Power and Crisis in the City

SOCIOLOGY, POLITICS AND CITIES

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Power and Crisis in the City

Corporations, unions and urban policy

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To my parents – Helen and Harry Friedland – at whose loving and quarrelsome dinner table I learned to think, I humbly dedicate this book

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Editor's Preface

Sociology, Politics and Cities

Cities have been the focal points of economic, political and cultural life in all those countries experiencing the kind of rapid industrial and commercial evolution that was first seen in the early nineteenth century in Britain. To understand national economic and political forces was therefore to comprehend the development of cities. To follow culture required insight into urban life. Early appreciations of these links developed in the German works of Marx, Weber and Simmel.

This early appreciation of the importance of the relationships between national forces and cities was not emphasized in the American analyses of cities stimulated by the Chicago School. Although it was to some extent present in the work of Park, Burgess, McKenzie and Wirth, it was lost in subsequent work which tended to conceptualize cities as isolated and self-contained phenomena. The significance of the relationships between power and cities was, however, kept alive in the American community power study work. The Lynds, Hunter, Dahl and more recently Bachrach, Baratz and Crenson have all made important contributions to our understanding of cities.

The eruption of major urban-based conflicts on both sides of the Atlantic during the 1960s made it quite clear that cities could not be understood within the main American paradigms of the 1920s. They also demonstrated that both national economic forces and the concept of power were central to any comprehension of what was happening in cities at that time.

This intellectual challenge was first met in France in different ways by Lefebvre, Castells and Lojkine. Harvey also

made a contribution in Britain. Much of this work was based either on neo-Marxist Althusserian structuralism or on extensions of Marxist political economy, particularly the concept of rent. Although this work provided a great stimulus to urban research, some elements of it have not proved as fruitful as was first hoped. It has suffered from ethnocentricity, circularity, inappropriateness in contemporary circumstances and a lack of comparative empiricism.

A different intellectual response to understanding cities was also started in the late 1960s, this time in Britain, by Rex, Moore and Pahl. They developed some Weberian themes to account for the observable distributions of urban resources by so-called 'gatekeepers'. This type of local work, although useful in understanding local processes, did not address the growing significance of national and international forces in shaping particular urban developments.

The series 'Sociology, Politics and Cities' provides a vehicle for the extension of these debates and for newer contemporary approaches to understanding cities. The series is trans-disciplinary, including not only sociological and political work but also interconnected economic and historical research. It includes analyses of both private and public intervention in cities and therefore encompasses an interest in public policy. The main aim of the series is to encourage and stimulate a continuing debate and analysis concerned with capitalist, socialist and underdeveloped cities. It is concerned to develop theoretical understanding of these phenomena based on empirical analyses. On the bases of such understanding the series is also concerned with the formulation and evaluation of significant and relevant urban policies.

London University
January 1982

JAMES SIMMIE

The Reasons Why Cities are Ugly and Sad: A Foreword

Roger Friedland's *Power and Crisis in the City* deserves a wide readership. Although the book is specifically concerned with policy and politics in the central cities of the US, it also deals in a fertile and original, not to say provocative, manner with some issues of fundamental significance to social and political science in general. The immediate subject-matter of the study is the role and power of business corporations and trade unions in American urban policy in the postwar period, especially in so far as these organizations have influenced both the formation of, and the impact of, urban policy on housing, the poverty program, riots and civil disturbances, and most recently of all, the urban fiscal crisis. These are all matters of great importance in their own right, and specialists in American studies and urban affairs will find Friedland's discussion of them absorbing.

To study these issues, however, the author also has to confront several of the central problems and issues which bedevil a wide range of social science specialisms. Most notably, he discusses the process of historical change in the form of the dynamics of public policy – especially the influences which help to create such policy in the first place, and the influences which subsequently mould its impacts and its unforeseen consequences. In order to deal with these questions, the study, in turn, tackles one of the timeless problems of political science, that of the relationship between social, economic and political circumstances on the one hand, and policy choices on the other. In other words, the book is a case study of the essence of political science itself: Who gets what, when, how? And in order to tackle this question,

Friedland has to face up to yet another long-running debate about how to define political power, and how to approach the study of its operation.

These are issues of such widespread interest that many readers outside the US, and many who are not specialists in either urban affairs or American studies, will want to examine its arguments and its conclusions. Therefore, I shall use this foreword to say something about the social and political background to the study which Friedland, being an American writing about America, quite naturally takes for granted. Those who are acquainted with the recent history, and with the special features of urban politics in the US, will do well to pass straight to the real business in hand which begins with Chapter 1, but those who feel some brief and general background information might be useful may prefer to read on.

Central cities and their suburbs. With the benefit of hindsight we can see that many of the central cities of the US were beginning to slide into serious social and economic trouble as early as the 1950s. Their problems were caused not by a combination of inflation, unemployment and economic slump, as we might well assume nowadays, for America was then the wealthiest nation in the world, and growing ever more affluent with every stock market report. On the contrary, urban disease was precipitated, paradoxically, by the booming affluence of the Eisenhower era, when the social and economic revolution that had begun to transform the cities at the turn of the century, and which was only temporarily halted by the Wall Street crash and the Second World War, picked up speed once again. It was economic growth, not economic decline, which put an impossible strain upon the central cities, and revealed the structural faults of the American system of urban government.

Why did peace and prosperity cause decay and dereliction? The answer is that the inner cities paid the price of growth, while the suburbs most generally reaped the benefits. In the social and economic accounts of the American nation, the suburbs took the lion's share of the gains, and the inner cities paid, almost exclusively, for the losses. They are still doing so.

During the swelling affluence of the postwar years the suburbs grew as weeds (like Topsy). New and spacious houses

were built by the million for middle-class families who wanted to escape the city, and could afford the price. Their two-car garages were filled with the latest fin-tailed fashions from Detroit; for the children, new schools were constructed, lavishly supplied with equipment, and staffed with well-trained teachers; for the fathers, new expressways and beltways were built to carry them to their downtown offices; for the mothers, there were new suburban shopping malls where big department stores and specialist shops catered for suburban trade six days a week. And on the seventh day, there were immaculately maintained churches of every white, middle-class denomination. Doris Day's films may have caricatured suburban life, but like every good caricature, they simply played upon reality rather than inventing it.

On the other side of the tracks, or rather on the other side of the new urban beltways and expressways, parts of the central cities were beginning to decline and decay. Gradually they started to lose their more prosperous – usually white – population, as the suburban exodus picked up momentum. As people moved homes, so shops followed people, and as people and shops moved, so the small businesses which provide and service both followed suit. Some factories moved, too, in part because they were looking for newer, cheaper and larger premises, and also because it was convenient to follow their skilled and middle-class workforce.

The outward migration of population, shops, offices and factories to the city's rim left something of a vacuum where parts of the inner city had been. The central business district continued to thrive and to expand as the tempo of the economy increased, but just beyond the downtown department stores and high-rise office blocks, houses were abandoned and store fronts boarded up. Whole blocks began to decay, and were soon taken over by gangs of street kids, freaks and drop-outs, groups of down-and-outs and winos. Those who stayed in the inner-city residential areas found the job market tightening up, as some of their employers started to leave for the suburbs. Their children's schools grew worse and worse. Violence and crime became increasingly commonplace, poverty increasingly concentrated and visible. Slums, ghettos, unemployment, abandonment, violence, crime, poverty, ugliness; they all

contributed to the suburban exodus, which, in turn, fed the vicious cycle through second and successive phases.

Within a stone's throw (almost literally) of the splendour of the White House in Washington, a rather elegant department store stood gutted and boarded up, looking for all the world like some transplanted relic of wartime Berlin. In Philadelphia abandoned houses started to collapse on the kids playing in them, fires broke out, and gas pipes started to leak dangerously. The city moved in with bulldozers to knock the danger flat. In Pittsburgh, a once handsome and friendly neighborhood, close to the city's central business district (aptly named the Golden Triangle), showed signs of deterioration, slow at first, but then with alarming speed. In Philadelphia another all-white, inner-city block was busted, and quickly transformed into an all-black slum, which then became just another block in the building of a modern ghetto. In Detroit . . . in Cleveland . . . in Chicago . . .

In each case the problems of the inner city grew in direct proportion to the growth, size and affluence of the suburbs, because both responded, though in opposite ways, to the growth of industry and commerce. Thus the central city and its suburbs are different aspects of the same process – neither more nor less than opposite sides of the same coin.

The effects of polarization were dramatically magnified by the strange political arrangements of the typical American metropolis, a set of arrangements which cannot be found in any other urban-industrial society in the west. The great majority of metropolitan areas in the US were – and still are – fragmented into many local government jurisdictions, with a large central city usually being surrounded by tens, hundreds or even thousands of politically autonomous suburban authorities. By judicious use of their building, zoning and tax laws the suburbs could maintain, or even improve upon, their exclusive middle-class status, thereby ensuring that their boundaries were virtually impervious to the social and economic problems of the central cities. As a result, as social problems became increasingly concentrated in the inner cities, so the resources necessary to deal with them were increasingly locked up in the suburbs. While the political structure of many urban areas in west Europe ensure that central cities can call

upon at least some of the resources of the suburbs, the fragmented system of metropolitan government in the US makes this very difficult at best, and impossible at worst. Small wonder the suburbs became known as 'the white noose' which strangles the predominantly black residential areas of the inner cities.

In the words of a perceptive but anonymous social scientist and poet:

The reason why cities are ugly and sad,
Is not that the people who live in them are bad.
It's just that the people who really decide
What goes on in the city live somewhere outside.

This is true in the sense that the mere existence of autonomous suburbs has a profound effect on central cities, and often in the sense that politicians, businessmen and most community leaders with a powerful influence over central-city affairs live in the suburbs. They may make decisions for the central cities, but do not necessarily have to live with all the consequences.

By the early 1960s it was abundantly and painfully clear that something had to be done to help the central cities. And, indeed, something was done, mainly in the form of two federal programs known as Urban Renewal and the War on Poverty. And since these are the center of attention of the early chapters of Roger Friedland's book, they also require some background material for non-American readers.

(1) *Urban Renewal*. The term 'urban renewal' was added to popular usage in the US by the 1949 Housing Act, which turned the attention of the Federal Government away from public housing, which had a bad name, toward the idea of revitalizing the inner cities by demolishing slum property, and also by modernizing and rebuilding property which could be saved.¹ The costs of doing so were too high, it was argued, for the private sector, so the Federal Government stepped in with its own scheme. It would not actually lay one brick or glaze one window on its own, but it was prepared to encourage local urban renewal authorities to help others to do so by contributing handsomely to their costs. Specifically, the Federal Government paid two-thirds of the difference between

the costs of buying and clearing land, and the income received from selling it to private developers. The remaining third had to be found from local sources.

Although the main emphasis of the program was shifted in 1967, it was not so much concerned with building low-income housing or with the task of rehousing the poor, as with urban revitalization and restoring property and tax values in the central cities. Nevertheless, urban renewal authorities had a clear responsibility to find adequate housing for those displaced by their schemes, and the overall aim was certainly not to worsen the parlous state of low-income housing in the central cities. The aims of the scheme also included the wholesale rehabilitation and reconstruction of the areas worst affected by urban blight, and it was not intended to fatten the profits of private businesses, or to subsidize them to move into areas which were prime sites for redevelopment in the first place.

However, the eventual outcome of the program was different from its initial intentions. At the outset, in 1949, 10 per cent of the federal funds to any one urban renewal authority could be used for non-residential purposes, but this was increased to 20 per cent in 1959, and to 30 per cent two years later. However, throughout its history, from 1949 to its end in 1974, the scheme devoted less than 50 per cent of the annual total of cleared land to housing, and for long stretches of time (1956 to 1967) the figure hovered somewhere between 15 and 30 per cent. By 1965 it had resulted in a net loss of residential land, and a net gain in land used for commercial purposes, usually shops and offices. Nor were the worst slums and ghettos tackled. Rather, the need to find sites which were attractive to both private developers, and to local authorities with a watchful eye on property and tax values, resulted in the development of areas close to the central business district. Nor was much contributed to the low-income housing stock. On the contrary, because this was the least profitable use of land, it invariably gave way to middle- and high-income accommodation, or else to commercial property. There was therefore a considerable net loss of cheap housing.

Between 1950 and 1971 some 300 000 families and 150 000 single individuals were moved by urban renewal authorities.

Assuming each family had three members (a conservative assumption), over one million people were moved in all – equivalent to a good-sized city in almost any country. Of the families, approximately a third were white, and the rest were of black or other ethnic minorities. Of the individuals, about 60 per cent were white, and the rest blacks, or other ethnic minorities. Thus, in round figures, some 650 000 (almost two-thirds of the total) blacks and other minority group members were moved, providing ample evidence for the popular claim that ‘urban renewal is negro removal’. To make matters worse, only 40 per cent of the housing units on renewal sites were made available to them, the rest being put at the disposal of a disproportionate member of white and middle-class citizens. The great majority of those displaced had incomes of less than \$6000 in 1962, but rents on the renewal sites averaged \$2300 a year. The net effect of urban renewal on the housing stock was to increase the supply of middle- and high-income accommodation (at a public subsidy), and to reduce the amount of low-income housing, thereby driving up its price.

In addition, a further 100 000 businesses were forced to move, many of these being small concerns employing a handful of people, and many (between a quarter and a third) going out of business as a result. Not infrequently, the land taken from small businesses was cleared for high-rise office blocks, which were then either occupied by, or rented by, relatively large and wealthy corporations. Once again, this was all done in the name of the public interest and at the price of a handsome subsidy from the public purse.

Urban renewal in the US is one of the more obvious examples of socialism for the rich – that is, of a policy which is designed to help the poor and the needy, but which ends up helping those who are so well able to help themselves that they help themselves to the benefits of others. There is nothing especially American about this perverse phenomenon, for it operates in both capitalist and mixed economies, as well, no doubt, as in the communist countries of eastern Europe. Nor is it a phenomenon of the modern state, for, as the Good Book says, ‘Unto them that hath shall be given’. Nevertheless, Roger Friedland’s account of urban renewal and the political

and economic forces shaping its implementation throws a good deal of light upon the mysterious process, and thus upon the question: Who gets what, when and how?

(2) *The War on Poverty*. Urban renewal did not touch many of the major urban problems in the US, and nor, to be fair to it, was it ever intended to tackle anything other than land use and the local tax value of real estate. A broader attack on urban poverty commenced in August 1964, when President Johnson signed the Equal Opportunities Act and declared his administration's 'War on Poverty'.² There were at the time about thirty-five million Americans on or below the poverty line, and some experts firmly held the view that the line was drawn too high so as to exclude millions more in dire social and economic circumstances. Of those in official poverty, some sixteen million lived in urban areas, and another ten million lived in inner-city areas. While most of the poverty-stricken did not live in the cities, therefore, it was the big-city slums which contained the greatest concentration and the most visible array of social problems. For most Americans, the war on poverty was an urban program, especially a black urban program.

The origins of the war on poverty lay in a profound dissatisfaction with urban renewal on the part of the Ford Foundation, which set up a series of Gray Area Projects with the intention of creating community self-help organizations. This basic idea became the backbone of the War on Poverty, which was carried out at the local level by public and private non-profit-making agencies, with the financial backing of the Federal Government. In order to do this the Government set up the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to coordinate a variety of different activities. In each case, the intention was to support promising local initiatives and experiments designed to deal, not with the symptoms of poverty, but with its causes. The poor and the unemployed were encouraged to help themselves become self-supporting, and since it was fully recognized that poverty and unemployment are not single problems, but whole bundles of them, many agencies were set up, each with a slightly different task:

- *The Job Corps*. The only part under the direct control of the

- OEO, this provided education, training and work experience in rural camps for unemployed youths.
- *The Neighborhood Youth Corps*, providing education and work experience for youths living at home.
 - *Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)*, to provide volunteer workers for slums, hospitals, Indian reservations, labor camps, etc.
 - *Head Start*, to provide a better education for children brought up in the slums.
 - *Upward Bound*, to encourage older slum children in their educational attainments.
 - *Legal Services*, to provide legal services for the poor in their dealings with public agencies.
 - *The Community Action Program* – the most important part of the OEO's activity, and designed to develop and coordinate various local anti-poverty activities. The basic idea was to support new approaches and local initiatives, and to give community leaders, and above all the poor themselves, the chance to participate in these efforts.

The War on Poverty was shorter-lived than Urban Renewal, and was effectively killed off by Nixon, who cut funds and deflected much of what was left to the purchase of police equipment. However, during its peak years it involved thousands of millions of dollars of federal money – more than seven thousand million dollars from 1967 to 1970. At the height of its activity, there were more than a thousand community action agencies, and although most were in rural areas, most of the money (about two-thirds) was spent in the cities.

The special character of the whole program lay in its attempt to mobilize political activity. In the now famous statement, it aimed at 'maximum feasible participation of the residents of the areas and the members of the groups served'. The OEO's guide to applicants for funds added: 'The purpose of federal assistance to community action programs is to help urban and rural communities to mobilize their resources to combat poverty.' In practice this usually meant the formation of community pressure groups which would speak for, and act on behalf of, poor people in their dealings with public bodies of

various kinds. The successes and failures of the whole scheme is hotly debated still, but in the view of Daniel Moynihan, 'Very possibly the most important long run impact of the community action programs of the 1960s will prove to have been the formation of an urban Negro leadership echelon at just the time when the Negro masses and other minorities were verging towards extensive commitments to urban politics.'³ The relationship between the mobilization of urban blacks during the War on Poverty, Urban Renewal which preceded it, and the urban riots which followed it, constitutes one of the most important and fascinating aspects of Roger Friedland's analysis.

At the heart of this analysis there lies the long-debated problem of how to define, operationalize and measure political power. The nature of this debate is widely understood and discussed, so there is no need to waste words summarizing the state of play. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that anything fresh or original could be added to the recent work of Polsby, Lukes, Gaventa, Barry and Dunleavy on the general issue of how to treat the concept of political power.⁴ Yet Friedland manages to do just that.

Starting from the position that the definition and treatment of political power has generally been too behavioral, in that it has concentrated almost exclusively on the ability of actors to get other actors to do things they do not wish to do, Friedland moves quickly to an exploration of the relationship between social and political structures, and political power. This is, potentially, at the very least, a highly promising line of development, if only because existing structures are, themselves, partly the outcome of past political battles, and have a decided influence on the outcome of current political struggles. To give only one example, one of the most vital of all political battles concerns not what decisions are to be made, but how they are to be made. In other words, who is to participate, in what issue-areas, under what conditions, and in which political arena? The 'game' of politics is not just about scoring goals; even more important are the questions of who controls the referee, who frames the rules of the game, how many should play, and what constitutes a goal. In politics the name of the game is to avoid playing for high stakes unless you

have the referee in your pocket, or can frame the rules to suit your own game, or have twice as many players as the opposition, or can rule that the first ten goals scored by the opposition do not count.

Translated into the terms of American metropolitan politics, this means that if you can ensure the legal and governmental autonomy of the suburbs, and then use these powers to exclude the people and the problems of the inner city from your own territory, then you are more than half way home and dry when it comes to protecting your own social and economic interests. If, in addition, you can get others to believe, as you may believe yourself, that the system operates according to the normal rules of a free-market economy, then you have the added advantage that all the blame seems to lie with the wretched inhabitants of the inner city.⁵

This is the situation which Friedland analyzes in the pages that follow, and he does so using a strikingly original approach to the data. In this respect, however, he is not alone, for in the same week that I started the first draft of *Power and Crisis in the City*, I also proof-read an article by Tore Hansen, a Norwegian political scientist who lives and works halfway round the world from Roger Friedland's native California. Quite independently, they hit upon exactly the same method for studying urban power and decision-making, and justified it the same way. Compare the following:

How, then, are we to interpret the relationships between socio-economic variables and political factors? Rather than regarding socio-economic variables as causes of the decisions, it seems more reasonable to treat them as decision-making *criteria* upon which public authorities may act. It is important to notice the difference between a causal factor and a decision-making criterion. While a causal factor is automatically related to the effect variables, the relationship between a decision-making criterion and the decision has to be *established* by the decision-making body. In other words, the decision-makers select the criteria upon which the decision is going to be based, and this selection process will be determined by the political values of the decision-makers.

In other words, choice of decision-making criteria is a function of political perception, selection and ideology, not a problem of simple causal relationships. Another way of saying this is that socio-economic factors *interact* with political variables in determining the expenditures, or rather that the effect of one particular socio-economic factor on the level of expenditures is conditioned by political factors [Hansen].⁶

[T]he policy effect of local conditions will be contingent upon the local power of corporations and unions. In cities where corporations or unions are powerful, those local conditions that affect their interest will have a greater impact on policies intended to serve their interests than in cities where corporations or labor unions are not powerful. This model assumes that the local state does adopt policies in response to local conditions and the power of organizations outside the state. But it also assumes that policies are adopted in response to the extent that local conditions affect organizational interests. Corporate or union interests in local policy depend on the extent to which local conditions affect those interests. Thus the local state responds to local conditions that impinge upon corporate or union interests, but only where corporations or labor unions are locally powerful. If either local conditions do not affect corporate or union interests, or corporate or union power is lacking, policies are less likely to be adopted [Friedland, this book].

By pure coincidence these two passages elaborate basically the same theory and the same method for studying political power at the local level, one in Norway, and the other in the US. The theory and method can, however, be used anywhere in the world and at any level of a political system. It would not be the least bit surprising to find it used in all sorts of contexts and all sorts of countries in the years to come.

Dundee University, Scotland
January 1982

KEN NEWTON

Notes

1. For a good account of urban renewal and its impact see Robert L. Lineberry and Ira Sharkansky, *Urban Politics and Public Policy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) pp. 328–42. See also Thomas R. Dye, *Politics in States and Communities* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969) pp. 434–9; Scott Greer, *Urban Renewal and American Cities* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965); Martin Anderson, *The Federal Bulldozer* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1964); Herbert J. Gans, *People and Plans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972) ch. 13 ‘The failure of urban renewal’, pp. 239–61. For a recent attempt to defend the record of urban renewal see Heywood T. Sanders, ‘Urban Renewal and the Revitalized City’, in Donald B. Rosenthal (ed.), *Urban Revitalization*, Urban Affairs Annual Review, vol. 18 (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1980) pp. 103–26.

2. For a general account of the War on Poverty written by a non-American see Edward James, *America Against Poverty* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970). See also Lineberry and Sharkansky, *Urban Politics and Public Policy*, pp. 291–303; Thomas R. Dye, *Understanding Public Policy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972) pp. 111–29; Gans, *People and Plans*, pp. 262–83.

3. Daniel P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding* (New York: The Free Press, 1969) p. 129.

4. Nelson Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory: A Further Look at Problems of Evidence and Inference*, 2nd enlarged edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (London: Macmillan, 1974); John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Brian Barry, ‘Is it Better to be Powerful or Lucky?’, parts I and II, *Political Studies*, 28 (June and September 1980) pp. 183–94 and 338–52; Patrick Dunleavy, ‘An Issue Centred Approach to the Study of Power’, *Political Studies*, 24 (December 1976) pp. 422–34.

5. For a discussion of the ways in which the political system hinders the working of a ‘free-market’ system, see Anthony Downs, *Opening up the Suburbs: An Urban Strategy for America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973) esp. pp. 1–12.

6. Tore Hansen, ‘Transforming Needs into Expenditure Decisions’, in Kenneth Newton (ed.), *Urban Political Economy* (London: Frances Pinter, 1981) pp. 31–2.

Author's Preface

I am ambivalent about big cities. I experience a cinematic rush from the juxtaposition of girls with purple hair, silky black shorts on roller skates, against razor-cut, button-down executives. It also gives me headaches to spend too much time in Washington Square. The fleshy swelter of hands-on local political conflicts, complicated by histories of kinship, ethnic pride and neighborhood favor is vibrant. It is also trivial, parochial and irrelevant. The ping-pong conversation, the references to the latest movie and book, who won the regional elections in Italy and the real political suasion of the Korean rebels, this global voyeurism is scintillating. Yet the meat and potatoes production often goes on elsewhere. Knowing and doing have separate locations. But what do you expect from a two New Yorkers' son who grew up in a canyon suburb of Los Angeles.

As a social analyst of politics, particularly urban politics, I find it most comfortable to work in the erogenous zone between Weber and Marx. If politics are animated by class relations, they are structured by organizations – corporations and labor unions – whose interests and *modus operandi* are not explicable in terms of objective opposition. If urban policies have important consequences for capitalist growth, they cannot be explained by capitalism. If the structure of urban governance is vulnerable to contradictions between capitalism and democracy, these must be explained by the interplay of institutional interests of the state, capitalists and the electorate.

When I began to write this study, the opposition between critical neo-Marxism which called for a 'qualitative' analysis, and the more structural-functional social science which espoused a 'quantitative' analysis, was in its heat. I found this fusion of theoretical and technical conflict to be fundamentally unproductive and wasteful. The evolution of technique quickly

evolved to make empiricism impossible, to incorporate time and to require a theory of observability. A strong commitment to causal structure, historical process and a theory of data became prerequisites to the appropriate use of technique. I hope that the debates will increase over specification and conceptual meaning, and how to combine different techniques to answer particular questions. I have tried to use quantitative techniques to elucidate specific historical processes. This is not, then, a study of all cities. It is a study of certain aspects of US central cities between 1964 and 1975.

Finally, I take great pleasure from intellectual production, yet I often accord it very little meaning. For me it is the most exquisite of games, often played viciously and with great seriousness, because it is being played for reality. I happen to believe in truth. Because it is embarrassing, this grotesque alchemy, I like to poke fun at it.

With such an orientation I have complex debts to my mentors, Robert Alford and Michael Aiken, who kept me jumping between theory and data and to whom I owe my training. To my friends and colleagues – Sam Bacharach, Ken Newton, Erik Wright, Gosta Esping-Andersen, Bill Bielby, Frances Fox Piven, Herbert Wong, Maurice Zeitlin, Bill Domhoff, John Mollenkopf, Manuel Castells, Don Cressey, Hal Winsborough, Jim Baron, Alex Hicks, Harvey Molotch, Jack Biello, and Richard Child Hill – I am grateful for their support and their criticism. I am also beholden, with the usual absolution, for the close critical readings I received from Robert Alford, Erik Wright, Frances Fox Piven and Ken Newton. Finally I want to thank John Burke, Professor of History at UCLA, for introducing me personally to the passion and struggle of ideas.

Shaped by the sexual tempests of my generation, work on this manuscript has endured longer than any of the relationships that made writing it possible. The love of three women binds these pages: Jette Thy, Merrie Klapp, and Debra Friedland. The last shall bind my life. It is not that I am promiscuous. I have simply been working on this project for too long.

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