe were influenced by the rhetoric of the conservative movement says Smith and as a consequence some programs such as Cal State Fullerton’s were denied the resources and support it needed to survive (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007).

Smith maintains that Black Studies gives Black students an appreciation of their culture and counteracts the demoralization of Blacks in the media. He furthers argues the necessity of Black Studies programs rests in the dialectical material theory used by Emmanuel Kant and Karl Marx which brings together Hegel’s notion of idea of thesis (dominant culture) and antithesis (minority culture) where history is created by these two forces that engage in a class struggle for power and resources. According to Smith, the traditional curriculum has blamed the victim and refused to acknowledge inequality therefore Black Studies is needed to serve as a mediator creating black human capital that can adequately compete in the marketplace. Thus, education serves as a form of income redistribution system he further notes (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007; Smith, 2003, p. 26). Presently, the Black Studies Department at Cal State Fullerton is
finding it difficult to meet student enrollment targets which is one of the most important factors in helping departments expand its curriculum, hire new faculty and increasing the operating budget for programs, staff and supplies. While the reasons for the declining student enrollment are multi-faceted, Smith believes that the department continues to be “treated like a step-child” by an institution whose top administrators seemed to be influenced by curricular conservatives who were most vocal during the 1990s (Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2007).

California State University Northridge

Cal State Northridge is located approximately 20 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles in the San Fernando Valley and is currently home to the largest Black Studies department in the California State University system. Established in 1968 and gaining departmental status in 1970, Dr. Tom Spencer-Walters, current chair of the Pan African Studies Program at CSU Northridge, says that location and visionary pioneers helped the Pan African Studies Department at Cal State Northridge grow to what it has become today. In 1968, black students and community activists were outraged when the white coach of the football team assaulted a black player during a home game. Spencer-Walters said that black students revolted and the publicity of the incident put pressure on the administration to respond (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007).
Forced with an angry group of black students who occupied the administration for nearly two weeks, the administration acquiesced to twelve demands made by the students which included (1) establishment of a Black Studies program (2) employ more black faculty (3) create a faculty/student/community liaison council to serve as the governing body for the Black Studies department and (4) establish a more diversified curriculum which included Chicano Studies. Two years after the students made their demands, the Pan African Studies department was born.

What aided students in their quest to establish a Black Studies department, says Spencer-Walters, was the interest of then-Cal State Northridge president James Cleary in not only resolving the issue between the black player and white football coach but also in recruiting more Black and Chicano students to Cal State Northridge (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). CSUN President Cleary, according to Spencer-Walters, believed that ethnic studies programs were one way to recruit more minority students and to also fulfill one of the university’s promises to increase the number of black faculty. The fact that Cleary remained president of the university for twenty-three years (from 1969 to 1992) created an environment of administrative stability which allowed Pan African Studies to remain part of the curriculum so long as Cleary was at the helm. Although support from the university president was important to the success of any newly established academic program, Pan African Studies did face its share of challenges from within and outside the institution. Spencer-Walters believes that for some whites within the university itself, Pan African Studies was a passing fancy. So in order to
protect the department from encroachment and charges of illegitimacy, Pan African Studies chairs began to put more of the courses into the General Education Curriculum after being granted departmental status. Likewise, Pan African Studies looked to collaboration with other well established departments to ensure student enrollment and institutional survival (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007).

Specifically, Pan African Studies courses were offered as part of the multicultural education component of the liberal arts track leading to teacher certification. Pan African Studies also established a cross-listed developmental reading and writing course with the English department for students who lacked the basic reading comprehension and writing skills needed for success in college. This particular pair of courses, PAS 79/80, was taught by faculty in Pan African Studies in order for these students, who were typically minority inner city youth, to make a connection with someone in the department (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). By using novels and poems written by Black authors, this pair of courses introduced students to some of the content they could expect to find in other Pan African Studies courses. As was the case with Cal State Fullerton, the passage of ACR-71 meant that Pan African Studies would become a permanent part of the General Education Curriculum and the university would rely heavily on ethnic studies for its diversity courses. Around the same time that ACR-71 is passed, academics around the country began to embrace James Banks’ idea of multicultural education. Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process (Banks, 1997). Elaborating further, Banks (1997) says that
“As an idea, multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms. Multicultural education is a process because its goals are ideals that teachers and administrators should constantly strive to achieve” (p. 3-31).

Spencer-Walters says that so many people were “married to this idea that they were not willing to actively work against Black Studies” in the early to mid 1980’s (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). However, by the late 1980s and early 1990’s, voices speaking out against Black Studies became louder and more popular to the news media. According to Spencer-Walters, who has been chair of the Pan African Studies department since 2001 and on the faculty since 1984, the Culture Wars embolden people like Shelby Steele and Ward Connerly who actively spoke out against Black Studies even though both men, who were especially critical of Black Studies programs in California, were too close to be objective (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). By being “too close to be objective” Spencer-Walters implied that both Steele and Connerly were being paid by conservative academic change organizations such as the National Association of Scholars and conservative philanthropic foundations such as the Bradley Foundation to discredit Black Studies and therefore refused to see the additive value of such departments.

So outrageous and offensive were the claims made by Steele and Connerly that their critiques mobilized the people whom they openly attacked and forced Black Studies faculty into a defensive mode where they had to constantly justify their right to be in the
there. During this period, recalls Spencer-Walters, the department was hit pretty hard with a barrage of requests to respond to Steele’s allegations that Black Studies was nothing more a “sundry” manifestation of the welfare state which lacked academic merit. As a result, the department did lose a number of students, particularly white students who were influenced by their parents or the media to avoid Black Studies courses at all costs (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). Black Studies at most public, comprehensive universities did also lose some institutional resources and support due to the negative publicity departments received as a result of the Culture Wars, says Spencer-Walters. At Cal State Northridge, it would take nearly ten years before Pan African Studies faculty lines were increased by four in 2001 (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007).

The challenge for Pan African Studies in terms of basic survival now comes from a greater focus on student enrollment. Within the CSU system, academic departments are given full time equivalent student (FTES) targets to reach each term and if a department consistently reaches target then the chair can ask for an increase in faculty lines. The emphasis placed on student enrollment does not adequately address the academic integrity of the department, however. Spencer-Walters points out that every effort has been made within Pan African Studies at Cal State Northridge to publicly acknowledge the academic nature of the department by insisting that all full-time faculty, regardless of whether they are on the tenure track or not, has a terminal degree (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007). A common charge leveled at Black Studies
departments, especially in the formative stages of its development, was the critique that these departments lacked legitimacy because special dispensation was made to circumvent the standard qualification of faculty which was the doctoral degree. The granting of the PhD, says Spencer-Walters, used to be reserved for a few people and was used initially to keep blacks out of the faculty ranks. Ironically, after steps were taken on the part of Spencer-Walters to ensure that every full-time Pan African Studies faculty member that he supervises holds a terminal degree, campus administrators began to focus on student enrollment figures as indicators of academic legitimacy and viability (Spencer-Walters, personal communications, May 3, 2007).

Even though Pan African Studies at Cal State Northridge is the largest Black Studies department in the CSU system, the Culture Wars presented a new set of challenges for relatively new program which forced the Pan African Studies faculty to establish creative ways to ensure their own survival which included cross-listing courses with larger departments; putting almost all of the Pan African Studies courses into the General Education Curriculum; and encouraging students to double major with other departments. In Spencer-Walters’ estimation the Culture Wars of the 1980s and 1990s represented an “economic protectionist policy” on the part of academic and social conservatives who wanted to do away with any message that challenged their ideas about government, education, and the economic system and the end result was denied access to financial and human resources necessary to grow and maintain a strong academic department (Spencer-Walters, personal communication, May 3, 2007).
point out that academic and social conservatives made a distinction, however, between Black Studies programs at Harvard or Yale versus San Francisco State or CSU Long Beach when he says that Black scholars such as Henry Louis Gates, Jr. are “loyal to their elite institutions while Black Studies faculty at the smaller comprehensive universities are loyal to the field” (Spencer-Walters, personal communications, May 3, 2007). Therefore, the battles that faculty and administrators in Black Studies at both Cal State Northridge and Cal State Fullerton faced during the Culture Wars went beyond their own individual departmental survival but had serious implications for the survival of the field as a whole. Although Black Studies programs at the comprehensive, teaching-based institutions still exists, most faculty and staff in these departments will tell you that their stability is tenuous at best and the battles initiated under the banner of the Culture Wars has made a lasting impact on perceptions about the scholastic integrity and utility of Black Studies.

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1 In this study, moderation is defined a political philosophy which calls for assimilation and conventional political behavior. For a further discussion of moderation see Clayborne Carson’s (1981). *In struggle: SNCC and the black awakening of the 1960’s.* M.O.: University of Missouri Press.

2 The Black Arts and Culture Series materials were labeled the Black Studies program on promotional literature by the BSU in defiance of the university administration’s refusal to grant an official recognition for the establishment of an autonomous Black Studies program. The autonomous Black Studies program would not be granted recognition until September 1968.

3 The initial Black Studies proposal was written and disseminated by SFSC student and activist James Garrett. The proposal, though approved by the Faculty Senate for implementation, languished in Council of Academic Deans where it stayed until it was re-written by Dr. Nathan Hare, who was hired for the express purpose of establishing a formalized Black Studies program at SFSC.

4 The Third World Liberation Front began in 1967 when a group of Black, Mexican and Asian Americans students formed an organization that would serve as a unified political arm that pushed for the educational needs of Third World students. The BSU at SFSC was one of five organizations that comprised the TWLF and took the lead on the student strike of 1968 although all of the remaining groups were very active.
participants and supported the BSU’s push for the establishment of a Black Studies program. The remaining groups included the Latin American Students Organization, the Mexican American Student Confederation, the Philippine American Collegiate Endeavor, and the Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action and the Asian American Political Alliance.


vii The California Master Plan for Higher Education called for the grouping of SFSC and other California colleges together under a single system under the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960 thus removing governance from the State Board of Education. Dumke led the study team which drafted the master plan and eventually became Chancellor for the California State University system for over 20 years.

viii The SFSC Strike lasted for five months beginning in November 1968 and ending in April 1969. During the strike, Robert Smith resigned as president of the college citing trustee interference in undermining the authority of the campus leadership and risking the safety of all students, faculty and staff. His replacement was S.I. Hayakawa, a Japanese American semantics professor who was hand-picked by the trustees and Governor Reagan. Hayakawa’s approach to presidential leadership was iron fisted reflecting the values and wishes of the trustees as opposed to the needs of the students and faculty.

ix Thomas Short (1988) defines curricular conservatives as defenders of the traditional curriculum who are not necessarily political conservatives. Curricular conservatives believe that programs that seek to promote cultural diversity such as Black Studies are substituting social reform and political objectives in place of advances in knowledge and intellectual skills. Curricular conservatives found a safe space to freely discuss their opposition to minority, women’s and interdisciplinary studies through the National Association of Scholars. For details on curricular conservatism, see Short (1988) “Diversity” and “Breaking the Disciplines”: Two New Assaults on the Curriculum in Academic Question.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

5.1 Why Black Studies? The Economics of Race in American Higher Education

The growth and popularity of conservative academic change organizations, conservative student newspapers and conservative-funded research projects during the Culture Wars as outlined in chapter 3 provides evidence that social conservatives have established a vast ideological apparatus which includes philanthropic organizations, media outlets and think tanks by which their views on affirmative action, welfare reform, school vouchers and ethnic studies have been disseminated to a wide cross section of the American population and have gained currency in the American political and social landscape. Less clear is the reason for this conservative philanthropic investment in higher education and why Black Studies became a favorite target of curricular and social conservatives during the Culture Wars. Although we can speculate that the overarching goal for much of this philanthropic investment was to dismantle and rid the academy of academic fields which “…provided critiques of traditional politics, culture and social affairs, that worked affirmatively for the transformation of the existing social order” (Bobo, Hudley, Michel, 2004, p. 4), what does this ultimately mean? What comprises the existing social order and why would conservatives take such pains to protect it?
In chapter two, I provided a description of the three characteristics that comprise modern American conservative political thought – libertarianism, traditionalism and anti-Communism. Jeff Roche (2003) says that post-World War II conservatism “…is characterized by an intertwined set of ideas that celebrate individual freedom and community responsibility, entrepreneurial capitalism and traditional family, Protestantism and patriotism” (p. 79). Those who supported these ideas also stressed the importance of their shared community values, especially those regarding race and morality (Roche, 2003). Thus for conservatives, the existing social order emphasizes free market economics or capitalism, whiteness, order and strict religious adherence. However, as Donna Langston (2001) points out, “Unlike our European allies, we in the U.S. are reluctant to recognize class differences. This denial of class divisions functions to reinforce ruling class control and domination” (p. 124). Instead, race is more frequently discussed in the United States than class because “race not only tends to subsume other sets of social relations, namely gender and class, but it blurs and disguises, suppresses and negates its own complex interplay with the very social relations it envelops” (Higginbotham, 1992, p. 255). Race functions as a meta-language says Higginbotham (1992) which diverts peoples’ attention away from other forms of hardship and oppression that people face in our society. The meta-language of race therefore privileges those who wish to maintain control over the economic and political systems in society by keeping victims of class and gender oppression focused on the primacy of race in their day-to-day social interactions. This is particularly important during the Culture
Wars because as people were focused on “identity politics”, multiculturalism and race, and Michael Lind (1996) wondered if the Culture Wars was a smokescreen for growing economic inequities. Why then was the focus during this period on cultural and racial issues instead of the redistribution of income and wealth? Could the reason why Black Studies was targeted by curricular and social conservatives during the Culture Wars be due to economic reasons more so than racial or cultural ones?

It would be easy to say that conservative critics of Black Studies programs were simply ignorant racists who refused to accept that African Americans have made a significant contribution to the development of the United States and should therefore be added to the college curriculum through the establishment of autonomous Black Studies programs. However, this analysis would be highly simplistic and overlook the fact that race has been utilized for economic purposes such that skin color, like gender, has figured prominently in the systematic denial of access to wealth and opportunity for all American citizens. In the wake of this historical use of race to both exploit black labor and determine or stunt black social mobility, the economics of race is useful in understanding the conservative attack on Black Studies.

There is no denial that since the 1970’s, conservatism has proved to pose a formidable challenge to liberalism. Presently, the nation is clearly divided over issues such as affirmative action, school reform and immigration and through their sophisticated use of the media as well as the financing of individual scholars and organizations, conservatives have been quite successful in offering an alternative policy perspective to
liberalism. Primarily this alternative perspective reinforces the value of the free market system, rugged individualism and public morality. Ellen Messer-Davidow (1993) says that “…these labels signal corporate, religious and philosophical interests within the Right. The ideology figures people as individuals so driven by their imperfections – for instance, self-interest according to capitalist doctrine, or temptation according to Christian doctrine – that they endanger the social order.” Therefore, in order to preserve society, individuals must be disciplined by strong social institutions – the family, school, church and government. In the interest of keeping our colleges and universities strong and preventing them from being influenced by the clutches of socialism, conservatives have pumped millions of dollars into higher education to rid the academy of those elements deemed harmful to the preservation of social order. Academic programs such as Black studies, women’s studies and comparative studies which by nature are concerned with issues of access and social change were particular targets of conservative scholars who believed that these fields sought to undermine basic American values of individualism, morality and free market economics. Major critics of Black Studies, for instance, complain that not only does the discipline lacks objectivity, intellectual rigor and is basically anti-Western in its philosophical orientation, it overstates the pervasiveness of racism as an explanation for the lack of Black economic and social progress. Consistent with individualism, conservatives attribute a person’s oppression not to society but to some failure on that person’s part -- to act, to have a positive attitude, or to be lucky, says Messer-Davidow (1993). Furthermore, many conservatives share a
belief in the whole notion of individual or personal responsibility and are almost unilaterally dismissive of the “pervasive racism” explanation for the lack of Black economic and political progress since the 1980’s (Carnoy, 1994). While the personal responsibility explanation does have merit, Carnoy (1994) maintains that,

“We Americans do not like to hear that equal individual efforts in the marketplace do not produce equal results. We do not like the idea that government – which we tend to mistrust – is needed to set things right. But in this case, the argument is logical: economic possibilities for African Americans have always been set in the context of politics and government intervention, from the days of slavery to Emancipation to Reconstruction to disenfranchisement at the end of the past century to the civil rights movement to the recent days of white backlash, (p. 52).

So in other words, politics has always played a key role helping or hindering Black economic and social equality and the personal responsibility as well as the pervasive racism explanations both attempt to “de-politicize” racial economic and social inequality. The reality is that African Americans as a group did not have the economic or political capital necessary to enact such broad, sweeping social programs without the assistance of the federal and state governments. The progress that African Americans made during the 1960’s would have not made a significant impact on the Black community had it not been for government involvement. Yet, affirmative action and Black Studies came under attack because the political climate has changed such that policy makers now use race to manipulate blacks and whites for political purposes and have legitimized existing inequality using solely personal responsibility explanation for these structural economic and social inequities.
5.2 Summary of the Research Findings

Modern American conservative political philosophy was developed as a critical response to the spread of FDR’s New Deal liberalism for which early conservative groups, made up primarily of libertarians, traditionalists and anti-Communists, charged liberals with using state control over the economy to initiate political and social changes which expanded the liberal welfare state and led the country toward socialism. In order to prevent the expansion of this liberal welfare state, these early groups joined forces becoming unified under the moniker of conservative and brought their political ideals and financial resources together forming a vibrant grassroots political movement. This conservative grassroots movement was particularly active in the 1940’s and 1950’s during the height of domestic anti-Communism becoming deeply involved in the formation and expansion of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC); offering scathing critiques of President Truman’s policy of containment; forming conservative anti-Communist organizations such as the John Birch Society and charging that the Warren Court was “soft” on Communism when it sought to narrow the scope of the Smith Acts which prohibited the teaching and advocacy of the “forceful overthrow of any government in the United States.” This early conservative activism also had a profound negative impact on high profile African Americans such as Paul Robeson, W.E.B. DuBois and William Patterson whose civil rights activist work was scrutinized by the FBI and other government intelligence agencies as being linked to and advocating the
spread of Communism throughout the United States. By examining conservative grassroots organizing that focused on domestic anti-Communism, it helps to shed light on conservative views on race and racism by demonstrating how conservatives utilized the threat of applying the “Communist” label to silence all critiques of de facto and de jure forms of racial discrimination. White Citizens Councils used direct mailers, brochures and town hall meetings to mobilize ordinary white southerners to fight against Communist encroachment that supposedly came in the form of civil and voting rights legislation, school desegregation and busing.

Only a decade later, conservatives would claim that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was part of a great liberal social engineering project, though not intentionally, would spread communism throughout the free world. Former Alabama governor, George Wallace, used Cold War fears of international Communism to discredit the civil rights movement claiming that liberals were sympathetic to Communism by attempting to persecute the white minority to the whims of the “colored” majority around the world (Carter, 1996). Though in private he supported the Civil Rights Act, conservative Republican candidate Barry Goldwater took the public position that the Civil Rights Act should be a states’ rights issue and therefore should not be passed (Goldwater, 1979). However, the states’ rights argument obscured the fact that not only would this leave African Americans at the mercy of individual states to determine whether to extend the protection for basic rights such as due process and voting but also ignored how the federal government failed in its obligation to protect these rights supposedly guaranteed
by the Constitution. Therefore, the Civil Rights Act went beyond a states’ rights issue to provide basic rights for all of its citizens.

In the second half of the 1960’s, with the rising tide of African American discontent with racial segregation and discrimination, many conservatives took the position that that Black student lunch counter sit-ins, the growth of more “radicalized” Black politics\(^1\) and eventually Black student demands for the establishment of Black Studies programs in the nation’s colleges and universities was sufficient evidence that proved that the nation was moving closer toward socialism and/or social anarchy. As Schuparra (2003) points out, images of the Watts riots were exploited by Ronald Reagan who connected this lawlessness with liberal social policies. Conservatives capitalized on white fears of a black social revolution through violent means and were able to sway southern white and northern Irish and Italian Democrats to leave the party in favor of the Republicans on the basis of white perceptions that blacks “moved too fast” in their attempts to press the nation for greater civil rights protection (Dallek, 2000). By the end of the 1960’s, Black Studies was established at San Francisco State College and colleges and universities across the country began institutionalizing similar programs. Yet this hard-fought victory for black studies masked a growing conservative backlash against “liberalism” in the academy that gave rise to a full fledged ideological attack on interdisciplinary academic programs such as black studies, women’s studies and comparative studies.
Social conservatives, with the assistance of the neo-conservatives, heeded the advice of Robert Weaver who convincingly argued that “ideas have consequences” and have gained the intellectual and political legitimacy needed to take their ideology to the American public through the academy. The creation of these philanthropic organizations and policy institutes allowed for social conservatives to move from being the political elite with aspirations to become the governing elite (Blumenthal, 1986). The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 represented the modern social conservative “ascension” to the governing elite following several years of hard work on the part of these conservatives to first win control of the Republican Party (as represented by Barry Goldwater’s selection as the Republican nominee for the presidency in 1964) and to then broaden the appeal of social conservatism to traditionally loyal Democratic voters (such as white Southern Democrats as well as the Irish and Italian American communities) through the popularity of people like Ronald Reagan during his successful bid for the governorship of California in the 1960’s.

To carry out the ideological attack against liberalism in the academy, conservatives developed think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, philanthropic organizations including the Bradley, Scaife and Castle Rock foundations which gave heavily to academic change organizations such as the National Academy of Scholars, Accuracy in Academia and the Madison Center for Educational Affairs. These organizations in turn financed scholars whose research reflected conservative political and social ideology, established college conservative newspaper training programs,
organized speaker bureaus for conservative ideologues and supported legislation that would rid the nation of affirmative action.

Joel Spring (2002) refers to the establishment of webs of interlocking conservative foundations and think tanks and the subsequent dissemination of the research supported by these organizations as “the trickle down theory of ideas”. This theory holds that in trying to save the country from liberal scholars who have been the intellectual architects of a “suicidal” course of an expanding welfare state, conservatives needed to identify and train a group of intellectuals that would promote a general understanding of the importance of the free market (Spring, 2002). In essence, this group of intellectuals would work to “trickle down” ideas about the merits of the free enterprise system similar to the ways in which supply-side economists would later talk about trickle down economics during the Reagan presidency. Accompanying the discussion of the merits of a free market system was talk about personal responsibility, religious morality and patriotism. This “trickle down theory of ideas” would impact the academy in profound ways by charging the liberal intelligentsia with establishing and maintaining a broad-scale attack on the concept of the free market. Recall Lewis F. Powell’s efforts in the early 1970’s encouraging prominent American business leaders to finance the establishment of conservative think tanks and philanthropic foundations which would promote the values and ideals of libertarianism, traditionalism and anti-communism. Echoing Powell’s sentiments, William Simon left his job as the secretary of the treasury for Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford in 1976 to become the head of the Olin Foundation.
“…to support those individuals and institutions who are working to strengthen the free enterprise system” (Simon, 1979). Both men urged big business to support university programs and media that stressed pro-capitalist ideas. The end result is the establishment of a vast array of interlocking conservative philanthropic and public policy organizations which provide the necessary monetary aid to scholars as well as students interested in promoting conservative social and political values.

I explained in the preceding section that it is the economics of race which helps to explain more precisely the reason why Black Studies was bore the brunt of the conservative attack during the academic culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s, even though outright racism and racial chauvinism did factor into the equation. As described case studies of individual Black Studies departments in colleges and universities through the United States, the Academic Culture Wars had a profound impact on student enrollment, faculty hiring and institutional support for Black Studies. Certainly the financial implications of the Academic Culture War were most profoundly felt at the public comprehensive universities such as California State Universities, Fullerton and Northridge, where access to philanthropic support from the Ford Foundation was not available. On the other hand, at places like the University of Wisconsin that had strong institutional support from top level campus administrators and took advantage of the access to Ford monies, Black Studies departments were able to grow and thrive. Even at Northwestern University, which was eligible but did not receive Ford monies, strong departmental leadership and internal funding for the department allowed for a more
recent “renaissance” in the Black Studies department where the number of faculty has increased threefold and plans are underway to propose a Ph.D. program in Black Studies. Although Black Studies departments in the comprehensive, teaching based institutions may have felt the effects of the Culture War attacks on the discipline more acutely than their elite, research based university peers, the entire discipline continues to “suffer the burdens of its beginnings” and must continually defend its right to exist within the hallowed halls of academe. The Culture Wars may have not dismantled Black Studies but it has made the stability of the field far less certain as a result.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Study

Several ideas for further study emanate from this research project. First, more research work needs to be done examining how Black Studies departments at historically Black colleges and universities or even religious affiliated institutions fared during the Academic Culture Wars? Institutional type certainly played a role in how Black Studies at research and teaching based institutions met the challenges brought on by conservative philanthropy and the Culture Wars.

Although Schultz (1993) and Messer-Davidson (1993) have done work on the uses of conservative philanthropy in seeking to rid the nation’s colleges and universities of academic feminism and women’s studies, research needs to be conducted contrasting how Women’s Studies fared during the Culture Wars as opposed to Black Studies. Both fields came under attack from conservative scholars during the Culture Wars but it is
important to note the possible differences in how each field coped with this attack. Does gender become a meta-language as Higginbotham (1992) suggests happens with race?

Finally, while Rooks (2006) shows how liberal foundations such as the Ford Foundation helped Black Studies in the institutionalization phase of the late 1960s with set-up funds to establish departments and provided monetary aid to elite research institutions in the late 1980s and 1990s which allowed many of these programs “ride out the wave” of conservative backlash against Black Studies. However, there has been little or no research done which examines other liberal foundations and scholars that supported Black Studies during the Culture War years. Certainly, Black Studies scholars responded to critics from the academic right as did people like Arthur Levine. However, there is no comprehensive study which focuses specifically on how liberal foundations may have supported researchers and scholars who sought to defend Black Studies as well as American academia as a whole during the Culture Wars.

\[1\] For our purposes here, “radicalized” Black politics is a phenomenon which eschews moderation in favor of direct action, strong political rhetoric and directly challenging the racial status quo. SNCC under the leadership of Stokley Carmichael and the Black Panther Party are examples of organizations which subscribed to “radicalized” Black politics.
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