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*Breakthrough:  
The Relevance of Christian Existentialism*

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THE CONSERVATIVE PRECINCTS of American life witnessed more than one kind of dissent in the 1950s. While secular liberals fought to keep the spirit of democracy alive, others confronted the second aspect of the problem that Arthur Schlesinger had limned in the late 1940s: the challenge of finding stable values and social forms appropriate to a democratic culture in the "age of anxiety." To take up this challenge would mean engaging in a kind of cultural dissent, experimenting with new ways of living and thinking. Some young people in 1950s America, fearing anxiety but determined to overcome it, explored in great detail the existentialist outlook that Schlesinger had found attractive but took it in directions that he had not foreseen. By the early 1960s, some of the young existentialists concluded that the way out of anxiety was through disruptive, challenging political activism. This vision of authenticity through dissent led them into the civil rights movement and the new left.

Some of the most politically effective young existentialists offered a relatively acceptable and appealing dissent because they grounded their existentialism in the legitimacy of Protestant evangelicalism. The early cold war was a time of "religious revival," as some called it, of rising church attendance rates and the ascendancy of evangelical celebrities like the young Billy Graham. Outpourings of the "old-time religion" were noted on college campuses, starting with the upheaval at Wheaton College, outside Chicago,

at the conclusion of World War II. In the 1950s, evangelical groups like the Campus Crusade for Christ won many converts among students. At the University of Texas, conservative Protestantism was the rule, fundamentalism alive and well.<sup>1</sup> Buried deep in the social conservatism of evangelical Protestantism was a latent dissidence, a radical version of this creed's sharp dissatisfaction with contemporary culture. To a minority of young people in the 1950s and 1960s, this latent radicalism came through loud and clear in the highly contemporary form of Christian existentialism.

In the 1950s, students in Austin and elsewhere immersed themselves in the currents of existentialist thought emanating from Europe and circulating throughout the Western world. What emerged from this process by the start of the 1960s was a politicized, seemingly de-Christianized dissident evangelism, a kind of “religionless Christianity,” to use the pregnant phrase of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The teachings and example of Bonhoeffer, a German theologian who was executed by the Nazis in 1945 for his involvement in an antigovernment conspiracy, were introduced to young Texans searching for authenticity by Joseph Wesley Mathews, a one-time fundamentalist preacher, at an influential place called the Christian Faith-and-Life Community (CFLC). The CFLC was a residential religious study and training center affiliated with UT. Ronnie Dugger had difficulty making up his mind about Mathews and named him an “inspired Merlin . . . genuine, fraud.”<sup>2</sup> Others committed to more familiar forms of religiosity and social concern, such as Frank Wright, head of the University Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in Austin, always doubted that Mathews and his teachings contributed much to the political ferment of the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> But contribute they did.

Dugger wondered, “Could it be that Joe knew god but just wasn’t introducing him around?”<sup>4</sup> Mathews’s theology was unorthodox, but its brash rebellion was calculated to appeal to young people as unmoved by traditional religion as he had become. (This approach found no small success in selling religion: one-tenth of the students who came through the Community reportedly went on to join the clergy.)<sup>5</sup>

As existentialist theologians like Rudolf Bultmann had urged, Mathews sought to wrench Christianity out of its ancient trappings and recast it in modern language, symbols, myths, and hopes. Worship, and life itself, became drama. In what the French Catholic thinker Gabriel Marcel called a “broken world,” salvation reemerged as therapy.<sup>6</sup> Jesus Christ was a symbol of openness to risk and extremity. Believers sought new selves, not as saints transported to the clouds, but in a “New Being” here on earth. One of Mathews’s disciples in the early 1960s remarked, “I think the Community is more like the early Church than other groups are today, because the early Church didn’t give a goddamn about life after death. Neither do we.”<sup>7</sup> Such heterodox adherents sought to fulfill Bonhoeffer’s promise of “a new language, perhaps quite non-religious, but liberating and redeeming—as was Jesus’ language; it will be a new language of righteousness and truth.”<sup>8</sup>

Dugger and Christian liberals like Wright, young people would have been less likely to draw politically dissident inferences from Mathews’s existentialism. Existentialism, like the philosophical strains of vitalism and pragmatism that it resembled in some respects, did not in itself imply political engagement of any kind. Yet at this conjuncture of historical circumstances, amid the synthesis of diverse elements in the political culture of the United States, existentialism fed a radical humanism that infused the dissident search for democracy and authenticity.

In the beginning, the Faith-and-Life Community seemed like a thoughtful, conservative venture in Protestant campus ministry. The institution's founder was a genial campus Presbyterian minister named W. Jack Lewis. Steeped in local culture as an undergraduate at UT in the 1930s, Lewis had been head cheerleader, or "yeller." He served as a navy chaplain during World War II and returned home to minister to students at Texas Tech College and then at UT. In 1950/1951 he undertook further theological studies in Britain and Europe and encountered the Iona experiment, an intentional Christian community in Scotland. He thought this kind of experiment might speak to contemporary students in a way that conventional campus ministry did not, and he resolved to begin a similar community in Austin.<sup>11</sup>

In 1952 Lewis assembled a prestigious board of directors that provided the CFLC with both official sanction and a springboard into fund-raising. The board included Harry Ransom, as well as Texas businessmen evidently glad to support this kind of Christian endeavor. But the board was mainly composed of prominent theologians at schools across the country, the most illustrious of whom was James I. McCord, who at this time was moving from the Presbyterian Seminary in Austin to the presidency of Princeton Theological Seminary. McCord had been with Lewis in Scotland, and their conversations had urged Lewis on.

Lewis saw the Faith-and-Life Community as part of the movement for "lay renewal" that had spread across western Europe after World War II. This movement, echoing one of the original themes of the Protestant Reformation, emphasized the religious leadership of the laity. It sought to engage laypersons in continuing theological study and to encourage them to relate theology to society. At the CFLC, the "layman" who was to be engaged in religious dialogue was the university student, "that he might be more informed and articulate in his beliefs, with a view toward his becoming a responsible churchman, parent, and citizen in his life and work." The CFLC undertook this lay training, it explained in a communication to other ministers, "for the sake of the renewal of the Church." The CFLC became a model for lay education and campus ministry known around the country and even the world. McCord averred that by the early 1960s, the CFLC had "become known throughout the nation and around the world as a symbol of how Christians might respond to the demands of a new time." Clergy at many other schools, like Duke and Brown Universities and the Universities of Montana and Wisconsin, modeled their own experiments on the CFLC.<sup>11</sup>

"Evangelical Christian Communion" or church, thus placing limits on its ecumenism. In its first year it admitted only men, who numbered thirty.

They lived together in what was called the "College House," with university approval. In 1953 the Community opened a "Women's Branch," also numbering thirty women, and the "Men's Branch" expanded to forty-five; each branch totaled about fifty in the later years of the experiment. Mildred Hudgins, the CFLC's "den mother," administered the Women's Branch.

The women and men lived separately but had joint classes. Judy Schleyer Blanton, a student who lived in the Community around 1960, remembered students there sneaking in and out of bedroom windows, but there is little reason to believe that more sex went on at the CFLC than elsewhere on campus. Women and men ate Friday evening dinner together at the Men's Branch and participated in unified prayer services. All students who chose to join the Community knew they would have to fulfill the normal undergraduate course requirements in addition to their studies at the CFLC. The curriculum here was likely more challenging than what students encountered in most regular classes at the university.<sup>12</sup>

The Community's members persistently described their activities as "corporate." This reflects the cold war concern that people in advanced industrial societies were faced, in this age of anxiety, with the twin dangers of individual isolation and social conformity—conditions that amounted to a recipe for totalitarianism, according to the social thought of the day. Communal experiments like the CFLC, with its written "covenant" enunciating the social commitments of its members, underscored the need to invest social forms with meaning and intentionality in order to prevent them from becoming mindless or oppressive. Claire J. Breihan and O. R. Schmidt, undergraduates who lived at the Women's Branch in the mid-1950s, recall that the corporate discipline of the CFLC was one of its most attractive aspects to them.<sup>13</sup> The Faith-and-Life Community held that it was difficult for individuals to confront a changing world effectively "without the *discipline and sustenance* of corporate structures." Navigating a new world required the development of "new and creative modes of corporate existence," and the Community's members intended to play a part in this work. Where "the struggle" to create such "creative modes" occurs, they said, "there is the breakthrough. There is the future alive in the present." The CFLC searched "toward the development of the new forms that will, God willing, bring meaning into the midst of meaninglessness for countless persons who are trapped between an old world passing away and a new world being born."<sup>14</sup>

The Community officially stated that its experiment in intentional community was both compatible and interdependent with the pursuit of fully developed individuality, or autonomous “personality,” to use the term promoted by Paul Tillich, one of the Community’s favored theologians.<sup>15</sup> “Authentic, self-consciously disciplined community does not swallow the individual; it rather creates the very possibility of personhood by pushing the individual against the necessity to decide for himself,” the CFLC’s covenant read. “Genuine participation in the structures of community and authentic individuality are two poles of the same reality.” The higher freedom of the *gemeinschaft* was not supposed to mean conformity. At least some students reported that in practice, life in the Community was animated by a bias “against accommodation for harmony’s sake.” (Others felt differently, as I discuss later.) The capacity to disagree was a mark of the really close relationships that bound a true community. “Let us never forget,” the participants agreed, “that though we are utterly bound by our covenant, we remain free at any time and in any circumstance to break the covenant; never, to be sure, by default in decision but by a self-conscious free resolve made in light of other claims.”<sup>16</sup>

Yet for all the innovation of its formal aspect, between 1952 and 1955, the curriculum at the Community took a “conventional approach,” focusing on Bible and theological studies. Lewis grew disenchanted with this curriculum. “There was no existential ‘bite’ to awaken the student to the relevance of Christian faith to life as he experienced it daily,” he reflected later. The study materials had been “presented from the orthodox and/or dogmatic viewpoint” and therefore “seemed often to demand the acceptance of some constituted authority for their validity.” That Lewis found this problematic indicates the antiauthoritarian direction in which his religious thought already was headed.<sup>17</sup>

Lewis sought new students and new teachers. The criteria for admittance to the Community were radically relaxed: No longer did students need to belong to a church, either Protestant or even Christian. Starting in the fall of 1955, any “inquirer” could apply. Previously, most students, like Claire Breihan, had come from conservative Protestant backgrounds, often fundamentalist. Furthermore, university administrators, professors, and clergy had steered toward the Community many students perceived as campus leaders. Al Lingo, a CFLC undergraduate in the mid-1950s who later returned as a teacher, was a member of the Cowboys, a prestigious UT fraternal organization, as well as a Greek fraternity member in good standing. Fred Buss, another Community member from the late 1950s, was a member of the Deacons, another elite campus men’s group. Now “the

door was open to Catholics, Jews, agnostics, atheists, Buddhists, Hindus, and others.”<sup>18</sup>

Ultimately, “national, racial, religious, economic, and academic barriers were eliminated” to varying degrees. Most dramatically, the Women’s Branch became the first racially integrated housing on the UT campus in 1954 when it admitted a lone black woman. Residents from the time remember this as a conscious political decision by the group, and it cost the Community some sorely needed financial support. In subsequent years, other black students lived in the Community; one recalls it as “a real enjoyable place to live... people were real friendly.” A large number of foreign students lived at the CFLC between 1955 and 1962, one of its most distinguishing features on campus.<sup>19</sup> Just as important to the Community’s subsequent direction was the appointment in 1956 of Joseph Wesley Mathews as the director of the curriculum. Until he departed for Chicago in 1962, Mathews’s teachings and personality were an omnipresent influence on the character of life and study at the CFLC. McCord recommended Mathews, who was a professor at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and the CFLC’s board unanimously agreed. Although Mathews alienated and hurt at least some of the students he taught, he enraptured others. He acquired disciples and enemies, who found him, respectively, inspirational and authoritarian. He brought the “existential ‘bite’” that Lewis wanted. But Mathews went beyond Lewis—eventually beyond what Lewis could stomach—taking the Community, as one of Mathews’s protégés said, “in a revolutionary direction.”<sup>20</sup>

Joe Mathews started his career as an evangelical preacher with fundamentalist leanings. The son of an Ohio Methodist minister, he went to Hollywood in the 1930s to break into the movies and got saved instead in a Los Angeles revival. He maintained a dramatic flair, his heavy silences, poetic outbursts, and fake stammer in the classroom became legend among his students. With his faith intact, he entered the army as a chaplain during World War II. His experiences in the Pacific theater of war “destroyed him” when he found that his religious verities were useless to dying men. “He could offer somebody a cigarette as they died, but he didn’t have anything to say to them. They had to die themselves,” as Lingo puts it.

In a state of intellectual and spiritual crisis, after the war Mathews began studies with H. Richard Niebuhr at Yale Divinity School, where he became immersed in existentialism. The younger Niebuhr’s austere teachings are usually seen as quite conservative, emphasizing human sinfulness and limitations and steering attention away from broader social questions. But Mathews combined this intellectual material with both the evangelis-

tic zeal of his American Protestant tradition and his own dramatic inclinations. He became a local celebrity at Perkins, known for iconoclastic sermons during which he might rip pages out of a church's Bible to illustrate his disdain of the traditional symbols of belief.<sup>21</sup> The contemporary relevance of Mathew's theatrics was indicated by Joe Slicker, Mathew's assistant at the Community, when he remarked, "The gospels are not talking about a guy named Jesus. They are talking about a drama about a guy named Jesus."<sup>22</sup>

Mathew's drew students' attention to the questions that had been sweeping through European Protestant circles for decades and in particular to the German theology of Tillich, Bultmann, and Bonhoeffer. Many classified all these thinkers as theological existentialists; Tillich and Bultmann adopted the term themselves. Tillich and Bonhoeffer also were associated with the "neoorthodox" movement in theology, which historians have viewed as a conservative reaction against theological liberalism. Existentialism, however, served as the pathway between theological conservatism and radical humanism. Historically, existentialist philosophy had emerged from Protestantism, particularly in the thought of Søren Kierkegaard (whose writings the students at the CFLC also read). Small wonder, then, that in the cold war United States, existentialism took root most securely in a Protestant religious context. It ended by helping young people reach a place that many of the Faith-and-Life Community's initial establishment supporters could have neither predicted nor wanted.

### *Anxiety and Mastery*

Walter Kaufmann, the editor of an influential English-language anthology on existentialism published in 1956, despaired of producing a definition of existentialism, saying that it "is not a school of thought nor reducible to any set of tenets." He asserted, in fact, that existentialism "is not a philosophy but a label for several widely different revolts against traditional philosophy" and concluded that "revolt" and "individualism" were perhaps the most stable characteristics of this odd antireed. "The heart of existentialism," he wrote, was "the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and especially of systems" of thought, based on the belief that such systematic thinking was "remote from life." It is possible, however, to identify some consistent themes of those thinkers usually classified as existentialist. Kaufmann's remarks hint at a couple of those themes: first, a belief that thought about life should take the experience of life, rather than abstract principles, as its starting point and, second, an affirmation of the

capacity for self-conscious revolt against authority, intellectual or social, as a basic component of human identity.<sup>23</sup>

Kaufmann failed to consider in any detail the Christian existentialists.<sup>24</sup> These thinkers, studied by students at the CFLC, focused on the paired danger and promise of modern life. The danger was anxiety, and Tillich was its major expositor. Anxiety was a feeling of looking into an abyss, produced by a permanent state of estrangement from God or simply from "the ultimate," or the "ground of Being," as Tillich liked to put it, psychologizing religion for the sake of secular readers.<sup>25</sup> Anxiety was an existential condition, that is, a condition of human life itself, according to Tillich, but it had gotten worse in the age of modernity and industrialization. For all this, Tillich urged his readers to say "'yes' to life," to embrace life despite the spiritual and psychological threat of anxiety, to embrace the risk of nonbeing in the way that Jesus did on the cross. The real prophet of mastery over modernity for students at the Community, however, was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a less anxious and more politicized figure. A martyr for his political activity, Bonhoeffer became the exemplar of authentic religion in the modern world.

According to midcentury theologians, people of previous eras could get through their lives either without experiencing too much acute anxiety or they could find relief from it in the unchallenged certainties of both this world and the next. The precapitalist, certainly the pre-Reformation European, past was supposedly a time of psychological and spiritual security, the meaning of life anchored in divinely ordained patterns, social and cosmic. But, the narrative went, increasing human control over the physical world disturbed the sense that the world was a perfect and completed structure of divine making. "Only after the victory of humanism and Enlightenment as the religious foundation of western society could anxiety about spiritual nonbeing become dominant," wrote Tillich. More recently, the awareness of other cultures damaged the authority of the Western worldview. Secular humanists celebrated both human power over nature and the human freedom to consciously choose values. Liberal Protestantism was, in a sense, born of these challenges to cultural and theological certainty and of the desire to accept the lessons of the Enlightenment.<sup>26</sup>

Many of the existentialists could not rest easy with this accommodation, and this joined them to the neoorthodox thinkers who rebelled against an easy theological modernism. They did not think the loss of the old certainties could be absorbed so painlessly. They recognized the degree of freedom from necessity that the human species had won in its battle against the natural world, but they feared that spiritually, this physical freedom was sending them toward the abyss. In the 1930s, Tillich wrote that "the man of

today. . . is the autonomous man who has become insecure in his autonomy.” Human control over the world, by itself, might be anything but a comforting prospect. “The spiritual disintegration of our day consists in the loss of an ultimate meaning of life by the people of Western civilization.” As so secular a thinker as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. agreed, “progress”—science, capitalism, and culture—stripped the inherited meanings away from life, and anxiety enveloped humanity. Schlesinger prescribed a dose of neoorthodoxy for what ailed the masses. Tillich viewed fascism as a response to this spiritual crisis, an attempt to manufacture a new set of cultural symbols that would provide Europeans with a vision of social order grounded in something transcendent (“blood and soil”).<sup>27</sup> The Faith-and-Life Community would make another, less noxious try at this symbol building.

The neoorthodox prescription of traditional Christian faith—and its assertion that God was “wholly other”—convenient though this formula might have proved as a bulwark against anxiety, was not widely convincing. It seemed to fly in the face of decades of accumulating cultural relativism among liberal Christian theologians, both European and American, who had pioneered the comparative study of world religions and who had progressively diluted the specific Christian content of what they considered legitimate belief, in search of the core religious “spirit” that was manifested differently in different cultures.<sup>28</sup> Traditionalists could wish these cultural developments away, but wish was not reality. It was left to others to answer the difficulties of modernity.

No theologian strode more briskly headlong into the future than Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Personally he expressed a rather orthodox obeisance before his Christian God, yet his admirers could take from him his modernism and leave behind his traditionalist aspect. Unlike Tillich, the epitome of scholarship, Bonhoeffer was better known for his life than his work, and his death was the best-known fact of his life. A young German who adamantly opposed the Nazi regime from its start in 1933, he fought the Nazification of the German Lutheran Church, eventually becoming involved in the small, indigenous anti-Nazi resistance. For his knowledge and approval of the failed plot to kill Adolf Hitler in 1944, he was imprisoned and in 1945 he was hanged. His most widely read work was a volume of fragments he wrote near his life’s end, published posthumously as *Letters and Papers from Prison*. The Faith-and-Life Community was established only seven years after Bonhoeffer’s death, and the moral lessons of World War II—lessons focusing on collaboration and resistance—were much in discussion throughout its lifetime.<sup>29</sup>

In the 1960s Bonhoeffer became, posthumously, a major player in the theological controversies associated with the phrase “the death of God.”

In 1963, John A. T. Robinson portrayed Bonhoeffer as the most radical of the “new” theologians. Similarly, the American Harvey Cox, in his 1965 book *The Secular City*, positioned the dead German as the harbinger of secularism. Bonhoeffer’s cryptic call for a “religionless Christianity” was congenial to Cox and to many young people of the 1960s. Bonhoeffer proposed to do away with many of the trappings of modern religion and to combine a primitive church with a sense of human control over the world. His “religionless Christianity” would be simultaneously archaic and modern. It would mean a “breakthrough,” as Bonhoeffer put it, in beliefs, values, personal life, social life, and politics—a “breakthrough” to a new life.<sup>30</sup>

Bonhoeffer used the phrase the “world come-of-age” to describe the autonomy and mastery over the natural world that humankind had developed in the modern era. In “questions of science, art, and ethics,” human understanding and control had supplanted any mythological notion of supernatural control. This was a breakthrough in the history of humankind, and Bonhoeffer celebrated it. He stated bluntly, “Man has learnt to deal with himself in all questions of importance without recourse to the ‘working hypothesis’ called ‘God’; it is becoming evident that everything gets along without ‘God’—and, in fact, just as well as before.” He thought liberal theology was correct in that “it did not try to put the clock back.”<sup>31</sup> Unlike Tillich and most other existentialists, Bonhoeffer did not view this freedom from “God” as a source of angst. Rather, he celebrated the “world come-of-age” with no sense of unease. This meant that he saw no reason to naturalize or disembody God into “the ground of Being”; to him, human autonomy need not mean an estrangement from God. He asserted that humans’ very freedom meant that they could make a radically free decision to accept God. He urged a breakthrough to God that would coexist with, not contradict, the breakthrough to autonomy.

Reflecting a modernist conviction that religion had to change with the changing times, the young participants in the Faith-and-Life Community frequently commented on the “New World” they saw emerging in the mid-twentieth century. They felt they lived in “an acutely dynamic world of flux,” “an intensely technological world of automation,” a world of both “space conquest and nuclear powers” and “technical psychology and inwardness.” The new world of science simply “eliminates traditional other-worldly metaphysics,” they insisted. Expressing a characteristic concern of their era, they worried that automation was creating “a whole new problem of leisure time,” as well as the need to make this time worthwhile. Modern psychology was “transfiguring the whole meaning of personal freedom.” This world is being thrust upon us.”

Like Bonhoeffer, the Community's members resolved to embrace the future confidently. Above all, they expressed the view that the people of their time could not go back to a comforting, naïve past. "The question of our age," they said, "is not how to return to a static universe but how to respond to the given scene of perpetual change." The challenge, they observed, "is not how to return to naïve unawareness, but how to participate authentically in this era of radical self-consciousness." They lived in "the time of experiment."<sup>32</sup>

They mused particularly over the character of human psychology in the world come-of-age. Like Tillich, they thought the development of depth psychology was part of a growing human self-consciousness that any thoughtful person had to confront. "With the new world has come a breakthrough in the human spirit," they explained. The "post-modern man is emerging," characterized by "intensive and extensive consciousness of his situation in an utterly new world. He is the man of awareness." This introspective personality acquired a new awareness of human autonomy, powers from which one could not flee. Community members thought that modern psychological self-awareness had far-reaching implications for human conduct. People know that "another can never finally determine [their] style of life for [them]," that there are "no predetermined patterns for [their] life." Such "new" personalities needed to find their own meaning and direction in life.<sup>33</sup>

This was the paradox of anxiety. Humans carried both the chance and the burden of creating meaning in life. This was their freedom, and it distinguished them from all other creatures. They had to wrestle meaning from the void of nothingness, despite the threat of meaninglessness that was always hovering over their shoulder. If they resisted this challenge, then they refused to be human. The young Christian existentialists of the CFLC shared this conviction with Camus and Sartre. Humans created possibilities for meaning but were never rid of "anxiety, the rubbing together of nothingness and possibility." Anxiety and freedom thus became the two sides of the human coin, both existential conditions. This is why Kierkegaard, after characterizing anxiety as the "sickness unto death," declared that the sickness was "man's advantage over the beast."<sup>34</sup>

### *The Ethics of Authenticity*

Reinhold Niebuhr secured an appointment for Paul Tillich at Union Theological Seminary during the 1920s, as he had done for Bonhoeffer. But whereas Bonhoeffer, guilt stricken for escaping the Nazi regime, returned to his homeland and met his death, Tillich left Germany to

remain in the United States for the rest of his life. Tillich's writings in English exerted great influence in academic circles, as with his three-volume *Systematic Theology*, and more broadly with books like *The Shaking of the Foundations* and *The Courage to Be*. Tillich moved from an early association with Christian socialism to a less clearly political theology that stressed life and love. As much as anyone, he integrated modern psychology with theology. Some have seen him, especially in his later and most influential work, as the purveyor of a therapeutic, amoral theology that avoided polities and banished any genuine religious sensibility. Indeed, he was a theorist of therapy, urging his readers to say "'yes' to life." Young people who read his work in the 1950s, however, took from it not an affirmation of dominant values and ways of life but a critique. Although by the 1950s Tillich seldom engaged in explicit political discussion, his cultural critique helped fuel an impulse toward rebellion.<sup>35</sup>

Tillich reconciled allegiance to God with human freedom by refiguring God as "the ultimate," "the unconditional," or "the ground of Being." This diffuse concept of God made Tillich attractive to theological liberals (even if it remained unclear exactly what Tillich meant). He simply asserted that if one was seized by an "ultimate concern," then one was in a religious state. Thus he reconciled God with human inclinations.

The unconditional is a dimension of all things in this world, their "inner infinity." At particular moments in our lives, the unconditional "break[s] through a given form of individual existence, bringing it into union with the ultimate ground of meaning. It is the experience of being grasped by the essential power and meaning of reality," the really real.<sup>36</sup> Generally, however, we are out of touch with this ultimate realm, according to Tillich: "The sense of the immediacy of the origin, of the creative sources of man's life, [has been] lost." He lamented, "Under the conditions of human finitude and estrangement that which is essentially united becomes existentially split."<sup>37</sup>

Wholeness, or authenticity, was the goal for existentialists, and it displaced the more traditional objectives of salvation and even goodness. To the Christian existentialists, alienation and sin were one and the same; thus authenticity acquired moral freight as the opposite of sin. Overcoming sin was a matter of ending spiritual estrangement. It was not a matter of good works. Here Tillich found common ground with the neorthodox rejection of good works as the heart of faith and with the "realist" view of human nature as inherently flawed, a view popularized and put to various political uses by Reinhold Niebuhr.<sup>38</sup> The concept of existential sin, for others, encouraged not a complacency regarding human fallenness but, rather, a striving toward unity—and a promise of redemption.

Nonetheless, existentialist thinkers sometimes suggested a wholesale demolition of conventional codes of morality in search of authenticity, a kind of antinomianism. Carl Michalson, for example, asserted, "Life and desire and the quest for authenticity, better known to religious tradition as faith or salvation—these supersede the restrictions of mere correctness." Authenticity was the new morality.<sup>39</sup>

In practice, the pursuit of wholeness meant a situational ethics, which the Faith-and-Life Community preached with little reservation. "Emphasis was placed on contextual or situational ethics" in the curriculum, Jack Lewis noted, because "in the end . . . faith is a decision, not a proof-text. It is commitment rather than dogma; risk, not certainty." This seemed a doctrine appropriate to a new and changing world. In unprecedented circumstances, a personal feel for the authentic action might be all one had to go on. Dietrich Bonhoeffer redefined responsibility thus:

The responsible man acts in the freedom of his own self, without the support of men, circumstances or principles . . . nothing can answer for him, nothing can exonerate him, except his own deed and his own self. It is he himself who must observe, judge, weigh up, decide and act.

"Decide and act," uncertainty be damned: this was the existentialist credo. This was the way out of brokenness.<sup>40</sup>

The wholeness that Tillich promised would overcome psychological, spiritual, and social alienation, all at once. To Tillich, the achievement of an integrated and forceful "personality" would flow from our reunion with God, and it would go hand in hand with the achievement of community. Tillich agreed with Erich Fromm, a more expressly political and more dissident thinker, that "the right self-love and the right love of others are interdependent, and that selfishness and the abuse of others are equally interdependent." Tillich's insistence on a spiritual dimension to the achievement of community and personability, on the need to gain contact with the "really real," distanced him from the secular humanist ideal of autonomous personality which, he said, "tends to cut the individual off from his existential roots."<sup>41</sup>

The bond that joined individual persons to God was essentially the same as what bound humans together in a true community, according to Tillich: as love that in the 1950s and 1960s, Martin Luther King Jr. (who wrote his doctoral dissertation on Tillich) spoke of as the force that could judge America and overcome its divisions. It was the courageous love that judged in humility and in the knowledge of identity with the accused. It was the kind of love that would heal what was separated. The overcoming of existential alienation would be a "union-in-love with the ground of our being."<sup>42</sup>

According to Tillich and King, we experience this powerful love from God in moments of crisis when we exhaust our capacity to cope with our situation. This was what Tillich called the "human boundary-situation." It is the time when we experience the inadequacy of our freedom, in the proverbial "long dark night of the soul." The paradigm of the boundary-situation is Jesus' abandonment on the cross. God's love arrives when we are most bereft and vulnerable. This means that we must take risks, expose ourselves to vulnerability, be willing to experience the terror of our freedom; this is the way to make contact with the unconditional. In this way Tillich provided a religious parallel to the broader existentialist premium on risk taking. We are free to put ourselves in situations in which we are "radically threatened"; here we will find authenticity.<sup>43</sup>

Love is both redeeming and transcendent. It is the point of view from which we can render prophetic judgment on the world; again, *agape* is the love that forgives and reconciles while judging. Love is the source of "the transmoral conscience," the only sure guide to "ethics in a changing world," wrote Tillich. It is the only force that "can transform itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditional validity." These are the moral and political implications of Tillich's doctrine of love, which seemed amoral and apolitical to his critics. Love not only is the basis for spiritual and social integration but also provides the ground for criticism of the present and the guide for behavior toward other persons in uncertain, changing times. Tillich wrote that the social consequence of love as a guide to action is justice.<sup>44</sup>

Only by drawing these social consequences from God's love for us can we maintain a sense of connection with the unconditional. Spiritual integration cannot be achieved successfully without applying the rule of love to others. Tillich asserted what he saw as the political implication: "Without the collaboration of individuals within the movements for social justice, no spiritual reconstruction can be conceived of." Without a corollary concern for social justice, in Tillich's view, the ideal of personality can never be more than the secular humanist ideal of individual liberty—entailing the loss of meaning that he thought follows that ideal.<sup>45</sup>

If we experience God's love and spread it outward, living in a community of love, we will exist no longer in a state of meaninglessness, said Tillich, but in "the New Being." The New Being is a life "that overcomes the frustrations, the *fragmentariness*, and the *perversions* of human existence, bringing

*together that which is separated.*" It is an authentic state of existence. Provocatively, Tillich called it the "Protestant Gestalt of grace," a healing process. "The grace of God in Christ is a therapy," said Michalson. It "is the medicine of salvation; it heals the sickness of freedom." This promise of the New Being, Tillich declared, was what the Protestant churches should preach to the people of the twentieth century. The gospel of therapy and authenticity, not the promise of a heavenly afterlife, would prove meaningful to them.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, the search for wholeness and authenticity seemed by far the most salient aspect of the new theology for its student audience. Young people in the 1950s often couched the questions of "being" and authenticity in terms of a search for "identity." The staff of the Faith-and-Life Community reported that they and other campus ministers had found the question "Who am I?" was the one with which students had been "consumed" over the entire period since the end of World War II.<sup>47</sup> Students expressed feelings of alienation from their authentic selves and confusion about who they were or who they were supposed to be. The CFLC staff reported that many students were "acutely aware within themselves of a deep, uneasy, lonely emptiness . . . sick of the illusions, pretensions, fake roles and masks by which they hide from life as it is." One young woman said this was "an age of despair." Keith Stanford, another Community member, thought this problem was related to sexual confusion and repression. He observed a "widespread common necessity felt that one must again and again play out these masculinity or femininity pageants" and thought this compulsion pointed to "a deeper dislocation" or anxiety. "That we do not clearly know who we are as sexual beings is eloquent testimony that we do not know ourselves as *selves*," he thought.<sup>48</sup>

Students absorbed from Christian existentialism therapeutic concerns, as the preceding comments indicate, and they sometimes discussed this desire for personal knowledge and integrity in terms of becoming authentic or human. The "problem of ourselves," thought student Meg Godbold, was "the problem of what perspective, vision, effort, and courage we can call forth to embody competence and authentic style." In her view, to live as a human meant learning "how to live vitally and authentically." It was crucial to "know and embody very fully what it is to be human."<sup>49</sup> There was little theology in these complaints and ambitions. To many young people, the ideals of authenticity and humanism were the most powerful elements in the radical religion they encountered.

### *Breaking Through*

A cataclysmic break had to be made if one wished to enter the New Being. In a sense, this was the most important message of the Faith-and-Life

Community. The existentialist message of breakthrough updated the long North American Protestant tradition of regeneration and revival into a search for authenticity. The theologian Edward Hobbs declared that one had to "die to everything he ever has been, good intentions and all." To live for the sake of the things of this world was to exist in death, he asserted. "By abandoning our old understanding of ourselves—our false, death-dealing understanding—resolutely, honestly, responsibly," we could find new life. Emil Brunner wrote that God's grace meant "reconciliation," which amounted to a "complete reversal of the direction of man's life." If we could make this break, we might discover "the new life," in which "God has really come to man." The "new life" was "the New Birth, the Divine establishment of the 'new man.'"<sup>50</sup>

But this New Being required a dual breakthrough: to the "really real" and to other human beings. Only in community was the New Being possible. Dietrich Bonhoeffer agreed, and he offered a concrete model for the "break-through to community" and to the New Being: the discipleship of the New Testament. Writing about the early Christian church out of his own resistance to unjust authority, Bonhoeffer's modern discipleship was a conspiratorial community of resistance.

Bonhoeffer left an account of his experience running a renegade seminary in Germany in the 1930s, *Life Together*, which became a model for the Christian Faith-and-Life Community's "common life together." Here he specified the method by which the members of a spiritual community could simultaneously strengthen their bonds and affirm one another's individual personhood. This method was confession. "In confession the break-through to community takes place." In confession, we greeted one another as sinners: "The basis on which Christians can speak to one another is that each knows the other as a sinner," Bonhoeffer wrote. Confession was humiliating. Christ was humiliated on the cross, and those who followed him needed to embrace this, to admit the experience of humiliation as equally essential as risk as a landmark on the way to the new life. "In the deep mental and physical pain of humiliation," he wrote, "before a brother—which means, before God—we experience the Cross of Jesus as our rescue and salvation." As in Tillich's human boundary-situation, in confession, we chose to make ourselves vulnerable and thereby found God. "In confession the break-through to new life occurs," Bonhoeffer declared.<sup>51</sup>

The CFLC covenant's discussion of guilt and community reflected a desire for transparency, leading to breakthrough, strongly reminiscent of Bonhoeffer's account. In recognition of common guiltiness, the students affirmed, each would open herself or himself to "the gaze of another." The participants in the Community affirmed their intention of "exposing our-

selves to our fellows" and pledged to accept one another in their guilt. "The releasing of hidden guilt and the possibility of embracing the same, is that without which we cannot and do not have life." Participants felt that one of the most notable aspects of their experience at the Community was the "intensity of relationships" they developed. Many who came to the Community wanted "to enter into an open dialogue with other awakened people about what it means to live genuinely as human beings before one another."<sup>52</sup>

Joe Mathews encouraged such hopes for a breakthrough to community and for individual regeneration. Both his followers and his detractors saw him trying to induce the same kind of crisis he himself had known, a crisis of belief and identity. He had known his own boundary-situation, and his young charges would know theirs if he had anything to say about it. "Breaking people down" was important to him, as one of his protégés, Casey Hayden, later remembered. The idea that breakdown might lead to breakthrough was firmly rooted in both modern psychological theory and Protestant theology, and the Community echoed this idea clearly. Even Jack Lewis, a more conventional thinker than Mathews, saw crisis leading to salvation. "A breakthrough is a gift that we acknowledge when we have been broken through. Ask those who have returned from the valley of the shadow in mental illness, alcoholism, family disruption, business failure and other personal or social crises."

For some, breakdown did not lead to breakthrough. At least a couple of students from the Community ended up in mental hospitals, and some blamed Mathews, at least in part.<sup>53</sup> Foreshadowing the criticisms of new religious groups which, in the 1970s, were labeled cults, some former Community members criticized what they termed the "brainwashing" techniques that Mathews used on students. In 1964, several people complained that "a little 'cult'" had grown around a certain staff member, who went unnamed but who undoubtedly was Mathews. He "spent several weeks destroying every belief, every shred of self-confidence, every competence, and every anything else that composed our persons," one recalled. "This was a stated goal—so he could help bring us to the light." One might encounter "*ridicule and sarcasm* . . . if one did not accept the Community line." To some, this treatment seemed to violate the themes of openness, love, and honesty that the group championed. "This was the real paradox! The teachers emphasized openness, honesty, permissiveness, freedom of thought, etc.—and yet I found I had to vomit back the 'party-line' or I was tabooed a person who really didn't understand myself or was simply afraid to be honest with myself and others."<sup>54</sup>

Others were more measured in their criticism. "You could accept or reject the ideas of others, but you were pressured to say why," said one former participant in the Community, who then added, in a candid afterthought, "This pressure for responsibility is something I often resented." Doubtless by the early 1960s, the more conservative Christians felt embattled here in the face of the Community's increasingly radical theology. Casey Hayden offers a more favorable assessment, however. She moved into the Community after a short time in a women's dormitory at the university and found in Mathews a congenial ear for her dissatisfaction with mainstream campus life, as well as a kindness that others do not note. Some of Mathews's detractors saw him as domineering, even obnoxious, but not dangerous. Dorothy Burlage, far from unreserved in her enthusiasm for him, found Mathews "extreme, doctrinaire, zealous," though "brilliant." In his pursuit of breakdown and breakthrough, "nothing was sacred."<sup>55</sup>

When describing the experience of breakthrough, Bonhoeffer used an image of childbirth to invoke the ancient Christian tradition of spiritual rebirth. Why not simply begin again? One could be reborn in Christ as the "new man of the future." If others felt despair, the attitude of the child was the adequate response. Here, he wrote, the existential "echoless crying out from solitude into the solitude of self, the protest against all kinds of duress, has unexpectedly received an answer. . . . He who has grown to the man in exile and wretchedness grows to be the child as he finds his home." Whoever could make this leap back toward openness and simplicity could make the leap into the future. Bonhoeffer disdained "equivocation and pretence," and he hoped to find the way "back to simplicity and straightforwardness," evoking an Adamic hope for cultural and personal rebirth.<sup>56</sup>

Some participants in the Community reported just this kind of rebirth, evoking a modernist conversion experience. Lois Boyd, a student from the University of Oklahoma who came to the CFLC for a retreat in 1962, described how the Austin students communicated to her the themes of rebirth and freedom.

"Come on," they shouted at us, "You can LIVE." They shouted this at us in a lot of ways—poems, a movie, and those noisy pictures that came alive in that room and spoke to us. . . . They were calling out the same message. . . . over and over. . . . "Come on—You can do it—You have Cosmic Permission to LIVE!" . . . The air was sweet—Life was good—and—I KNEW IT WAS SO!

This "cosmic permission to live" echoed Tillich's "yes" to life. It also stood as an implicit rebuke to the conservative church culture native to the

region. The students were asserting that knowing God did not mean giving up one's freedom or life's pleasures. "There was room for freedom—room to LIVE!" Boyd exulted. She compared her experience at this retreat to a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis and a child emerging from a womb. As she explained, "Our Lives were so very new . . . and birth is such a delicate, fragile thing—and violent—and personal. But good! Only the newly Alive can know how good!" Now everything appeared in a new light. "Everything was so full of meaning," she said. "Oh God! Can LIFE be so wonderful?"<sup>57</sup>

### *The Appeal of Avant-Gardism*

Many members of the Community saw political implications in the breakthrough to community, to authenticity, and to new life. One contemporary observer noted that "debate among students [at the Faith-and-Life Community] is likely to center very rarely on whether a person should be baptised [*sic!*], and very commonly on such problems as militarism, racism, and poverty."<sup>58</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life and work inspired the social revolutionary liberation theology of Latin America. Working in a less polarized time and place when political radicalism was far less legitimate—the United States in the 1950s—Joe Mathews drew on Bonhoeffer's example to put across the view that political rebellion was part and parcel of the search for authenticity. The CFLC stated its goals thus:

"To Recover that kind of genuine dialogue among contemporary men which will issue in creative social structures capable of mediating authentic personal existence and new possibilities for justice for all men who must respond in one fashion or another to this world."<sup>59</sup>

Dialogue, community, and authenticity, it seems, were bound up with the pursuit of justice. This surprised some because the young people participating in this discussion came to their dissident conclusions by an oblique route; it was the personal desire for a breakthrough to authenticity that led them down this path.

If community was a necessary part of the breakthrough to authenticity, then, as suggested earlier, the question of who might belong to the community quickly arose. To Bonhoeffer, the inclusion of the weak and suffering in the community was a particular message of the gospels. "The exclusion of the weak and insignificant, the seemingly useless people, from a Christian community may actually mean the exclusion of Christ; in the poor brother Christ is knocking at the door."<sup>60</sup> If love was the cement of community, then the question became whom one should love. In the Sermon on the Mount,

Jesus urged love of one's neighbor. Some interpreted this conservatively, taking it to mean that we should love those near us or those like us. Bonhoeffer, internationalist and enemy of anti-Semitism, showed little patience with discriminations between neighbors and nonneighbors. "Who is my neighbour?" he asked mockingly. "Is it my kinsman, my compatriot, my brother Christian, or my enemy? . . . We have literally no time to sit down and ask ourselves whether so-and-so is our neighbour or not. We must get into action." Written in the Germany of the 1930s by an anti-Nazi preacher, the original subversive meaning of these words was clear. In the American South of the 1950s and 1960s, the words might disclose a similar meaning, suggesting the parallel, which partisans of the civil rights movement frequently drew, between the Nazis' treatment of Jews and the southern white treatment of African Americans.<sup>61</sup>

"Getting into action" meant political action. Instead of looking for a God of strength, the point was to accept a God of weakness and to accept responsibility oneself for doing what needed to be done. Merely bearing witness to evil events was not sufficient; Bonhoeffer decided, nor was empathy with the victims of injustice. The better response was political action intended to stop evil. If this meant becoming guilty oneself, then so be it. "I believe that God can and will bring good out of evil, even out of the greatest evil," Bonhoeffer wrote. "For that purpose he needs men who make the best use of every-thing," and he included the careful use of violence, as his approval of the plot against Hitler indicates.<sup>62</sup>

Years later, Marxist-influenced liberation theologians sought to form "base communities" that worked for social justice.<sup>63</sup> As noted earlier, these radicals drew on Bonhoeffer's example. Even though Bonhoeffer was no leftist, he offered a prophetic critique of a complacent, comfortable church. "To make a start, it should give away all its property to those in need," he wrote nonchalantly.<sup>64</sup> He envisioned a politically powerless church, an outpost of Christian spirit, what Harvey Cox, borrowing from Bonhoeffer, later called a *keygrammatic* church, announcing the "good news" of the gospels in a way that was relevant to the world, "not in the form of general propositions but in the language of specific announcements about where the work of liberator is now proceeding and concrete invitations to join in the struggle." Cox called such a church "God's *avant-garde*".<sup>65</sup>

Students in the Community looked beyond their individual selves for authenticity, and ultimately many of them embraced the role of cultural and political avant-garde. They confessed to "participation in the widespread estrangement and alienation in all social structures of our day" and issued a

call “to face the breakdown of authentic human relations in [our] marriages and homes.” They looked to social causes to explain personal difficulties and also to social solutions.<sup>66</sup> To “know yourself as a whole being,” Keith Stanford said, one needed to be a part of something bigger. Don Warren affirmed the sociality of personal identity, remarking, “We discover who we are[,] not in silent and lonely meditation, but in the midst of the world given to us.”<sup>67</sup> Participation in the wider world was the only possible antidote to personal malaise, the path to a personal breakthrough. Both men thought that not just community but “being freed for community *in mission* is to discover the meaning of personal freedom.”<sup>68</sup>

Participants in the Community grew disgusted with what they considered excessive introspection. They enthusiastically read a great deal of psychoanalytic literature, including Freud, Fromm, Rollo May, and Viktor Frankl, but they thought it was possible to be too psychologically oriented.<sup>69</sup> Dottie Adams derided the person who “is always prepared to pull the psychological tools out of his little black bag, and start dissecting.” This type reveled in the analysis of his “sick, sick society,” Carol Darrell pointed out; he “delights in being told how sick he is” himself, which left him “paralyzed.” Like the “cultured men” whom Kierkegaard despised, he killed everything with too much thought and avoided making decisions. “He has pushed *life* out of him,” said Darrell, and “has assumed the posture of a mere spectator.” He was afraid of decision and commitment.<sup>70</sup>

Such a person was afraid of life itself. Like many who would follow them in the coming years, the students here posed their alternatives in the rhetoric of life against death. Darrell characterized the navel gazer almost as a vampire: “He has all sorts of expressions for describing the world as one vast graveyard and he sees his job as constantly reminding people that they are dead.” Unfortunately, she thought, “this fad is so much a part of our entire way of living in the mid-twentieth century” that college students could not escape it.<sup>71</sup>

Don Warren agreed that the time for strictly personal rumination was past. “No longer silence, no longer inwardness unaccompanied, but life, full life, historical life . . . this is the demand and the possibility in our day.”<sup>72</sup> In the Community’s rhetoric, a world of life was a world in which the “brokenness” of which Marcel wrote was reversed. Excessive introspection only prolonged the state of alienation. “We have forgotten who it is that we are,” one prayer service read. “We have fragmented the world.” The participants intoned, “We have come to remember our life/for we are dead men.” They thanked God for giving them new life, which occurred, they said, “only in the world.”<sup>73</sup>

They spoke of a holistic “life of commitment” that extended to both per-

sonal relationships and public behavior; this was the slogan proclaimed on the cover of the Community’s main publication in 1962.<sup>74</sup> Mentors like Lewis and Mathews may have had in mind a social agenda from their earliest involvement with the CFLC. But for reasons of both principle and practicality, the Community’s literature often discussed social commitment in a relativist fashion, urging students to commit themselves to something. The members of the Community prayed for strength “to be responsible” in “politics . . . the social order . . . education . . . vocation.” When studying “Applied Christianity,” said Jack Lewis, they discussed in their classes how they could lead a “responsible life in the world,” in the realms of family, culture, politics, and economics.<sup>75</sup>

The Community’s sense of worldly responsibility sometimes displayed a sharper political edge. In a prayer service in 1961, after many words about death and fragmentation, those assembled recited a section on “The Life,” characterizing their new life in highly political terms.

*We have been called to live:*

.....  
.....  
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*to be responsive and sensitive;*

*Let us take upon ourselves the urgencies of this world;*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

*enable us to be responsible:*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

*to the people of this world*

*may we have compassion for*

*the starving*

*the sick*

*the estranged*

*the oppressed*

*the imprisoned*

These were sympathies that resonated with Bonhoeffer’s experience and thought. Committing themselves along these lines was the way, the prayer suggested, to overcome fragmentation. This was the path to a new life.<sup>76</sup>

Some of these Bonhoefferian sympathies were similar to those that Camus expressed. Students at the Community, like Dorothy Burlage and Casey Hayden, also read Camus.<sup>77</sup> Even though he was a declared atheist, there were many points of contact between him and the Christian existentialists, particularly the emphasis on individual decision and resistance against injustice as keys to human identity. Many politically minded Christians were attracted to his work, and Camus himself wrote that there was something of value in Christianity. In an essay quoted in the *Letter to Laymen*, entitled “The Unbeliever and Christians,” Camus stated that “the

world of today needs Christians who remain Christians.” He declared that true Christians must

voice their condemnation . . . they should get away from abstraction and confront the blood-stained face history has taken on today . . . I am waiting for a grouping of those who refuse to be dogs and are resolved to pay the price that must be paid so that man can be something more than a dog.<sup>78</sup>

A weekend seminar for laypersons at the Faith-and-Life Community included many readings from Camus, including this essay, as well as another entitled “No Bystanders.” All existentialist thinkers believed that people should “get away from abstraction.” Influenced by thinkers like Camus and Bonhoeffer, students at the Community thought that political engagement and commitment was the way to accomplish this. The way to be human was to refuse to be complicit.<sup>79</sup>

The Faith-and-Life Community’s leaders viewed the Community as a model for a new, avant-garde church that would “get away from abstraction” and “voice its condemnation.” Their mission was to announce the “good news,” the *kerygma*, in a more socially involved way than the conventional churches did: “The Church’s only reason for being is to declare this good news to man by living in the very midst of the world as the embodiment of her Gospel.” They would be a living example of the Christian message, but not in a monastic way.<sup>80</sup> The Community’s members often spoke of being on the “edge,” of “finding the edge.” The Community’s ideal, Al Lingo remembers, was

to be at the edge, between the no longer and the not yet. Most people lived in the no longer. Those things that were okay, that were ordinary institutions. But what was coming as the not yet was being forged like somebody who was laying track before the train came.... To point the way. The pioneer, the social pioneer.

He explains what this idea meant in practice in Texas in the late 1950s and early 1960s: “There was a cutting edge in race relations, to be on. And if you weren’t on the cutting edge, then where were you?”<sup>81</sup> God’s avant-garde could not avoid taking political risks.

This, finally, was what Community member Meg Godbold meant when she said that “we at the College House talk about responsible action, being historical people, and creating culture.” This meant acting as the social pioneer, entering into unknown territory, despite the “uncertainty of fulfillment.” It was “as a point of authenticity” that people should “engage ourselves this way,” she wrote. Casey Hayden recalls the importance of the “tragic hero or heroine” image to her and her friends at the Community,

something they derived partly from Camus’s writings. This meant that it was meaningful to take political action not only when “fulfillment” was likely but also when the risks were great and the promise of success small. Political action was taken not just for instrumental purposes but because this was the path to authenticity.<sup>82</sup>

In their desire to be “in the world,” Community members cast their gaze far and wide. They seemed hungry for knowledge of the world distant from Texas, for as much knowledge as they could get. They wanted to feel connected to what seemed like the most exciting developments in the world—“the edge.” Starting in the late 1950s, CFLC staff members took summer trips to different parts of the world, making contact with clergy embarked on experiments that had something in common with theirs, and they returned to Austin to give exhaustive reports on what they had learned. Community members were assigned different parts of the world to research—economically, politically, culturally—and reported back to their fellows. They studied the political movements that at this time were sweeping both Europe and the Third World—particularly the nationalist movements in the Third World, which these American students found exhilarating, in part because of the role played by other students in those movements. As noted earlier, after 1956, many foreign students at UT lived in the Community, and no doubt this contributed to this interest in world events. Students here were sympathetic to the nonaligned movement among Third World countries. They maintained the same interest in the worldwide ecumenical movement that Bonhoeffer and his colleagues had shown in the 1930s. They also sympathized with Third World nationalism, seeing it as inevitable and healthy, and they thought an enlightened ecumenical Christianity could play a role in abetting that movement.<sup>83</sup>

Although the Community’s staff had national and worldwide contacts and although they saw their experiment as a model for other churches, the students were most concerned with fulfilling their role as avant-garde in their more immediate environment, especially the university. Wesley Poorman, a seminary intern who worked on the CFLC staff in 1961, wrote that the campus minister should “gather a residual body of committed Christians who will be a leavening force, not only within the community of faith, but also within the community of learning.” According to Lingo, among Community members, “the commonality . . . was that people knew they were doing something on behalf of the university. That our mission was to somehow be a light in the midst of the university.”<sup>84</sup>

If the Community’s members were interested in resisting oppressive authority, in the South the challenge of racial oppression was presented to them more clearly than any other, especially after the advent of the civil

rights movement in the mid-1950s. On several occasions, Community members expressed solidarity with African Americans. As noted earlier, the Women's Branch admitted a black woman in 1954. As an undergraduate member of the Community in the mid-1950s, Lingo, after some prodding by a fellow Community member, went to the black students' small dormitory on campus to ask the students there why they were bothered that the Cowboys, an honorary society of UT undergraduate men of which Lingo was a member, were preparing once again to stage their annual charity minstrel show. After spending several hours there on a couple of evenings, he thought he had learned a few things, and he proceeded to organize a petition against the minstrelsy, to argue at Cowboys meetings that this tradition should be terminated, and to communicate the African American students' concerns to a dean at the university. He did not succeed in stopping the show. (The minstrel shows continued until the early 1960s.) But, Lingo reflects, "It was a breakthrough for me—you know? . . . No one necessarily would have raised that for me at the student dining hall or the fraternity; you know? But the Christian Faith-and-Life Community was made up of people who—who were sensitive and aware and responsive to things."<sup>85</sup>

Later, as a member of the Community staff, he traveled to small-town, all-white churches outside Austin to preach sermons against segregation and in support of civil rights demonstrations.<sup>85</sup>

image." This emphasis on style accounted for a good deal of the mystique that the Community acquired around the UT campus. The search for a "life image" was an attempt to generate a contemporary substitute for something that had always been culturally important. The Community suggested that people always had given their lives meaning and had found guidance for their actions in central images or symbols. But the old images were no longer plausible, and a self-conscious search for new images was *invent*.<sup>87</sup>

As noted earlier, Mathews had little use for the familiar symbols of faith, but he was an apostle of symbolism, of drama; indeed, his own destruction of the old symbols gave him the opportunity to enact his own drama of rebellion. He encouraged Community members to experiment with new images from the worlds of poetry, film, and drama that were meaningful to them. Mathews viewed worship as an important site of symbolism, "the self-conscious symbolic activity of the faithful community." Members of the staff took turns leading prayer services and were encouraged to design their own formats. The script for the daily service was called the "choreography."<sup>88</sup> In these efforts, the Community echoed Tillich's view that we could find in all things

and acts a dimension of depth and meaning that was often missing, as well as Erich Fromm's call to recover "the forgotten language" of symbolic life.<sup>89</sup> Casey Hayden says she took from her experience in the Community the desire to "make of one's life a sacrament."<sup>90</sup> Yet the Community aestheticized worship, affirming the need for symbolic richness in its rituals; thus to make life into a sacrament was, perhaps, also to make one's life into art.

No one registered the effect of the Community's dramatic mystique more sharply than did Ronnie Dugger, who was fascinated with Mathews's persona. "Joe Mathews, the inspired merlin, the mystifying poet of prayer to one's own privacy, genuine, fraud, the leader of the Community," Dugger mused. "Could it be that Joe knew god but just wasn't introducing him around?" Joe wouldn't exactly say, but he wouldn't with transfixing grace." Dugger's own abandonment of his inherited faith may have fostered the

imbivalence he felt about Mathew's sincerity. It is remarkable that despite his own apostasy, Dugger still found in Mathew the intoxicating, elusive promise of hidden wisdom, the mystic implication of knowledge deeper than what we see routinely on the surface of life. This was the promise of "real," the sense of which anthropologist Clifford Geertz, echoing Illich, asserts is the kernel of genuine religious experience.<sup>91</sup>

places and who felt a sense of community as a subset of the larger student population were encouraged in this political action by the Community.<sup>86</sup> Such political interventions were appropriate to the “time of experiment.” Political risk taking was one facet of a more general experimentalism that infused the Faith-and-Life Community, an improvisational attitude whose theatricality was part of the Community’s avant-gardism. This dramatic view of life, including political life, was important throughout the dissident culture of the 1960s. Community members did not shrink from the aestheticist connotations of the avant-garde role; on the contrary, they frankly spoke of their abiding concern with style, their desire to cultivate an appealing “life

vehemently with its intellectual and ethical approach. Shortly after Mathews arrived at UT, in a timely, microcosmic clash of perspectives, he and Silber held a series of debates in the University Y. Each presented his own response to the question “What is the most important thing in life?” Mathews represented the call for individual decision, based on authentic feeling and the concrete situation; Silber stood for the rational application of clear principle.

Each night the crowd grew bigger, hundreds eventually overflowing the room. Samuel Beckett’s minimalist play *Waiting for Godot* had recently been staged at UT, and it became a point of contention between Silber and Mathews, each shouldering an ego of no small mass, competing for the mantle of intellectual mentor to the brightest students on campus. Some said the play reflected an existentialist outlook and spoke to the present age of anxiety, despair, and isolation, an era that perhaps, some young people suggested, was passing. Mathews expressed the view that Beckett’s work remained quite meaningful, and Silber contended that on the contrary, *Godot* was “empty” of meaning. He viewed it as an expression of hopelessness, not at all useful to young people’s attempts to grapple with the world around them. Despite Silber’s considerable forensic skills, it was to be the existentialist outlook, far more than the rationalist one, that enlivened young people in the years ahead.<sup>92</sup>

### *The Contribution of Christian Existentialism*

This one institution illustrates, in a particularly vivid and direct way, the broader influence of existentialist ideas on the emerging dissident youth culture of the 1960s. Students who spent time at the Christian Faith-and-Life Community in the years between 1952 and 1962 subsequently moved toward diverse efforts at self-fashioning and social change, and the ideas they absorbed at the Community continued to shape these activities for many years.

Strong personal links connected the Community to the early new left. After college, Casey Hayden worked for the YWCA and became an important member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), laboring in the civil rights movement of the Deep South. She also served on the national executive committee of Students for a Democratic Society and was an influential presence at that group’s 1962 Port Huron Conference, whence came the highly popular *Port Huron Statement*. In the mid-1960s Hayden helped spur the formation of the women’s liberation movement with her writings, widely circulated among the American left, on the position of women in American society. Later on, she became deeply engaged

with the counterculture of the era. Dorothy Burlage at first followed a similar path after graduation. She worked for the Y, in SDS, and with various civil rights and antipoverty groups; in addition to this activism, she was able to attend Harvard Divinity School for a time. In 1970 she returned to school and became a child psychotherapist. Tom Hayden was the main author of the *Port Huron Statement*, approved a year after his marriage to Casey, which took place at the Faith-and-Life Community. The similarity between certain ideas at work in the Community and those expressed at Port Huron may be due to the distinct influence of the Austin experiment as well as to the general currency of these ideas at the time.<sup>93</sup>

Others who “graduated” from the Community went elsewhere. Claire Johnson Breihan worked for more than two decades in the Austin Independent School District as a specialist in racial integration. In the 1960s and 1970s, Al Lingo worked with Joe Mathews to build a dissident, even revolutionary, church along the radical lines that the Faith-and-Life Community had laid out. Afterward, Lingo continued his involvement in countercultural, new age, and civil rights activity. Dick Simpson became a scholar of African politics, a prominent activist in Chicago city politics, and finally an ordained minister. Joann Thompson also worked with Mathews, later becoming an activist on health care issues, based at New York City’s Riverside Church. For all these people and many of their contemporaries, the quest for authenticity and the sense of social mission were thoroughly intertwined.<sup>94</sup>

Nonetheless, the Community split in 1962 over the issue of how to balance the two. Mathews’s goal, in Judy Schleyer Blanton’s view, was to “infiltrate” the mainline Protestant churches and to use them as a base for the pursuit of a “social justice agenda.” Jack Lewis thought Mathews was scaring away the financial donations that the Community needed and still sought from well-heeled Texans. He resolved to steer the CFLC back to a more conventional religious education curriculum. But rather than be fired, Mathews quit, and a majority of the staff members left with him. They went to Chicago where they started the Ecumenical Institute, which undertook organizing projects in localities around the world. This broke the creative tension between personal and political concerns that the Community had cultivated. By the mid-1960s, the CFLC was no longer a religious study center but, rather, a human potential workshop experimenting with various therapeutic techniques that arrived from the West Coast. This was not a therapeutics of political opposition. Lewis, no longer in control, left soon after Mathews did to become a campus minister at Cornell University, where he took part in peace protests during the Vietnam War and antinuclear demonstrations into the 1980s. In Austin, the Faith-and-Life Community

moved fully into a search for personal breakthrough that was unconnected to social and political activism.<sup>95</sup>

Until 1962, the Faith-and-Life Community served as a medium for communicating existentialist themes that were becoming attractive to many young people in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The sense of anxiety and the need to confront it, the preference for the concrete over the abstract, the importance of decision and personal responsibility, the attractiveness of situational ethics, the desire for a sense of vital life, and, above all, the search for a life of authenticity in touch with the “really real”: all these ideas were circulating with increasing velocity on the nation’s campuses and not always in a religious context. But especially in the conservative provinces, Christian institutions and a Christian intellectual framework enjoyed a cultural legitimacy that left students particularly open to the power of these ideas, when those ideas were encountered in this religious context. The Protestant content and evangelical undertone of the Community helped it channel these currents of spiritual and cultural ferment into the dominant spiritual culture of cold war America.

In addition to providing cover for new ways of thinking, Christian existentialism also contributed distinct elements to the broader existentialist vocabulary. First, it grafted a strong sense of moral and social responsibility onto the search for a vital life. Christian theology certainly had no lock on morality; even among existentialists, the Christian theologians were not the only ones who articulated a strong moral dimension, as Camus’s writing demonstrates. Other secular existentialists, however, whether philosophers or novelists, had only a tenuous grasp on a moral imperative. Observers like John Silber could claim some justification if they experienced trepidation when pondering the moral and political stability of the existentialist perspective. In secular existentialism, a moral dimension seemed to be optional; in Christian existentialism, it was not. (Even for Camus, one might argue, the moral dimension was a residue of the Christian tradition from which he was estranged.)

Community was another theme more characteristic of Christian existentialism than of existentialism in general. This became an important emphasis for the new left, in both thought and action, from the *Pont Huron Statement* to the agricultural communes and cooperative stores of the 1970s. Where did this idea, in such a self-conscious form, come from? The idea of a community of close relationships as the solution to a culture of alienation and as the incubator of truly strong and autonomous persons—in short, as a solution to the problems that Arthur Schlesinger thought the “age of anxiety” posed for a democracy—descended perhaps most of all from religious sources.

Although nonreligious communitarian traditions existed in American life, they were not so deeply embedded in the cultural mainstream of American life as was religious communitarianism, and they could not speak powerfully to so many Americans.<sup>96</sup> Instead, the civil rights movement did more than anything else to spread the communitarian approach to the conundrum of democracy and alienation, with its religious idea of a “beloved community” that sustained struggles for justice, that bred vigorous citizenship, and that served as a utopian ideal for all of society. The idea of the beloved community resonated with some young white people, because it answered the unarticulated needs that emerged from the historical experiences in which their lives were rooted and because it echoed other messages they had heard. Among the most important cultural sources of those other messages, which combined with the message of the civil rights movement to create a powerful political momentum behind the ideal of a community of political opposition, was Christian existentialism.

Love was the most distinctly Christian theme of all. This was a crucial theme of both the civil rights movement and, later on, the new left and the counterculture. For all their emphasis on the need for reasoned deliberation in political life, the young radicals who approved the *Pont Huron Statement* announced to the world their conviction that humans possessed an “unfilled” potential for “love” as well as for reason.<sup>97</sup> More significant than their concern with the human desire for love was their belief that this desire was politically relevant. Love was viewed as a key ingredient in the attainment of human dignity, the fulfillment of the human spirit, and the achievement of authenticity. It was the fount of creative response to the challenging world around them and the tie that bound the beloved community. It is difficult to see where this emphasis on love might have come from, directly or indirectly, except from a religious context. Love was not always a theme in existentialism; even for a secular existentialist who was deeply moral, like Camus, love did not occupy the place of importance that it did for religious thinkers, and especially for Christian thinkers.<sup>98</sup> According to Christian theology, love came from God to human beings and thence from humans to one another. For the civil rights movement of the 1960s, closely linked to an institutional base in African American churches, these connections remained salient. Young white activists in later years were far less likely to recall the religious roots of this still powerful element in their own outlook. They were left with a vision of a society and a community suffused with love that was in effect the residue of a Christian perspective.

Finally, there was the mystic search for something deeper in life, for the “really real.” As noted earlier, some thinkers call knowledge of the “really real”

the essence of religious experience. In Tillich's terms, it was a search for "the ground of Being," for "the ultimate." Existentialism, in any form, expressed a desire for a life of meaning. But this meaning was not necessarily something transcendent; it might be something created entirely out of the materials of this world. Alongside the Faith-and-Life Community's worldliness, however, there lay the suspicion that in the world they might find something more exhilarating and vital than what they had seen before, something more studied, they combined Bonhoeffer's command to go to the public place with Tillich's challenge to confront the boundary-situation. They wanted to be both on the edge and in the world. They sought to find, somehow, the extraordinary in the ordinary, the margin in the center. This mystic quest, stemming originally from a religious context and continuing to reflect a spiritual desire, shimmered around the borders of the postmaterialist, postscarcity sensibility of radical politics in the 1960s.

The discussion in the Faith-and-Life Community encoded and validated the link between personal and political concerns, a link that became increasingly important to the emerging youth radicalism of the era. One student noted that the Community gave him the "freedom to talk about my questions"—questions of self, of God, of life, and of the larger world—and it encouraged students to look for connections among these concerns. Geertz writes that the "watchword" of the religious perspective is "rather than detachment . . . commitment; rather than analysis, encounter." If this is true, then the search for authenticity that the young existentialists of this era pioneered was religious indeed. According to the *Port Huron Statement*, the spirit of "encounter" characterized the participatory democracy that the new left envisioned.<sup>99</sup> In the coming years, the quest for authenticity took young people through a path of commitment and encounter that only the most ambitious among them might have expected.

ONLY AMID THE PITCH and personal upheaval of social change did existentialism and the search for authentic life appear as signposts pointing to political engagement. The civil rights movement ultimately provided that context of upheaval. Yet by the time the interracial youth wing of the civil rights movement took institutional shape, with the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960 on the heels of that year's sweeping tide of black student sit-ins at retail establishments across the South, the search for authenticity had already become part of a political consciousness of a sector of white youth who favored activism, even protest. In the late 1950s, groupings of white youth in the South and around the country crystallized into nodes of liberal political dissidence, able and willing to break out into insurgency, almost seeming to wait for opportunities to do so. The civil rights movement gave them their greatest opportunity and pushed many of them toward the left.

These young people, influenced by existentialism, came to believe that activism was the path to authenticity. A more direct influence on them, however, was the social gospel tradition of Christian liberalism, descended from the early twentieth century, which provided them with a straightforward defense of political liberalism, with adult models of responsible dissidence, and with an institutional base for protest activity.<sup>100</sup> Christian liberalism communicated to young people the message that they could live a life

### *The Issues of Life: The University YMCA-YWCA and Christian Liberalism*

*From the Politics of Authenticity  
to the Politics of Identity*

*Everything we thought was wrong is still wrong and more besides, and we are without the institutions, influence, or understanding to help change it.*

ELINOR LANGER, 1973

*The most important factor in understanding the history of radicalism in the United States over the last twenty years or so . . . is the defeat of the left in the mid-seventies.*

BARBARA EPSTEIN, 1991

BY THE SEASON of defeat and victory, winter 1973, new left radicals had been lamenting their movement's demise for several years.<sup>1</sup> We may conclude, echoing Samuel Clemens, that the earliest obituaries were exaggerated. At least as great, however, is the error of those who, since the official end of the United States-Vietnam War, have insisted on the new left's continued existence. These include leftists hostile to the suggestion that history has passed them by and rightists who wish to preserve the bogeys that proved to be so useful through the ages of Nixon and Reagan.<sup>2</sup> Sympathy may be in order for those who cling to the past, but we ought not endorse their illusions. Things come to an end.

The era of 1960s radicalism ended with anything but a bang. The apocalypse did not come, and leftists did not recognize the rightist victory of 1968 as their own defeat (they ceded that honor to the liberals). There was, after all, plenty of leftist activism in the immediate post-1968 period. In these years a new generation of radicals maintained a coherent leftist community in Austin, centered in the *Rag*, agitating on a broad range of issues. The demise of SDS liberated the left in certain ways, especially in terms of addressing gender issues. The radicals now paid more attention to local politics as well, helping elect Jeff Jones to the presidency of the UT student government in 1970, where he became a spokesperson for a left-wing viewpoint (and intermittently an irritant to John Silber). Leftists forged an elec-

total coalition with the city's African American and Latino voters, bringing a newly liberal (but still, to them, a disappointingly conservative) city council into power by 1973.

The post-SDS Texas left also embarked on a new program of support work for striking wage laborers during a period of escalating labor conflict, partly because of the influence of Jones, whose father had organized a local of school bus drivers in his hometown of Brentwood, New York, and that of Pat Curley, who started a group called "Student for Strikers" in 1969.<sup>3</sup> By walking pickets and raising money and awareness, young white Austinites supported agricultural laborers, bus drivers, machine workers, and, most of all, the mainly Latina furniture workers participating in the protracted dispute at the Economy Furniture factory in Austin, who provided "an example to all who would struggle," in the view of one Austin new leftist.<sup>4</sup> Fitting this newfound concern into their familiar humanist framework, the leftists announced, "The struggle of working people for better wages and conditions is only part of a much deeper demand—the demand to be treated like human beings." Reiterating the new working-class analysis, they reasoned, "Most of us will be workers when we get out of UT . . . our basic situations will be the same as that of the strikers."<sup>5</sup> On this basis, ironically, they forged far more of a worker-student alliance than PL ever did.

In the 1970s, young leftists were more likely to call themselves socialists than at any time since the lonely twilight of Stalinism in the 1950s, yet their socialism was distinctly evolutionary, not revolutionary. In the absence of revolutionary expectations, the last cohort of the new left refashioned their movement into a new liberalism, a liberalism that emphasized cultural change. The term *revolution* did not vanish from sight, but, like the German Social Democratic Party of the early twentieth century, many new left radicals in these years "continued to preach revolution and to practice reform."<sup>6</sup> The early 1970s witnessed refurbished cooperation between leftists and insurgent liberals on issues such as the war and abortion rights, indicating in its waning days the new left's tropism toward liberalism.

One Austin leftist complained in 1972 that the local left's politics had become "the same as that of the *Texas Observer*"—liberal eclecticism.<sup>7</sup> He correctly perceived the incrementalism of this multi-issue politics, its tendency to work to abate the various manifestations of a system that leftists still perceived as fundamentally rotten, rather than trying to overturn that system with one central attack. This was formally similar to the multi-issue politics that had attracted the original group of local new left radicals in the early 1960s, but experience and experiment had expunged the radical movement's sense that such a politics would lead to a change in the underlying structure

of political life. The most serious bid for a new left politics that would be radical in a literal sense—working to identify and get at the society's political roots rather than clipping back its branches—was the feminist left of this late phase. Several factors undermined this effort, however. The need to agitate around concrete issues tended toward reformism; the pervasive cultural politics of the new left leaned toward reformism of a new kind, a cultural reformism; and too few men found a feminist left politics attractive.

In 1972 some Austin leftists who still thought a national organization was a good idea met with others in Davenport, Iowa, to plot the course of the New American Movement (NAM), a democratic socialist group that emphasized feminism and looked to a revitalized union movement as a potential political ally.<sup>8</sup> Its concern with participatory democracy in both the planned movement and the larger society appealed to those whom the factionalism in SDS had offended and harked back to the original vision of the *Port Huron Statement*.<sup>9</sup> Left-wing publicists and activists around the country in the early 1970s, such as Staughton Lynd and James Weinstein, hoped to build a popular radical movement based on such an agenda.<sup>10</sup> The vision of a democratic socialism lingered throughout the 1970s and 1980s, nursed by leaders like Michael Harrington, but it proved politically inert, unable to point the way to a new society or to attract large numbers of activist followers.<sup>11</sup> Not many had the stomach to travel this long and not very promising road.

Political and economic conditions were inestimably less propitious than those that had given birth to the new left's expansive optimism a decade earlier. The breakneck economic growth of the 1960s, which led stock market enthusiasts to label it the "go-go" decade, had stalled, and the projections of a future society with too much wealth and leisure for its own good evaporated. The political context was set by Nixon's race-tinted "wedge" tactics, his bunkered escalation of the air war against Indochina, and his administration's crackdown on radicals. This crackdown, featuring the liberal use of agents provocateurs in groups such as the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement, and various new left splinter organizations in the post-SDS period, was administered largely through the FBI's COINTELPRO. All these aggressive moves by the Nixon administration, both at home and abroad, blunted criticism on Nixon's right flank concerning his pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and his accommodation to increased social welfare spending and environmental regulation. By the early 1970s, a time when strong and confusing political crosscurrents blew across a hardening economic landscape, the American left had become a

mere pawn in a larger political game, a useful diversion to those in power rather than a truly important force in the nation's political life.

In addition, cultural conditions had changed in ways fatal to a revitalized new left. The African American movement, faced with problems of its own, was not about to play the catalytic role for white people that it had around 1960, and the union movement, despite its stirrings of democratic activism, was not really an adequate substitute. The attraction that white youth had developed for African American culture in the mid-twentieth century and that had underpinned the black movement's galvanic political effect on idealistic young whites had no parallel in the relations among youth of different classes in the 1970s. Participatory democracy itself had lost much of its allure, the victim of incessant criticism from within the left itself for both its inattention to economic issues and the "tyranny of structurelessness." Efforts to revive a national new left represented the chastened vision of survivors, and as with previous incarnations of this type, its fate was perhaps to be respected but not followed.

In the twenty-five years since the new left unraveled, the United States has not seen a cohesive, organized left regroup. If an organized left were to appear before the millennium, it would end an interregnum double the length of the hiatus between the old and new lefts, which lasted perhaps twelve years, from 1948 to 1960. Many Americans continue to hold leftist views, and there has been plenty of leftist activism between the mid-1970s and the late 1990s, but leftists generally have carried on their politics as individuals, mainly in issue-specific organizations in which they have collaborated with liberals.

Without compelling paths of insurgency to follow, the new left and its existential politics settled back into the larger politics, culture, and society that gave birth to them. This process of partial reconciliation illuminates the developments of the 1970s and 1980s and also reinforces the understanding that the rebellions of the 1960s were in no sense alien to the United States but, rather, were representative products of national and global culture in the cold war era. Temporary economic luxury allowed the flowering of a post-scarcity radicalism. Superpower competition and economic obsolescence impelled the process of racial decolonization, domestically and worldwide (though that "liberation" proved largely formal in both settings). In neither case did fortuitous circumstances produce momentous political change. Circumstance opened the path for people to make history (if not exactly as they pleased) by pursuing long-developing ideals: in one case, the industrial-era yearning for authenticity and, in the other, the broken promises of eighteenth-century democratic revolution and nineteenth-century civil war.

In the 1960s, romantic dreams, religious impulses, and Enlightenment ideals all refreshed the American vision of citizenship, a citizenship of equality and vitality. The racial changes wrought by the civil rights movement quickened the desire of young, white, middle-class Americans to transcend alienation and achieve authenticity, to throw off the weight of weightlessness. The new left's vision of racial equality, participatory democracy, a restored manhood, and an end to the "age of anxiety" seemed as clear then as it seems poignant and time bound now. In place of the Marxist vision of communism, this was the new Prometheanism, the new utopia. By the 1970s, however, few American radicals really thought they would reach utopia.

In the quarter century since the new left's end, leftist politics in the United States has formed along two axes, each of which has been polarized. The first such split is the division between utopianism and reformism; the second results from the breakdown of the new left synthesis of the quest for authenticity and social justice.

In 1950 the sociologist David Riesman, no leftist, nonetheless called for utopian thinking, for he thought it appropriate to a postscarcity age.<sup>12</sup> The young leftists and counterculturalists of the 1960s, agreeing that this was a new age beyond scarcity, furnished all the utopianism anyone could have asked for. By the late 1960s, on the left, this was codified as "libertarian socialism," a society in which everyone had the wherewithal to pursue her or his own project of self-liberation, whether homely or visionary, and in which no "puritanical" restrictions would stand in the way.

The vision of a libertarian socialism, contradictory as it may appear to many, has lingered in the American left. Yet in practical terms, few radicals have advanced either a detailed outline for such a society or political strategies for making the great leap forward to it. Instead, like liberals sympathetic to cultural modernism, leftists have worked on a variety of fronts to preserve existing liberties, such as abortion rights, and to expand, bit by bit, the frontiers of cultural liberty, for example, by establishing legal protections for gay and lesbian citizens.

On material issues, leftists have taken a similar approach, working either to extend—or, more commonly, to guard against severe retrenchments of—protections for workers and consumers, progressive taxation, affirmative action programs designed to redistribute opportunities in racial and gender terms, and environmental regulation. Leftists also have continued to dissent from post-Vietnam imperial projections into the Third World. Overall, circumstances and the lack of any coherent political alternative have led most of those with radical sympathies toward the very liberal eclecticism of which the disappointed leftist cited earlier accused his com-

rades in 1972. Utopianism has survived but is detached from the wide-ranging activism of American leftists.

The search for authenticity also lives on, but in a less politically charged way than in the period between 1955 and 1975. Critics always claimed that existentialism was apolitical, but during that span of years, they were wrong. The politics of authenticity has changed, however, and the change is more accurate now. Americans—left, right, and middle—now look for authenticity, for reconnection to the divine and to communities that seem ancient and organic. The search for authenticity has become, in fact, politically promiscuous; the once-strong association between this quest and left-wing politics remains undamaged only in the minds of a few. The search for authenticity has become so pervasive a yearning in the United States, its open expressions so chockablock in our popular culture and so evident across the political spectrum, as to render it less clearly a dissident, much less a specifically leftist, resource.<sup>13</sup> This further demonstrates the close links between the leftist existential politics of the 1960s and the larger culture that produced it. Yet radical movements require both a rootedness in the dominant culture—in its hopes and values—and a compelling claim that only in the path of radicalism can individuals achieve those hopes.

Surprisingly, authenticity has remained a salient term of discussion in the United States even as its opposite, alienation, has dropped from sight. One of the ironies of the new left is the extent to which it apparently succeeded in banishing talk of anxiety and alienation from the political vocabulary of the United States. In the political culture of dissent, nothing in the 1970s changed more certainly than this. The young white radicals of this era were disinclined to keep their complaints to themselves, so we might infer that the problem of anxiety ceased to vex them. The glint of triumph peeks through the rubble of defeat. Perhaps the relevance of authenticity, as an ideal, lingers after it is widely achieved.

But even if the cultural problems that the new left's existential politics addressed remain, political shifts have made less legitimate any discussion of inner alienation. In the 1950s and 1960s, this discussion linked personal unhappiness to defects allegedly at the root of the social, political, or cultural systems in which Americans lived. Since the victory of the right in the late 1960s and the eclipse of the new left, public discourse in the United States has been increasingly dominated by conservative criticism of the national state. In a sense, the government has come to stand in for the malign social, economic, and cultural forces that leftists targeted for criticism in the 1960s. Of course, the new left did its share to delegitimize the American state, unwittingly contributing to perhaps the most powerful strategy of the post-

1960s right.<sup>14</sup> This channeling of political complaint is less conducive to discussion of personal alienation. Certainly one can be alienated from the state, from the formal political system, and new left radicals placed no small emphasis on this phenomenon. Yet they tended to view that kind of alienation as positive, a resource for insurgency, and not as the subject of a political and cultural critique. It is the problem of inner alienation that has almost vanished from public discourse.

Perhaps the new left and the counterculture together simply exhausted existentialism as a path of dissent, demonstrating to all who looked that it led to a cul-de-sac. The American left's principal problem since the 1960s has been less to decide what kind of society it wants than to discover how to make that dream a reality. The problem of social change has proved intractable. Only over the course of decades have middle-class American radicals, the descendants of the “new radicals,” gradually admitted the truth, especially painful to people of their social background, that forces much larger than they have directed the course of change. One important element in the eclipse of existential politics was the increased respectability of economic analysis in the left of the 1970s.

After Mariann Wizard left the Communist Party, she established a foundation in Austin dedicated to “the pursuit of happiness.” Many of her (non-Communist) comrades responded with incredulity, even outrage. This was frivolous, they said. Scarcity had returned, as any wage earner could relate; the pressing need was to build bridges across class lines. If you want to advocate social change, Wizard retorted in vintage 1960s style, “you gotta have an alternative.” The existing society was one of unhappiness, so she advocated happiness.<sup>15</sup> Postscarcity politics lost some of its luster as leftists recognized changing material realities and the class character of their revolt. If existentialist hopes lingered, their expression became less legitimate even for the left.

structural crisis and transformation faded, replaced by a picture of politics in the United States as a complex web of interactions among a set of distinct groups, any of which might apply pressure to the “system” in which they all operated.

Political pluralism was not all there was to 1960s radicalism, however. Both the religious-romantic search for authenticity and the Enlightenment desire for inclusion and equality had strong universalist pedigrees. These visions respectively asserted a uniform relation to the cosmos and demanded a uniform relation to the polis. These individualist values came together, perhaps paradoxically, in the vision of a beloved community. In that community, 1960s radicals expected to find individuals who shared universal experiences and needs, not least the need for community itself. The beloved community promised, as well, to meld the differences among the groups that previously had merely negotiated the terms of their interaction, to make a new, redemptive community of all. One can view this as a characteristically American utopia—the universal nation, the transnational identity—that accompanies the pluralist workaday understanding of society.<sup>17</sup> For all the practical pluralism of the new left, these radicals yearned for some transcendental point above the interactive fray from which they might issue prophetic criticism of their society. An old vision of personal transformation and transcendence, a Protestant heritage to which all Americans could lay claim, even if unknowingly, echoed, as Gitlin suggests, in the new left’s “rhetoric of total transfiguration.”<sup>18</sup>

With the benefit of time, we can see the universalist vision of rebirth, community, and ultimately revolution tugging at the pluralist understanding of political change, giving the new left’s story a measure of pathos. These young white radicals desired a breakthrough to solidarity with “others” that has remained, from the acme of the interracial civil rights movement until the present, an ineradicable aspect of the vision of breakthrough to new, authentic life. Gitlin views the investment of hope in “external agencies” of revolution in the late 1960s, whether the Third World or the poor, as a new left “search for surrogate universals” to fill the role that the proletariat played in the forsaken Marxist scenario. In the 1980s, especially in the “sanctuary” movement against the Reagan administration’s policies toward Central America, the politics of “solidarity,” aiming for connections between the privileged and “others,” remained strong on the American left. Here, as in the days of the civil rights movement, white Americans felt they might achieve meaning and authenticity by making a moral connection with those of a different station and background, even as many of their contemporaries searched for authenticity among their “own kinds.” From the 1960s to the

1990s, these universalist impulses betrayed a deep-rooted uneasiness with the fragmented quality of the pluralist search for social change.<sup>19</sup>

If the new left struck an uncertain balance between universalism and pluralism and if the universalist element in new left politics suffered a severe blow from the declining salience of the existentialism to which it was attached, perhaps this explains the laments heard in the 1990s over the declension of dissent into “identity politics.”<sup>20</sup> That such a politics ascended between the 1970s and the 1990s, both on the left and more generally in the United States, surely is true. The explanations offered for this development are familiar.

In the early and middle 1960s, a grand alliance for progress made great strides, especially concerning civil rights. Depending on who tells the story, either African Americans, under the influence of black power doctrine, first abandoned the coalition, or else they were pushed out by white liberals who wanted black votes but whose payoff was disappointing. Then women, infected with the separatist virus, departed as well. “On the model of black demands came those of feminists, Chicano, American Indians, gays, lesbians.”<sup>21</sup> Soon the right began its easy domination of a divided opposition. At this time, the heightened pluralism of the left dovetailed with the craze for “symbolic ethnicity” among the distinctly unradical masses of white Americans.<sup>22</sup> By the 1980s, issues of social identity, mainly sexual and racial, dominated radical discussion.

There is truth, as well as exaggeration and diversion from the real issues, in such narratives. In identity politics, individuals define their polities along lines of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual identity, in part to make themselves feel rooted, real, solid. This political trend thus expresses a quest for authenticity. Sometimes the traditional left-wing search for social justice coincides with identity politics, especially for those who count themselves members of subordinate groups. Considered from the left, however, the shortcomings of identity politics are also evident. Here the search for authenticity lives on, but in fixed, given channels of fellowship. Conservatives sometimes associate identity politics with the recent discussion, in academic circles, of utopian “postmodernist” liberation from fixed conceptual frameworks, of joyous fluidity and multiplicity, but this link is questionable. In fact, this association merely obscures the strongly antiutopian character of identity politics, the bias of this politics against thinking outside an interest-group approach to change. Identity politics is subject to the same criticisms as is the old political pluralism, militant rhetoric notwithstanding. The levers of fundamental social change remain untouched, even unseen. Indeed, identity politics is quite congenial to

many who desire no such change, including many of those in the business world, and one should not dismiss that constituency out of hand.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the criticisms expressed by some 1960s radicals toward identity politics, however, the continuity between the new left and identity politics is notable. Identity politics seeks to clear a space for the fulfillment of a particular group's authenticity and for its political organization. These actions may lead to political change, but even if they do not, this space clearing is still considered desirable, for it can alleviate individuals' estrangement from their genuine identity. By the late 1960s, this kind of politics is where the new left's path led. Throughout the 1960s, new left radicals debated whether to attach themselves to the political potential and authenticity of social groups outside themselves or to embrace white, college-educated young people as a site of both radical agency and authenticity. Ultimately, the mainstream of the new left chose the latter course, as the popularity of the new working-class analysis, the movement's countercultural turn, and the rise of radical feminism all, in different ways, attest.

New-left activists cultivated islands of authenticity of a new society freed from alienation, in and around college and university campuses across the United States, and in the 1960s, some of these garden plots were still visible, some of them thriving. But islands are what they remained. Carl Oglesby anticipated this outcome when he asserted that although the new left's prefigurative politics was "morally cosmopolitan . . . its values are *practical* only within the Western (imperialist) cities, and are far from being universally practical even there."<sup>24</sup> Despite campus radicals' protestations in recent years that victories won on campuses themselves are politically significant in the wider world, the historian and socialist Barbara Epstein acknowledges that "on a deeper level, for those of us who were students in the sixties and either took part in or identified with the movements of that time, the experience of being incorporated into academia has involved a profound defeat."<sup>25</sup> The hope that campus agitation might lead to a leftist insurgency faded long ago, but the strategy has remained alive, for it has claimed other merits. This project has offered a balm to the alienation, inner and outer, about which existentialists, liberals, and leftists in the middle class have complained for decades. This was the new left's identity politics.

And what of democracy? The problem that Arthur Schlesinger posed in 1949 was not simply the problem of anxiety, and it was not that of social change. Instead, his powerful question was, How can we salve anxiety while maintaining democracy? He feared that the pressures of anxiety would push us away from the challenge of freedom. The new left resolved the problem that Schlesinger posed by rejecting his association of democracy with anx-

iety, instead asserting that true (by which it meant radical) democracy and an authentic culture were inseparable. In the view of new left radicals, democracy was not the casualty of authenticity but, rather, a necessary condition of authenticity.

Like countless Americans before them and like those who came after them, new left radicals sought to shift the balance of power in their society by constituting new centers of power in their selves, in individuals and communities. This strategy was clear throughout the new left's career, in the vision of participatory democracy as a supplement to the institutions of electoral politics, in the attempts to build community unions in cities around the country, and in the energy later spent on "counterinstitutions." Power would be redistributed through accretion, not expropriation. Although the new left spoke of democratizing the whole society, its synthesis of democracy and authenticity always took shape in particular communities, often locally. In this way, the linked goals of democracy and authenticity were quietly unhitched from demands for broad social change. Over time, the radicals' focus shifted away from identifying and demanding the conditions that would qualify the United States as a social democracy and toward attempts at creating democratic and authentic experiences in their own lives. The fading of a broad social perspective evidently led to the decline of the ideal of democracy altogether. In the 1970s and 1980s, the search for authenticity continued, but demands for more democracy, like talk of alienation, ebbed.<sup>26</sup>

Some continue to wait for the second coming of the new left. Their wait may not end soon. The new left was less an outgrowth of a continuous history of radical politics in the United States than the evanescent leftist branch of a search for authenticity in industrial American life. This movement's radicalism was sincere, and it spoke many truths about the country where it appeared. Its synthesis of hopes for personal and social regeneration was not new and likely will suffice future insurgent movements, on both the left and the right. Nonetheless, there may be little reason to think that the precise social and cultural elements that converged in this radical movement will do so again. Undoubtedly, further movements for social change will arise, but as happened in the 1960s, the sources and content of those movements may surprise those who implore the past to reappear.

*Introduction*

<sup>1.</sup> Between 1962 and 1964, the dominant forces in SDS, in its Economic Research and Action Projects (ERAP), moved to an emphasis on urban neighborhood organizing among the American poor. This proved to be a temporary (though important) deviation from the new left's initial emphasis on agitation among the American student and youth population, which it had enunciated in the *Port Huron Statement* and to which it returned for good at mid-decade.

<sup>2.</sup> John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958). Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon—What Happened and Why* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), pp. 75–98, highlights the broad province of the assumption of affluence in this period, calling it the cornerstone of a "liberal consensus" (which was not really very liberal in the contemporary political sense).

David Farber implies, with considerable merit, that the new left simply acted out what Daniel Bell calls the "cultural contradictions of capitalism," its consciousness incubated in a hedonistic consumerism that was integral to, if destructive of, the social system against which it rebelled. David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1994), pp. 16–17; Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978). Also see Warren Susman (with the assistance of Edward Griffin), "Did Success Spoil the United States? Dual Representations in Postwar America," in Lary May, ed., *Rearranging America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 19–37.

Peter Cileck, *Radical Paradoxes: Dilemmas of the American Left, 1945–1970* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), argues that new left radicals simply confused exploitation with alienation. Doubtless some did, but more important, I think, was the conscious new left preference for alienation over exploitation as the basis of left-wing mobilization.

3. For able surveys of the concept's adventures, see Joachim Israel, *Alienation: From Marx to Modern Sociology* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971); and Richard Schacht, *Alienation* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970). For clarity's sake, also see Dennis Wrong's piercing discussion, "Myths of Alienation," *Partisan Review* 52 (1985): 223–235.

4. Robert Westbrook, "Politics as Consumption: Managing the Modern American Election," in Richard W. Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, eds., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), pp. 146–162; Kenneth Keniston, *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964); Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom*, rev. ed. (1949; reprint, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962).

5. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, pp. 6, 246; Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, "Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930's–1950's," *American Historical Review* 75 (April 1970): 1046–1064; Keniston is discussed in Wilfred McClay, *The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 223–224. Though an architect of cold war liberal foreign policy, Kennan was personally conservative.

W. H. Auden coined the phrase "age of anxiety" in his 1947 book of that title. W. H. Auden, *The Age of Anxiety* (London: Faber & Faber, 1947). On the term's circulation, see William Graebner, *The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne, 1991), p. 102.

6. T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1983); Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America: The Intellectual as a Social Type, 1889–1963* (1965; reprint, New York: Norton, 1986).

7. The search for authenticity underwent significant changes since it first appeared in industrializing America, changes that I scarcely touch on here. I thank Jon Zimmerman for his advice on this point.

8. James Miller, in his outstanding study of the new left, contrasts the existentialist strain of the new left with the rational tendency, which Miller associates with John Dewey's political philosophy and which he clearly prefers. He explains that over time, this Deweyan tendency lost out to existentialism. Although Miller suggests that from the start, existentialism was an important dimension of the new left's vision of participatory democracy, his portrait of the early new left emphasizes the other elements in their politics. For all the subtlety and intelligence of his narrative, his confinement of existentialism to the later years of the story is insupportable. James

Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets": *From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), pp. 141–154, 317. Miller's chapter on participatory democracy (pp. 141–154) is the best brief analysis of the ambiguities of the concept.

The *Port Huron Statement* is reprinted in "Democracy Is in the Streets" and the line cited is on p. 332. The question of whether we should view the new left's politics as simply a means to a personal end is a complex one and requires careful handling. To some, this notion seems to delegitimize the new left as a political movement; others take license to engage in questionable psychological speculation.

Perhaps the most notorious example of both tendencies is Lewis Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), which interprets the new left as a displacement of young people's oedipal energies onto their teachers. Since Kenneth Keniston revealed in his study *Young Radicals* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1971) that young activists in the antiwar movement often had rather positive, sympathetic relations with their parents, oedipal explanations have been rather implausible. Keniston's conclusion is confirmed elsewhere, for example, in Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 49. Cyril Levitt, *Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), argues that a frustrated desire for power motivated new left activists. As my study indicates, one thing for which most new left activists in the United States had little desire was the exercise of power.

Others treat the matter more thoughtfully. Alan Brinkley, "Dreams of the Sixties," *New York Review of Books*, 22 October 1987, pp. 10, 12–16, concludes that new left activists sought the satisfaction of personal yearnings in political activism. Peter Cileck, *America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Disenchantment and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), emphasizes the persistent entanglement of personal fulfillment and social justice in this era's activism. My main caveat here is that neither personal nor political issues should be isolated as the cause of the new left. From the start, the new left's perspective questioned the very division between personal and political concerns, in part because both kinds of concern had combined to create this movement.

9. Walter Kaufmann, ed., *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1966); and William Barrett, *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), also were widely read. Todd Gitlin notes the impact of such paperback nonfiction volumes in the 1950s. Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987), p. 30.

Since World War II, much commentary on existentialism has missed the significance of Christian existentialism, which is ironic, since this is where existentialism began. The atheistic understanding of existentialism, associated with Sartre and Camus, emphasizes the ontological priority of the individual and the need for individuals to create meaning out of an absurd world through acts of personal rebellion. See Kaufmann, *Existentialism*, pp. 11–12. Some refer to individual political efforts as existentialist that seem particularly defiant or that embody a vague heroism amid

uncertainty and danger. This is the meaning Norman Mailer attaches to the term, for example, in his essay on John F. Kennedy, "Superman Comes to the Supermarket," in Harold Hayes, ed., *Smiling through the Apocalypse: Esquire's History of the Sixties* (New York: Crown Books, 1987), p. 17. Miller associates existentialist politics with an experimental search for "breakaway experiences," an individualistic quest for feelings of authenticity which he says corroded both the discipline and the sense of community he admires in the new left of the 1960–1965 period. Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets," p. 37.

These meanings of existentialism are different in important respects from the historically grounded understanding of existentialism that I excavate in this book. Much of the difference stems from the strong presence of Christian and communarian impulses in the setting I examine, in contrast to the atheistic and radically individualist Sartrean variety of existentialism. The search for values that would assist the movement from alienation to authenticity, as the people I consider imagined it, would occur only in a community, not as an individual enterprise. Furthermore, that community and those values would not emerge out of nothingness. The people in this story were well aware that they drew on the cultural resources of their locality, their region, and their country in their political and cultural efforts.

10. Some readers will be bothered by my use of the term *therapeutic*. Cultural conservatives tend to view therapeutic culture as a solipsistic search for intense personal experience—similar to the most dismissive definition of existentialism. Similarly, Bell, *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, pp. 120–164, argues that 1960s radicalism was simply a decadent phase in the culture of "modernism," which in Bell's definition is, once again, a search for intense individual experience. The literature on the rise of therapeutic culture in the United States goes back to Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith after Freud* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); and Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Declining Expectations* (New York: Norton, 1978)—a book that, incidentally, applauds the new left for calling attention to the social sources of personal unhappiness.

Both critics and defenders of therapeutic culture associate it with the modern search for authenticity. The philosophical critique of authenticity is available in Theodor Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973); and Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972); also see James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). These works argue that the experience of authenticity that lies at the center of therapeutic culture is basically a myth, always out of reach and, moreover, that this myth is the distinctive product of an advanced industrial culture. Lears, *No Place of Grace*—a polemic against the 1960s counterculture projected backward in time—combines a maverick cultural conservatism with a neo-Marxist interpretation of therapeutic culture as the handmaiden of advanced capitalism.

These critics make many telling points, but to define the search for authenticity merely as a search for intense experience is too restrictive. And historically, it is not

accurate to argue that therapeutic culture is incompatible with political concern or that a search for authenticity automatically leads people out of political concerns. The activists I examine here were deeply involved in a therapeutic culture, but this did not exclude other concerns. Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), deserves attention as an ethical philosopher's defense of authenticity as a moral ideal. Taylor cites Trilling's concept of authenticity in explaining what he means by the term, which he equates with individual self-fulfillment (pp. 15–16).

11. Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War America, and the Making of a New Left* (London: Verso, 1994), p. 9.

12. Karl Marx, "From Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844," in Eugene Kamenka, ed., *The Portable Karl Marx* (New York: Penguin, 1983), pp. 135–152. Also see Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), and Fritz Pappenheim, *The Alienation of Modern Man* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1959). For a sampling of the international discussion, see the essays collected in Erich Fromm, ed., *Socialist Humanism: An International Symposium* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Anchor, 1966).

Albert Camus quoted in John A. Russell, letter, in *Letter to Laymen* (a publication of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community), May 1961. Camus, an atheist whose atheism nonetheless existed in a productive tension with Christianity, was issuing a call for "true Christians" who would join in this existentialist refusal; Russell was a Methodist minister. For one recent discussion of Camus's politics see Jeffrey C. Isaac, *Arendt, Camus, and Modern Rebellion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992). Sartre (who plays hardly any role at all in the story I trace of existentialism's influence on young people in Texas) made the argument himself that existentialism was a form of humanism, in his own well-known effort to bring his ideas to the attention of a broader audience in the United States. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism Is a Humanism," trans. Philip Mairet, in Nino Langiulli, ed., *The Existentialist Tradition: Selected Writings* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Anchor, 1971), pp. 391–416.

13. Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1968); and Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell, 1963). Also see Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961). On Maslow's politics, see Marty Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), pp. 21–25. Friedan's case is complicated; on her obscure leftist background, see Daniel Horowitz, "Rethinking Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique*: Labor Union Radicalism and Feminism in Cold War America," *American Quarterly* 48 (March 1996): 1–42. Existential psychology and humanistic psychology were very closely allied, perhaps indistinguishable; for a signal work in this field, see Rollo May, *The Meaning of Anxiety* (New York: Ronald Press, 1950). The best summaries of all this work can be found in Rollo May, ed., *Existential Psychology* (New York: McGraw-

Hill, 1969); Friedan, *Feminine Mystique*, pp. 299–325; and Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 265–273.

See Richard S. Ellwood, *The Sixties Spiritual Awakening: American Religion Moving from Modern to Postmodern* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), for an account of this and other aspects of experimental religion in the period that remains mired in new age rhetoric. Also see Harvey Cox, *Turning East: Why Americans Look to the Orient for Spirituality, and What That Search Can Mean to the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977), for a contemporary account.

14. Such national overviews include Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS (New York: Random House, 1973); Irwin Unger, *The Movement: A History of the American New Left* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974); Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: The Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980); Gitlin, *The Sixties*; Wini Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962–1968: The Great Refusal* (1982; reprint, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989); Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets"; Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, "The Failure and Success of the New Radicalism," in Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930–1980* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); and Peter B. Levy, *The New Left and Labor in the 1960s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). Gregory N. Calvert, *Democracy from the Heart: Spiritual Values, Decentralism, and Democratic Idealism in the Movement of the 1960s* (Novato, CA: Communitas Press, 1991), is partly a national overview and partly a memoir (which is also true, to a lesser extent, of Gitlin's *The Sixties*).

Recent works that have begun to tell local stories of the new left are Kenneth Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), which is more about the antiwar movement than the new left per se; William J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), which has a diffuse focus; Jack Whalen and Richard Flacks, *Beyond the Barricades: The Sixties Generation Grows Up* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), a sociological study following a group of students at the University of California at Santa Barbara in their experiences after college; and Paul Buhle, ed., *History and the New Left: Madison, Wisconsin, 1950–1970* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), a collection of personal reminiscences that also includes a good introductory essay by the editor. William Billingsley's forthcoming study of North Carolina will also contribute to this growing literature. Nonetheless, there still is no full-fledged local history focusing specifically on the new left.

Many primary sources and documentary anthologies from the era in question examine new left and antiwar activity at numerous campuses. For samples of this work, see part 3 of Julian Foster and Durward Long, eds., *Protest!: Student Activism in America* (New York: Morrow, 1970); and David Riesman and Verne A. Stadtman, eds., *Academic Transformation: Seventeen Institutions under Pressure* (Berkeley, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching, 1973).

International perspectives are offered in Paul Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968* (New York: Norton, 1996); Seymour Martin Lipset, ed., *Student Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 1967); Ronald Fraser et al., 1968: *A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York: Pantheon, 1988); and David Caute, *Sixty-Eight: The Year of the Barricades* (London: Paladin Books, 1988).

For examples of the new left "history from the bottom up" tendency, see the essays in Alfred F. Young, ed., *Dissent: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1968); and see the discussion in Ian Tyrrell, *The Absent Marx: Class Analysis and Liberal History in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 123–164.

The vast body of work on the civil rights movement provides numerous examples of the value of local and state-level studies. Model local studies include William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); and Robert J. Norrell, *Ruining the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee* (New York: Knopf, 1985). State-level analysis, a more recent innovation, is pioneered in John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1955–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995); and Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

15. For a graphic discussion of the mechanisms and politics of this expansion, see Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Sanford* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997).

16. Sale, SDS, p. 206; Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets," pp. 224–226, 240–242, 244–254. Miller paints this experiment in "office democracy" as a failure.

17. Richard Hamilton, *Restraining Myths: Critical Studies of U.S. Social Structure and Politics* (New York: Wiley, 1975), p. 28; cited in Chandler Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. xviii.

18. The story of the early leadership of SDS and its break with the social democrats is told most evocatively in Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets," pp. 110–121, 126–140; Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer . . . : The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp. 202–219; and Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias*, pp. 63–77 (which, on pp. 44–45, emphasizes the overrepresentation of Jews in SDS). Gregory D. Sumner uses the term *cosmopolitan democracy* to describe the ideals of an international group of intellectuals in the 1940s in whose outlook he sees a foreshadowing of the new left; he follows James Miller's characterization of the new left's political ideas. Gregory Sumner, *Dwight Macdonald and the politics Circle: The Challenge of Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

19. The best recent work in this vein on twentieth-century radicalism is Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer*.

For an example of older work that seeks to establish an American “radical tradition,” see Staughton Lynd, *Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1968), a book that hasn’t worn very well. The radical tradition that Lynd and others construct features prominent libertarian or anarchist tendencies and is kin to a politically ambiguous belief in a fundamentally liberal American “national character”; work of this kind seeks to ground left-wing politics in liberal traditions. This is an intriguing political project, and one that is not entirely alien to this study. Such work is problematic, however, in the same way that any history is that relies on “national character,” even implicitly, as a historical force. For an extreme example, see David DeLeon, *The American as Anarchist* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). For a more careful but underdeveloped effort along these lines, see James Gilbert, “New Left: Old America,” in Sobnya Sayres et al., eds., *The 60s without Apology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 244–247.

<sup>20.</sup> Ronnie Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities: Form, Reform, and New Starts* (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 57–52; Alice Carol Cox, “The Rainey Affair: A History of the Academic Freedom Controversy at the University of Texas, 1938–1946” (Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1970), pp. 104–106, nn.

<sup>21.</sup> Jose E. Limon offers a critical assessment of Dobie in Jose E. Limon, *Dancing with the Devil: Society and Cultural Poetics in Mexican-American South Texas* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), pp. 43–59.

<sup>22.</sup> On this tradition (which, to some extent, the liberals of the cold war provinces constructed), see Lawrence R. Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); James R. Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895–1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Anthony P. Dunbar, *Against the Grain: Southern Radicals and Prophecy, 1929–1959* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981), which leans more toward religious leftists; Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics*; and John Egerton, *Speak Now against the Day: The Generation before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Knopf, 1994). The tradition was updated and its exploration continued in *Southern Exposure*, a political journal founded in 1974 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, by southern civil rights and new-left activists.

<sup>23.</sup> Historians of democratic and left-wing movements in more remote periods of the North American past have long appreciated the significance of religion in this context. Recent overviews of radicalism in the United States that pay ample attention to religion and spirituality include Paul Buhle, *Marxism in the United States: Remapping the History of the American Left* (London: Verso, 1987); and Robert H. Craig, *Religion and Radical Politics: An Alternative Tradition in the United States* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992). Historians of twentieth-century liberalism and radicalism are beginning to catch on. For recent work, see Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988); James T. Fisher, *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933–1962* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), a work especially compatible with this

one because of its concern with the search for authenticity in American culture; and James F. Findlay, *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607–1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 179–216, argues that the cultural upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s represented a “fourth great awakening,” but he relates religion mainly to the counterculture of that period, not to political radicalism.

<sup>24.</sup> See Michael Lerner, *The Politics of Meaning: Restoring Hope and Possibility in an Age of Cynicism* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1996). Since 1986 Lerner, a former new left activist in Seattle, has used his magazine, *Tikkun*, as a platform for his religious and political viewpoint. Lerner and *Tikkun* advance this outlook in a Jewish idiom, but they are notably open to other religious traditions (as long as they agree on the major questions).

<sup>25.</sup> Works that give adequate weight to the role of the civil rights movement in the new left’s origins include James O’Brien, “The Development of a New Left in the United States, 1960–1965” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1971); Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980); and Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980). Interestingly, the well-known overviews of the new left listed above in note 14 underplay the formative role of the civil rights movement, partly because of their emphasis on northern locales, but surely not entirely, since the civil rights movement’s impact in this respect was nationwide.

<sup>26.</sup> On the need for more work on whites in the civil rights movement, see Julian Bond, “The Politics of Civil Rights History,” in Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Williams, eds., *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), pp. 13–14. One recent book answering this call, a study of a white northerner, is Charles W. Eagles, *Outside Agitator: Jon Daniels and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). A wider-ranging study is David Chappell, *Inside Agitators: White Southerners in the Civil Rights Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

<sup>27.</sup> Particularly with regard to race, there were variations within this camp, which was epitomized by Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), of which *The Vital Center* was a sort of manifesto. Certainly in its early years, though, ADA’s politics was dominated by its anticommunism. See Mary Sperling McAuliffe, *Crisis on the Left: Cold War Politics and American Liberalism, 1947–1954* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978); and Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism, 1947–1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>28.</sup> For statistics, see figures 6 and 7 in Terry G. Jordan, “A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change in Texas, 1850–1980,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (1986): 406, 407. The term *Tejano* sometimes refers only to descendants of the Mexican provincial population of Tejas. Over the last century, African Americans have

accounted for a declining share of the Texas population, down from 20 percent in 1887 to 12 percent in 1980 (holding steady in recent decades), while the Mexican American share of the state population has risen dramatically, from 4 percent to 21 percent in the same period. Jordan argues that at some point after the U.S. Civil War, Anglo Texans (the first of whom migrated from the American Southeast) exchanged a southern identity for a western one (p. 388). The deep engagement of the people studied here with the southeastern civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s casts at least a small doubt on this thesis.

Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics*, focuses on white-black relations, emphasizing white racial attitudes and their political consequences. On Latino-Anglo relations, see David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); and Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979).

On the Mexican American movement, see Charles Ray Chandler, "The Mexican-American Protest Movement in Texas" (Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1968); Jose E. Limon, "The Expressive Culture of a Chicano Student Group at the University of Texas at Austin, 1967-1975" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1978); Jacques E. Levy, *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa* (New York: Norton, 1975); Ronald B. Taylor, *Chavez and the Farm Workers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975); Carlos Munoz Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London: Verso, 1989); Ignacio M. Garcia, *United We Win: The Rise and Fall of La Raza Unida Party* (Tucson: Mexican American Studies & Research Center, 1989).<sup>27</sup> D. W. Meinig, *Imperial Texas: An Interpretative Essay in Cultural Geography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), pp. 89, 35. Meinig's book is a superlative introduction to its subject.

Joel Williamson describes a "Volksgesitstan Conservatism" among postbellum white southerners that is somewhat similar to what I mean by volk populism. I do not mean, however, to freight the latter term with the spiritualism that Williamson discerns. Joel Williamson, *A Rage for Order: Black/White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 206-232. Jordan advocates "discard[ing] the myth of the typical Texan," noting that this "myth" cannot accommodate the social diversity of Texas (Jordan, "A Century and a Half," p. 385). I am interested in this Texan identity not as an accurate description of social reality but precisely for its mythic power.

<sup>28</sup> Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets," pp. 141-143, discusses the desire among new leftists to "speak American." For a discussion of these different kinds of culture, see Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 121-127. For a discussion of "subcultures" marked by a high estimate of their oppositional character, see Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979).

<sup>29</sup> Paul Buhle comments that the spontaneous white "sympathy towards Black culture," ranging "from sports to music to sexual fantasy," stretched "further among millions of ordinary teenagers than any previously Left-orchestrated

effort could have envisioned" (Buhle, *Marxism in the United States*, p. 224). Also see Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992). The most full-throated expression of this tendency, stressing the supposedly unexpressed sexuality of black males, is Norman Mailer, *The White Negro* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1957). Many in the new left and the counterculture were attracted to this notion, albeit in less extreme forms, and this attraction received affirmation in Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), which argues that young white radicals were trying to reclaim their lost physicality in political protest ("putting their bodies on the line").

<sup>30</sup> See Casey N. Blake, *Beloved Community: The Cultural Commentary of Randolph Barne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), as well as Lasch, *New Radicalism*, pp. 62, 79-90, 130-133. Also see Robin D. G. Kelley, "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Folk,'" *American Historical Review* 97 (December 1992): 1400-1408. The association of children with authenticity received new emphasis in the 1960s counterculture.

<sup>31</sup> Greg Calvert, national secretary of SDS in 1966/1967, was the main publicist of the new working-class analysis, and he posed the choice between that analysis and a dependence on "external agencies" in a 1967 speech at Princeton University reprinted as "In White America: Radical Consciousness and Social Change," in Massimo Teodori, ed., *The New Left: A Documentary History* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 412-418. The only secondary works to pay substantial attention to the new working-class analysis are James Weinstein, *Ambiguous Legacy: The Left in American Politics* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), pp. 116-117, 127-132, 140-144; Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left*, pp. 96-114; Calvert, *Democracy from the Heart*; and Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 38-41. Because they focus exclusively on the national elites of SDS, these accounts conclude erroneously that this analysis went out of style on the left after a brief vogue in 1966/1967. I discuss the new working-class analysis in more detail in chapter 5.

<sup>32</sup> Most accounts of the new left that narrate a process of decline in the new left's development (for example, works such as those by Miller and Gitlin) tend to express strong reservations about the new left's "cultural politics." For a fuller discussion, see Doug Rossinow, "The New Left in the Counterculture: Hypotheses and Evidence," *Radical History Review* 67 (Winter 1997): 79-110. Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Woodstock* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), is notable for its sympathetic view of the counterculture, as is Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias*, which agrees with the narrative of political decline found in Miller's and Gitlin's books.

<sup>33</sup> Schlesinger, *Vital Center*, p. 46; Lasch, *New Radicalism*, pp. 308-310. For mention of Schlesinger's comments, see Lawrence S. Wittner, *Cold War America: From Hiroshima to Watergate* (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 64; Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,

1991), p. 43; and James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 18.

Similarly, the Kennedy administration in which Schlesinger served sought to create a “hard,” masculine mystique that could rival the allure of communism in winning the hearts and minds of what the American leaders imagined was an essentially passive Third World. See Gossé, *Where the Boys Are*. The Kennedy administration’s intention to provide masculine leadership in this global contest indicates the broad province of this way of thinking about power in the cold war United States.

34. A serious gender analysis of the new left has picked up steam in recent years, in Alice Echols, “‘We Gotta Get out of This Place’: Notes toward a Remapping of the Sixties,” *Socialist Review* 22:2 (1982): 9–33; and Gossé, *Where the Boys Are*. All this work is indebted to Evans, *Personal Politics*. In chapter 8 I discuss further the equation of citizenship with masculinity in cold war America.

35. Robin Morgan, “Goodbye to All That,” in Leslie B. Tanner, ed., *Voices from Women’s Liberation* (New York: Signet Books, 1970), p. 275. This is not to say that women on the left generally agreed with Morgan’s conclusion, “Women are the real Left.” This suggestion of separatism was a preview of “cultural feminism” from Morgan, who gradually gave up the recognizable leftist dimension of her politics. Notwithstanding accusations of separatism, feminists in the new left, no matter how far-reaching their criticism of their male comrades, wished to work with them politically, at least until 1973.

36. For a guide to these incidents, see Louis A. Foleno, *A Critical Review of Selected Literature on College Student Unrest in the United States, 1968–1970* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992).

37. Some sympathetic scholars are reluctant to acknowledge the limits of the new left’s political success. For example, Wini Breines, “Whose New Left?” *Journal of American History* 75 (1988): 528–545, gives the new left as much credit as possible by conflating the categories of “new left,” “the movement,” and “the sixties.” The accomplishments she chalks up to the efforts of these movements include the advance of multiculturalism and feminism (p. 542), changes for which, to the extent that they have actually occurred, the new left is scarcely responsible. George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston: South End Press, 1987), depicts a new left that did not end in the 1970s but that instead continued to exist as a political force two decades after 1968. This is a mirror image of the right-wing portrait of new left continuity and influence, which can be found in books such as David Kimball, *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990). For a highly critical but thought-provoking discussion of the new left’s legacy in higher education, see John Paul Diggins, *The Rise and Fall of the American Left* (New York: Norton, 1992).

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> For inventories of concerns, see “Ideas: An Issue on the Issues,” *Texas Observer*, 16 January 1959; and MFC, “Here’s What Liberals Want,” *Observer*, 9

May 1955. The fight between liberals and conservatives in the Democratic Party, mentioned later, raised the significance of procedural issues; thus “MFC” placed free and fair elections high on the list of his priorities.

<sup>2</sup> Chandler Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). Also see George Norris Green, *The Establishment in Texas Politics: The Primitive Years, 1938–1957* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979).

In the late 1930s, Fath had been president of the University Progressive Democrats at UT, an organization that split from the Young Democrats when the larger group declined to support a second term in the White House for Franklin Roosevelt in 1936. Connally and others who later became close to Lyndon Johnson also were Roosevelt loyalists. While Fath maintained his liberal politics, Connally and Johnson moved right in subsequent years, blowing with the prevailing winds. “Early Years of Creekmore Fath,” *Observer*, 21 March 1958. Later I discuss Randolph, who became the main initial benefactor to the *Texas Observer*.

<sup>3</sup> See Ronnie Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities: Form, Reform, and New Starts* (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 51–52; Anthony M. Orum, *Power, Money & the People: The Making of Modern Austin* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1987), pp. 162–163.

<sup>4</sup> The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), the archetypal cold war institution, was formed in 1938, and some historians term the ensuing investigations of left-wing subversion the “little red scare.” Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), pp. 12–13. Robin D. G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), pp. 186–190, discusses matters in another provincial locale. According to the standard tale, this scare ended with the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1945, and the domestic cold war resumed in full flower in the late 1940s. It seems doubtful, however, that the wartime romance with the Russians extended to the provinces.

<sup>5</sup> Allred was an economic liberal, seeking to bring a moderate degree of regulation to the oil and insurance industries of Texas as attorney general between 1931 and 1935 and inaugurating old-age insurance and unemployment compensation as governor during the next four years. Ronnie Dugger, “Allred Revisited,” *Observer*, 27 June 1955; Ronnie Dugger, “Death of State’s New Deal Governor,” *Observer*, 2 October 1959. Allred sought no change in the racial regime of his state, affirming when he ran for the governors office that the Democratic Party’s primary would remain closed to blacks—a central mechanism of political exclusion in a one-party state. Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas* (Millwood, NY: KTO Press, 1979), pp. 156–161. As I discuss later, racial egalitarianism was the most important innovation of the secular political liberalism that emerged from the post-World War II period of right-wing dominance in the United States.

<sup>6</sup> Homer P. Rainey, *The Tower and the Dome: A Free University versus Political Control* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing, 1971).

<sup>7</sup> Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, pp. 42–43; Alice Carol Cox, “The Rainey

Affair: A History of the Academic Freedom Controversy at the University of Texas, 1938–1946" (Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1970), pp. 51–52, 60–67. (The four professors were Robert Montgomery, Clarence Ayres, Edward Hale, and Clarence Wiley.) Cox's dissertation provides the most reliable account of these events.

8. Cox, "The Rainey Affair," pp. 42–54; Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 43.

9. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, pp. 44–45; Cox, "The Rainey Affair," pp. 67–69.

10. Cox, "The Rainey Affair," p. 88.  
11. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 46.

12. Ibid., pp. 51–52; Cox, "The Rainey Affair," pp. 104–106, iii.

13. Mody Boatright, "A Mustang in the Groves of Academe," *Observer*, 24 July 1964. A complicated set of circumstances allowed for Dobie's dismissal. He had been on leave for two years and wished to remain away longer because of an allergic condition that he said the Austin flora would aggravate. The regents cited a rule limiting faculty to a maximum of two years' consecutive leave, "except in very unusual circumstances, such as military service or prolonged illness." Since Coke Stevenson, the former rightist governor, and others of like ilk had identified Dobie—"a highly vocal enemy of reactionary demagogues and a defender of labor unions and of many unpopular causes"—as a bad apple, the firing was widely perceived as political in nature. Henry Nash Smith, "An Enemy of Reactionary Demagogues," *Observer*, 24 July 1964. Jose E. Limon offers another view of Dobie, focusing on his attitudes toward Mexican Americans, in *Dancing with the Devil: Society and Cultural Poetics in Mexican-American South Texas* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), pp. 43–59.

14. Willie Morris, *North toward Home* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 168.

15. C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

Mills transferred from Texas A&M to UT in 1935 and stayed at UT until 1939, by which time he had earned a B.A. in sociology and an M.A. in philosophy. He studied economics with Clarence Ayres and devoted most of his attention to pragmatism. See Rick Tilman, *C. Wright Mills: A Native Radical and His American Intellectual Roots* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1984), pp. 1–9; Irving Louis Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian* (New York: Free Press, 1983), pp. 1–37, and Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 124–138.

16. Orum, *Power, Money & the People*, pp. 205–225; Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics*, p. 180; John Henry Faulk, *Fear on Trial* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966); Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 50.

17. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 64.

18. Ronnie Dugger, "U.T. Regents Veto Mrs. FDR, Stevenson as Speakers," *Observer*, 16 May 1955.  
19. C. Wright Mills, "The Decline of the Left," in Irving Horowitz, ed., *Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills* (New York: Ballantine, 1964), p. 10.

1963), p. 233. This essay originated as a 1959 speech on the British Broadcasting Company. The male construction of Mills's free citizens was no accident, as I discuss in chapter 8.

20. Larry Goodwyn, "The Texas Observer: A Journal of Free Voices," *Southern Exposure* 2 (Winter 1975): 27–28; Ronnie Dugger, "East Texas Justice," *Observer*, 30 April 1957; Ronnie Dugger, "Editor Accused," *Observer*, 1 February 1956.

21. Ronnie Dugger, "The Word Liberal and Its Detractors," *Observer*, 2 May 1955. The magazine he quoted was the British *Reporter*.  
22. Smith, "An Enemy of Reactionary Demagogues."

23. Dugger, "The Word Liberal and Its Detractors."

24. Ibid., p. 65; Claudetta Young, "Daily Texan's History Shows 58 Years of Color, Change," *Daily Texan*, 5 December 1958.

25. Ronnie Dugger, "Report of the Regents' Ire over 'Politics,'" *Observer*, 15 February 1956; Ronnie Dugger, "Willie and the College Yell," *Observer*, 22 February 1956; Ronnie Dugger, "Regents Told Texan Free," *Observer*, 29 February 1956; Morris, *North toward Home*, pp. 185–192.

26. Editorial, "Vote for Editors," *Summer Texan*, 20 June 1958.

27. Chandler Davidson, interview with author, 2 February 1992; Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).  
28. "'Dido' Incident Arouses University," *Observer*, 14 May 1957.

29. Bud Mims, interview with author, 8 February 1993; Editorial, "On the Policy of No Policy," *Summer Texan*, 7 June 1957; Bud Mims, editorial, "Desegregation Is Not Enough," *Daily Texan*, 16 May 1958.

30. Sara Burroughs, "Senator Says Demos Must Organize, Fight," *Daily Texan*, 13 November 1958 (the quotation is Burroughs's paraphrase of Yarborough's comment).

31. Orum, *Power, Money & the People*, p. 148.

32. Celia Morris, interview with author, 3 February 1993; Clarence Ayres, *The Divine Right of Capital* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946); Orum, *Power, Money & the People*, p. 148; Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 62; "Liberal Demos Choose Ayres for Project," *Daily Texan*, 27 April 1960.

33. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 45; Robb Burlage, interview with author, 1 June 1992; "Demos to Hear Dr. Montgomery," *Daily Texan*, 13 January 1959; Morris, *North toward Home*, p. 175.

34. Robb Burlage interview.

35. Morris interview.

36. Bud Mims, "President's Decision Upheld," *Summer Texan*, 7 June 1957; "Silver Fires Questions at Meeting," *Summer Texan*, 7 June 1957; Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 66.

37. "UT Was Child of Politics, Grew Rich through Use of Land," *Daily Texan*, 5 April 1960.

38. Ronnie Dugger, "The Politics of Knowledge," *Change* 6 (February 1974): 31; Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, pp. 74–84, 186–196.

39. Allen Lingo, interview with author, 18 June 1992; Morris interview; "Silver against Death Penalty," *Daily Texan*, 19 March 1959.

40. Dorothy Dawson Burlage, interview with author, 9 December 1992; Casey Hayden to author, 17 March 1997.

41. Morris, *North toward Home*, p. 158.

42. Dorothy Burlage interview; Morris interview.

Celia Morris, who attended Bob Montgomery's atomic bomb lecture three times, married Willie Morris. (They later divorced.)

43. Dorothy Burlage interview.

44. "Sixteen Will Leave Thursday for Texas Seminar in Chile," *Summer Texan*, 14 July 1959; Hal Simmons, "'Capitalism Is Doomed,'" *Daily Texan*, 22 September 1959.

45. "Week in Cuba Offered," *Summer Texan*, 7 August 1959; G. W. Ayer, "Students Favor Castro," *Daily Texan*, 27 September 1959.

46. "Socialism on Way, but How?" *Daily Texan*, 7 April 1960.

47. "Communism Parody of Christian Belief—Dr. Geren," *Daily Texan*, 20 February 1959.

48. Jim Hyatt, "Professors to Discuss Reds," *Daily Texan*, 25 October 1960; Jim Hyatt, "To Combat Soviets, Use Reason—Ayles," *Daily Texan*, 26 October 1960.

49. "US World Role Discussed at 'Y,'" *Daily Texan*, 3 December 1959; "Mathis Emphasized International Policies," *Daily Texan*, 2 October 1959.

50. Larry Hurwitz, "SA Decides to Remain in National Association," *Daily Texan*, 27 February 1959; Ralph Johnson, "SA Committee Places NSA on Probation," *Daily Texan*, 24 February 1959; "NSA 'Off-Hook' after SA Group Offers New Bill," *Daily Texan*, 10 March 1959; Leon Graham, "14 Appointments Put NSA 'Back in' at UT," *Daily Texan*, 30 June 1959; Dorothy Burlage interview.

51. Anthony Henry, "NSA Congress Delegate Opposes a Withdrawal," *Daily Texan*, 17 February 1959.

52. Christopher Lasch, "The Cultural Cold War: A Short History of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," in Christopher Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 98–110; Sol Stern, "A Short Account of International Student Politics and the Cold War," *Ramparts*, March 1967, pp. 29–38.

53. Editorial, "A Good Example," *Daily Texan*, 9 January 1959.

54. Editorial, "The Rotten Apple," *Daily Texan*, 16 January 1959; Editorial, "Oath-Taking," *Summer Texan*, 7 July 1959; Bob Moore, "SA Favors Removal of Disclaimer Oath," *Daily Texan*, 25 March 1960; Leon Graham, "Faculty Joins Affidavit Foes," *Daily Texan*, 11 May 1960; "NSA Leaders Urge Repeal of the Oath," *Daily Texan*, 28 April 1959; "Senate Votes 'Nay' on Disclaimer Oath," *Summer Texan*, 17 June 1960; Editorial, "Anti-Oath Stand 'Daily Worker' Line?" *Daily Texan*, 4 February 1959.

55. "Legislators Accuse UT of Teaching Atheism," *Daily Texan*, 24 February 1959; "Solons Modify Atheism Charge," *Daily Texan*, 26 February 1959.

56. Nina McCain, "Charge of Atheism Denounced by Clergy," *Daily Texan*, 25 February 1959.

57. Robb Burlage, "Coming: A 'Silent Generation' Faculty?" *Daily Texan*, 20 March 1959; Nina McCain, "Cures for Tied Tongues," *Daily Texan*, 25 March 1959.

58. Robb Burlage, "'Might-Have-Been' Factors Tell Story of Little Rock Crisis," *Summer Texan*, 28 July 1959; "Mansfield Mob Thwarts Court Edit," *Observer*, 5 September 1956.

59. Barry Shank, *Dissonant Identities: The Rock 'n' Roll Scene in Austin, Texas* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press/University Press of New England, 1994), pp. 11–12. In 1928 the Austin City Council drew up a plan to segregate the local black population in East Austin, a plan three-quarters successful by 1940.

Previously, most Austin blacks had lived closer to the university and the state capital, near the center of town. On the development of black Austin until 1950, and especially on civil rights activism in the 1940s, see Orum, *Power, Money & the People*, pp. 169–203.

60. Almetris M. Duren, with Louise Iscoe, *Overcoming: A History of Black Integration at the University of Texas at Austin* (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1979). The figure is cited in Dugger, "Willie and the College Yell."

61. "Kinsolving Looks Like Luxury Hotel," *Summer Texan*, 13 June 1958.

62. Jerry Conn, "'No Firm' Housing Plans," *Daily Texan*, 15 October 1959; "Negro Housing Report Okayed," *Daily Texan*, 25 October 1959; Carl Howard, "Negroes to Get Suitable Housing," *Daily Texan*, 15 November 1959.

63. Joe Carroll Rust, "Commission Asks Strong SA Backing," *Daily Texan*, 2 December 1958.

64. Robb Burlage, "Austin and Little Rock So Alike, yet Different," *Summer Texan*, 21 July 1959.

65. Kay Voetmann, "Atmosphere Separates Austin and Little Rock," *Summer Texan*, 4 August 1959. Key quoted in Davidson, *Race and Class in Texas Politics*, p. 11; Ronnie Dugger, "Who Was Guilty?" *Observer*, 30 April 1957.

66. Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Knopf, 1995), pp. 164–167, is forthright on this point. John B. Kirby, "The Roosevelt Administration and Blacks: An Ambivalent Legacy," pp. 265–288, and Barton J. Bernstein, "The New Deal: The Conservative Achievements of Liberal Reform," pp. 260–261, both in Barton J. Bernstein and Allen J. Matusow, eds., *Twentieth-Century America: Recent Interpretations*, 2d ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), are critical. Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue*, vol. 2, *The Depression Decade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); and Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), are more whiggish, discerning the roots of later changes in race relations under the New Deal regime. John Egerton, *Speak Now against the Day: The Generation before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Knopf, 1994), wavers between an honest accounting of how few white southerners dissented from the reign of Jim Crow in these years and a desire to see progress. For a discussion of those few dissenters, who hardly can be called liberals, see Anthony F. Dunbar, *Against the*

*Grain: Southern Dissenters and Prophets, 1937–1954* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981); and Robert H. Craig, *Religion and Radical Politics: An Alternative Christian Tradition in the United States* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

67. Larry Goodwyn, "The Negro Issue and Southern Liberalism," *Observer*, 21 November 1958.

68. Ronnie Dugger, "Where People Are Different Colors," *Observer*, 6 June 1959; "Reproach, Reform Program May Solve Racial Problem," *Daily Texan*, 24 November 1959.

69. On the business language of individualism and free enterprise, see Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945–60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

70. David Riessman, with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950); William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956); Vance O. Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: McKay, 1957); Vance O. Packard, *The Status Seekers* (New York: McKay, 1959).

See Daniel Horowitz, *Vance Packard and American Social Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), for a convincing portrait of Packard as a man confronting the changing present with the tenacious "producerist" values of the past.

71. "Ransom Asserts Import of Students' Individuality," *Daily Texan*, 7 April 1961; Jo Eickmann, "a word from the silent generation," *Daily Texan*, 16 March 1961; Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

72. Lee Smith, "Power Elite? C. W. Mills Challenges Intellectuals," *Daily Texan*, 4 November 1958; Christopher Shannon, *Conspicuous Criticism: Tradition, the Individual, and Culture in American Social Thought, from Weben to Mills* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 154. Shannon notes that this "pastoral" was common to twentieth-century American social criticism.

James Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets": *From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), pp. 78–91, discusses Mills's influence on the early new left. The writings by Mills that probably influenced the new left the most are *The Power Elite, The Causes of World War III* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1958); *Listen, Yankee! The Revolution in Cuba* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960); and "Letter to the New Left," *New Left Review* 5 (1960), reprinted as "The New Left," in Horowitz, ed., *Power, Politics and People*, pp. 247–259. In chapters 5 and 8, I have more to say about Mills's significance for the new left.

West, *Evasion of American Philosophy*, pp. 124, 311–318, discusses Mills's individualism and his preoccupation with personal style. Shannon, *Conspicuous Criticism*, notes sharply that Mills's ethics was rooted "not in any particular kind of morality but in a particular kind of self" (p. 166).

73. Horowitz, *Vance Packard and American Social Criticism*, pp. 10–23, emphasizes Packard's stringent Methodist upbringing; Chandler Davidson, "The Jabberwock,"

## Chapter 2

*Daily Texan*, 18 November 1959; Tommy Stuckey, "Author Calls Students Conservative, Selfish," *Daily Texan*, 2 December 1960.

i. On the "religious revival," see Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); and James D. Hudnut-Beumler, *Looking for God in the Suburbs: The Religion of the American Dream and Its Critics, 1945–1965* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994). David Harrington Watt, *A Campus Crusade for Christ*, which is also mentioned by Bob Breihan, interview with author, 10 November 1991.

2. Ronnie Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities: Form, Reform, and New Starts* (New York: Norton, 1974), p. 76.

3. Frank Wright, interview with author, 30 June 1992. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the University YMCA–YWCA at length.

4. Willie Morris, *North toward Home* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 171; Dick Simpson, *The Politics of Compassion and Transformation* (Athens: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 1989), p. 253; Tom Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1988), p. 40.

5. Ronnie Dugger, "A Dogmatic View of Religious Dogmatism," *Observer*, 21 April 1962.

6. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 76.

7. B. S., "Split Develops in the 'Community,'" *Texas Observer*, 28 April 1962.

8. Marcel quoted in Robert C. Solomon, ed., *Existentialism* (New York: Modern Library, 1974), p. ix, possibly the best anthology of writings in this tradition.

9. Q. in B. S., "Split Develops in 'Community'."

10. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: Macmillan, 1953; rev. ed., 1967), p. 172.

ii. "The College House of the Christian Faith and Life Community at Austin, Texas" (a study commissioned by the Hogg Foundation at the University of Texas) (Austin, TX, and Pelham, NY: Millard Research Associates, August 1964), P. 5 (hereafter "The College House"); James I. McCord, "The New Man in the New Age," *Letter to Laymen*, May 1961, p. 8; Richard VanSteenkiste, "College House Seeks to Resolve Basic Issues for Texas Students," *Daily Texan*, 23 April 1961, B. S., "Split Develops in the 'Community'."

12. "The College House," p. ii; Robb Burlage, interview with author, 1 June 1992; Judy Schleyer Blanton, interview with author, 17 May 1993.

13. Claire Johnson Breihan/O. R. Schmidt, interview with author, 29 June 1992.

[ca. 1960]), emphasis in original; "The Austin Experiment," in *Breakthrough*; "behind every breakthrough: The Financial Support of Alert New Men," in *Breakthrough*.

<sup>15</sup> Paul Tillich, "The Idea and the Ideal of Personality," in Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, trans. and ed. James Luther Adams (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948). Later I discuss further Tillich's relation of community and personality to spiritual reconnection.

The emergence of "personality" as a cultural norm in the United States, as against a supposedly older ideal of "character," is a chestnut of cultural history. This picture of cultural change is on display in David Riesman, with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950); also see Warren Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon, 1984). Richard W. Fox effectively questions this historical sequence in "The Culture of Liberal Protestant Progressivism, 1875–1925," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (Winter 1993): 639–660.

<sup>16</sup> "The Moral Covenant and Corporate Discipline of the Christian Faith-and-Life Community," CFLC document, p. 3; "The College House," p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> "The College House," p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Breihan/Schmidt interview; Allen Lingo, interview with author, 18 June 1992 (hereafter "Lingo interview"); "The College House," p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> "The College House," p. 35; B. S., "Split Develops in the 'Community,'" Breihan/Schmidt interview; Robert Bell, interview with author, 11 March 1993; Rajidah Franklin-Alley, interview with author, 18 March 1993.

<sup>20</sup> "The College House," p. 5; Allen Lingo, phone interview with author, 26 November 1991 (hereafter "Lingo phone interview").

<sup>21</sup> James Mathews, interview with author, 23 June 1993; Lingo interview; Brad Blanton, interview with author, 14 April 1993. James Mathews, Joe's brother, stayed on the straight and narrow path, eventually becoming a Methodist bishop. For a good discussion of Richard Niebuhr's intellectual and political development, see Richard W. Fox, "H. Richard Niebuhr's Divided Kingdom," *American Quarterly* 42 (March 1990): 93–101.

<sup>22</sup> Sticker quoted in B. S., "Split Develops in the 'Community'."

<sup>23</sup> Walter Kaufmann, ed., *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1956; Meridian Books edition, 1966), pp. 11–12. These themes in themselves do not distinguish existentialism from philosophical pragmatism; see James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in American and European Thought, 1870–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); and Morton G. White, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt against Formalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949).

<sup>24</sup> This is not true of the other widely read study of the time, that is, William Barrett, *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday, 1958); or of the later Solomon, ed., *Existentialism*.

<sup>25</sup> See Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 35, 39. Rollo May, *The Meaning of Anxiety* (New York: Ronald Press, 1950), offers a sec-

ular discussion of the same problem, one with which members of the Faith-and-Life Community also were familiar.

<sup>26</sup> May, *The Meaning of Anxiety*, p. 60. For differing views of these intellectual developments, see William Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); and Steven Turner, *Without God, Without Greed: The Origins of Unbelief in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

<sup>27</sup> Tillich, *Protestant Era*, pp. 193, 26; Tillich, *Courage to Be*, pp. 136–140, 96–103.

<sup>28</sup> See Ernst Troeltsch, *Christian Thought: Its History and Application*, ed. Baron F von Hugo (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), for a classic expression of liberal thinking on these issues; also see Hutchison, *Modernist Impulse*.

<sup>29</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*. See Eberhard Bethge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Man of Vision, Man of Courage*, trans. Eric Mosbacher et al. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

<sup>30</sup> John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963); Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Collier, 1965; rev. ed., 1990).

<sup>31</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*, pp. 178, 180.

<sup>32</sup> "The New World," in *Breakthrough: "Prominent Church Board Aids Experiment," Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

<sup>33</sup> "The New Man," in *Breakthrough*.

<sup>34</sup> Carl Michalson, "Christian Faith and Existential Freedom," CFLC reprint, pp. 6, 7; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Lloyd Alexander (New York: New Directions, 1964); Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, trans. Justin O'Brien (New York: Knopf, 1955).

<sup>35</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951–1963); Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (New York: Scribner, 1948). Will Herberg characterizes Tillich as a neoorthodox thinker in Will Herberg, ed., *Four Existentialist Theologians: A Reader from the Works of Jacques Maritain, Nicolas Berdyaev, Martin Buber, and Paul Tillich* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday/Anchor, 1958); as does William Lee Miller in "The Rise of Neo-Orthodoxy," in Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Morton White, eds., *Paths of American Thought* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963), pp. 326–344.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Fox, in his brief discussion of Tillich in *Rainhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), pp. 257–259, presents Tillich as a therapeutic, amoral thinker who ignored the tragic dimension of human existence as well as political matters. Fox also suggests a connection between Tillich's predatory personal behavior—he was habitually unfaithful to his wife and was known to sexually harass younger women—and his theology. In his later work, for which he became most popular, Tillich avoided explicit discussion of political and moral matters, and he did indeed offer a therapeutic theology. However, his theology had moral and political dimensions, which he downplayed in his later writings, and his therapeutic per-

spective was both firmly grounded in Christian tradition and compatible with moral and political concerns.

As for his personal behavior, it is entirely appropriate to look to his writings to see if they support such behavior, but I see no such support there. In Tillichian terms, the exploitation of others disrespects their equal status as children of God and hinders their achievement of personality. Far from fulfilling his theology, Tillich's personal behavior violated it. And as I point out, *agape* and *eros* were the varieties of love that Tillich championed in his writing, not *libido*.

36. These quotations are from James Luther Adams's essay, "Tillich's Concept of the Protestant Era," in Tillich, *Protestant Era*, pp. 288, 299; Ved Mehta, *The New Theologian* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 6.

37. Tillich, *Protestant Era*, p. 285; Tillich, *Courage to Be*, pp. 169–170, 90.

38. See Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Scribner, 1932); Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of Its Traditional Defense* (New York: Scribner, 1945); and Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr*.

39. Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr*, p. 4.

40. "The College House," pp. 59, 104; Michalson, "Christian Faith and Existential Freedom," p. 5; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, p. 217.

41. Tillich, *Protestant Era*, pp. 150, 262; Tillich, *Courage to Be*, p. 22; Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (New York: Rinehart, 1955); and Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

42. Tillich, quoted in Mehta, *New Theologian*, p. 7. See Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 38–43; and Paul Tillich, "Being and Love," in Herberg, ed., *Four Existentialist Theologians*, pp. 332–346, for brief discussions.

King's dissertation compared the theologies of Tillich and Henry Nelson Wieman. See Keith Miller, *Voice of Deliverance: The Language of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Its Sources* (New York: Free Press, 1991), pp. 61–62. For King's views, see Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963). Miller makes it clear that King rejected Tillich's concept of God as insufficiently personal, although King did embrace other aspects of Tillich's thought, like the concept of *agape*.

For an extensive exposition of the distinctively Christian quality of *agape*, see Anders Nygren, *Eros and Agape*, trans. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953). (Miller is at pains to note that King did not take his concept of Christian love from Nygren.) According to Nygren, *eros* is fundamentally selfish and egocentric, expressing the human desire for fulfillment in the possession of beautiful things, whereas *agape* is selfless and is "indifferent to value"; that is, it attaches indiscriminately to all humans simply by virtue of their humanity. *Eros* flows from women and men to God, and *agape* is a love freely given by God to us, which we can then return to God and transfer to our fellow humans.

44. Ibid., p. 355; also see Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, pp. 38–40, 94.

45. Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, pp. 268, 115.

46. Tillich quoted in Adams, "Tillich's Concept," p. 290 (emphasis added); Michalson, "Christian Faith and Existential Freedom," p. 9. Also see Tillich, *Protestant Era*, pp. 202–205; and Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Scribner, 1955).

47. Cover, *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

48. Carol Darrell, "The Paralyzed Man," *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962; Keith Stanford, "The Contemporary Dilemma," *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962; Keith

49. Meg Godbold, "The New Possibility," *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

50. Edward C. Hobbs, "The Gospel Through So-Called Secular Drama" (CFLC reprint), pp. 5, 4; Emil Brunner, "Justification by Grace Alone" (CFLC reprint), p. 6.

51. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, trans. John W. Doberstein (New York: Harper Bros., 1954), pp. 112, 105–106, 114, 115; also see William Blair Gould, *The Worldly Christian: Bonhoeffer and Discipleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. 6.

52. "The Moral Covenant," p. 3; Lingo phone interview; cover, *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

53. Casey Hayden, interview with author, 2 March 1993; W. Jack Lewis, "Dear Everybody," *Letter to Laymen*, November 1959; Rosalie Oakes, interview with author, 23 February 1993.

54. "The College House," pp. 29, 30, 31, emphasis in original. J. Gordon Melton and Robert L. Moore, *The Cult Experience: Responding to the New Religious Pluralism* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982) rejects the widespread fear of new religions or "cults." Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communities and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), concludes that a measure of authoritarianism is necessary for the survival of intentional communities.

55. "The College House," p. 29; Hayden interview; Casey Hayden to author, 17 March 1997; Dorothy Burlage, interview with author, 9 December 1992.

56. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*, pp. 108, 26, 40.

57. Lois Boyd, "A Strange Forty-Four Hours," *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962, emphasis in original.

58. B. S., "Split Develops in the 'Community,'" 59. Cover, *Breakthrough*.

60. Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, p. 38.

61. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan, 1949; rev. ed., 1959), p. 67.

62. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*, p. 34; Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, pp. 22, 327. For criticism of Bonhoeffer for his assent to using violence as a tool of resistance, see John M. Swonk Jr., *Liberation Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 144–165.

63. See Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Limitations of Modern Theology: On a Letter of Dietrich Bonhoeffer," in Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983), pp. 222–234; and Geoffrey B.

Kelly, *Liberating Faith: Bonhoeffer's Message for Today* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1984), pp. 153-171.

Bonhoeffer's writings and example have been used in many instances to justify resistance to political authority. For a discussion of parallels between the thought of Bonhoeffer and Daniel Berrigan, a left-wing Catholic, see Larry Rasmussen, with Renate Betzge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer—His Significance for North Americans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), pp. 43-56.

64. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*, p. 211.
65. Cox, *Secular City*, p. 110.
66. Cover, *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

67. Stanford, "The Contemporary Dilemma"; Don Warren, "The Summer Letter: No. 1," 16 June 1961.

68. "Our Common Rule (Tentative Outline)" (CFLC reprint), p. 1 (emphasis added).

69. In addition to the works by Fromm and May cited earlier, Rollo May, *Man's Search for Himself* (New York: Norton, 1953); and Viktor F. Frankl, *From Death-Camp to Existentialism: A Psychiatrist's Path to a New Therapy*, trans. Ilse Lasch (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), figured in the curriculum.

70. Dorrie Adams, "The Activist Man," *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962; Darrell, "The Paralyzed Man" (emphasis added).

71. Darrell, "The Paralyzed Man."

72. Warren, "The Summer Letter: No. 1."

73. "Mid-Year Retreat," February 4-5, 1961 (CFLC College House reprint), p. 1.

74. Cover, *Letter to Laymen*, February 1962.

75. "Mid-Year Retreat," p. 6; "The Moral Covenant," pp. 1, 2; "The College House," p. 59.

76. "Mid-Year Retreat," p. 6.

77. Dorothy Burlage interview; Hayden interview.

78. John A. Russell, letter, *Letter to Laymen*, May 1961.

79. "Parish Laymen's Weekend Seminar, Advanced Course CS I-C, Our Rule of Prayer."

80. "The New Image," in *Breakthrough*.

81. Lingo interview.

82. Godbold, "The New Possibility"; Hayden interview.

83. Examples of reports on events in the Third World read by Community participants are Alhaji Muhammad Mgileruma, "Africa in World Affairs: The Policy of Neutralism" (CLFC reprint, from *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 15 September 1961); and "The Message of the Third Assembly, World Council of Churches," adopted at New Delhi, India, the First Sunday in Advent, 1961 (CFLC reprint).

84. Wesley Poorman, "The Church on Today's Campus," *Letter to Laymen*, May 1961; Lingo interview.

85. Lingo interview.

86. Dick Simpson, interview with author, 8 March 1993.

87. "The New Man," in *Breakthrough*.

88. "Choreography for the Daily Office, 1960-1961" (CFLC reprint); "A New Experiment," in *Breakthrough*.

89. Erich Fromm, "The Nature of Symbolic Language," CFLC reprint from *The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales, and Myths* (New York: Rinehart, 1951).

90. Hayden interview.

91. Dugger, *Our Invaded Universities*, p. 76. Hayden to author; Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 112. Geertz distinguishes the religious perspective sharply from the aesthetic, arguing that aesthetics focuses on the surface realities of the world around us, on the real, not the really real (pp. 111-112).

92. Perhaps as "ideal types" these categorical differences have merit; if so, one sees in the Faith-and-Life Community a merging of aesthetic and religious perspectives. For a contemporary account of mysticism perused at the Community, see Colin Wilson, *The Outsider* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956).

93. Bob Breihan interview; Oakes interview. Casey Hayden thinks the debate took place during the 1956/1957 school year; Hayden to author.

94. Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot: A Tragiomedy in Two Acts* (London: S. French, 1957).

95. Hoyt Purvis, "Question of Goals Causes Staff Split," *Daily Texan*, 17 April 1962; Bryant, interview with author, 8 July 1992; Lingo interview.

96. See Laurence Veysey, *The Communal Experience: Anarchist and Mystical Communities in Twentieth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

97. *Port Huron Statement*, in James Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets"; *From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), p. 332.

98. For a Jewish existentialism, highly compatible with Christian existentialism (as its promotion by King indicates), see Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Scribner, 1970). Yet Buber's version is notable in this connection for the absence of a strong concept of love as that which binds people in *I-Thou* relationships. According to Buber, we should treat others as *Thous* simply because of our common humanity—the same justification given for the "indifference" of God's love, *agape*, in Christian thought. Nygren, *Eros and Agape*, asserts that the controlling idea of Judaism, the concept that binds humanity to God in that tradition, is *nemos*, indicating the imperative to obey God's law; thus he sets

Judaism radically apart from both Hellenic and Christian thinking on the human-divine relation.

99. Jo Eckmann, “‘The Community’ Seeks a Life of Meaning,” *Daily Texan*, 12 November 1939; Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System,” p. 112; *Port Huron Statement*, in Miller, “Democracy Is in the Streets,” p. 330.

### Chapter 3

1. On the social gospel, see Charles Howard Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1940); Henry F. May, *Protestant Churches in Industrial America* (New York: Octagon Press, 1949); Paul Carter, *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1954); Robert T. Handy, ed., *The Social Gospel in America, 1870–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966); Christopher Lasch, “Religious Contributions to Social Movements: Walter Rauschenbusch, the Social Gospel, and Its Critics,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 18 (Spring 1990): 7–25; Ralph Luker, *The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1889–1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); and Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
2. Quoted in Jimmy Banks, “YM(?)A—r: Open Door, Big Issues Stir Critics,” *Dallas Morning News*, 18 March 1962.
3. Bob Breihan, interview with author, 10 November 1991.
4. Chandler Davidson, interview with author, 2 February 1993.
5. Bob Breihan interview.
6. “Panorama Focuses On: The University Y,” *Daily Texan*, 15 May 1960.
7. Rosalie Oakes, interview with author, 23 February 1993.
8. Celia Morris, “Learning the Hard Way,” *Change* 6 (July–August 1974): 45; Willie Morris, “Living Theology: Smith and the ‘Y,’” *Texas Observer*, 23 March 1962; “Former ‘Y’ Exec Dies in Chapel Hill,” *Daily Texan*, 29 January 1963.
9. Willie Morris, “Living Theology: Smith and the ‘Y.’”
10. Casey Hayden to author, 17 March 1997. On the pacifist element in the early twentieth-century social gospel tradition, see C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898–1918* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 323–380; and Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America, 1914–1941* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971). On the student peace movement of the 1930s, wracked by its involvement with the Communist Party apparatus, see Robert Cohen, *When the Old Left Was Young: Student Radicals and America’s First Mass Student Movement, 1929–1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
11. Frank Wright, interview with author, 30 June 1992; Frank L. Wright, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: A Graphic Picture of Present Day Institutional Care of the Mentally Ill in America* (Philadelphia: National Mental Health Association, 1947).
12. Oakes interview.

13. On the distinctly mixed record of Christian liberals on racial issues in earlier decades, see Luker, *Social Gospel in Black and White*. The social gospel did not stand apart from the racist consensus in white America during the ironically named (in this connection) Progressive Era. Yolanda B. Wilkerson, *Interracial Programs of the YWCA’s: An Inquiry under Auspices of the National Young Women’s Christian Association* (New York: Woman’s Press, 1948), details the Y movement’s record and status on racial matters and urges a greater racial egalitarianism. I thank Nancy M. Robertson for alerting me to this report.

As an intriguing note on the links among the social gospel, the American left, and African American politics in this period, Yolanda Wilkerson was married to Doxey Wilkerson, a prominent black Communist in the 1930s and 1940s who later became a faculty member at historically black Bishop College in Marshall, Texas. Doxey A. Wilkerson, “Marxists and Academic Freedom,” in Loren Baritz, ed., *The American Left: Radical Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 336–343, is a document of the McCarthy period (1953), a civil libertarian, Popular Front-style defense of people like himself, Marxists in academic life. It evokes a “progressive” politics, rather unusual in Texas, that accommodated elements as diverse as Christian liberalism and communism. Doxey Wilkerson reportedly advised the students at Bishop in their civil rights protests in 1960, which spurred students at the University Y in Austin to undertake their own protests, as I detail in chapter 4.

14. Oakes interview.

15. Dorothy Dawson Burlage, interview with author, 9 December 1992. Burlage warns against inferring a direct and simple causal connection between religion and political activism in this context, insisting instead that activism emerged from an environment of overlapping political and intellectual forces.

16. T. J. Jackson Lears, in *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), asserts that by the late nineteenth century, “liberal Protestantism lost much of its power as an independent source of moral authority and became a handmaiden of the positivist world view” (p. 23) and that “a liberalized Protestant theology softened convictions and promoted ethical confusion” (p. 56). When the character of liberal Protestantism is considered in strictly philosophical and theological terms, the political history of liberal Protestantism in the twentieth-century United States is entirely effaced. If necessarily a conservative force, if liberal Protestantism sometimes seemed morally toothless and if it sometimes was put in the service of a ruling-class ideology, this did not have to be so; the rejection of Edwardsian hellfire and damnation did not imply a sunny optimism. Perhaps especially in conservative environments, liberal Protestantism served as a source of oppositional, politically liberal values through much of the twentieth century.

17. “Faith and Decision,” “Y’ Notes (University of Texas Y publication), spring 1962. The YWCA and YMCA chairs during the 1961/1962 school year were Susan Reed and Jim Neyland.

UT Birth Control Information Center and made her appear, if unconsciously, as a likely means to an end.

<sup>103</sup> Garrow, *Liberty and Sexuality*, pp. 457–454, 587–599.

<sup>104</sup> Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "A Moderate View on *Roe*," *Constitution*, Spring-Summer 1992; quotation from Barbara Ehrenreich, "Mothers United," *New Republic*, 10 July 1989. Both cited in Garrow, *Liberty and Sexuality*, p. 616. Garrow argues vigorously against such mixed feminist views of *Roe*, arguing that there was no tide rolling on in favor of repeal in 1973 and that *Roe* marked a great advance for feminists and American women. He also defends the integrity of the jurisprudential reasoning in *Roe* (Garrow, *Liberty and Sexuality*, pp. 616–617). Garrow's viewpoint is well taken, although as I indicate, feminist activists were concerned not only with winning this specific fight but also with continuing to build a movement, and Ehrenreich, along with others, evaluates the decision partly in that light.

<sup>105</sup> Garrow, *Liberty and Sexuality*, p. 407.

<sup>106</sup> Judy Smith interview.

<sup>107</sup> Judy Smith interview; Linda Smith interview; Hines interview; Foe interview; Merritt interview.

<sup>108</sup> Echols, in *Daring to Be Bad*, pp. 134–137, takes a few shots at socialist feminists, who receive rather little attention in her book overall.

In fairness, I should note that Echols remarks that "radical feminists were anti-capitalist—if only implicitly," but this element in radical feminism remains quite subdued in her treatment (Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, pp. 6–7). Furthermore, as I explain, frequently the radical feminists' leftist politics was quite explicit.

<sup>109</sup> Judy Smith interview.

### Epilogue

1. Elinor Langer, "Notes for Next Time: A Memoir of the 1960s," *Working Papers for a New Society* 1 (Fall 1973), reprinted in R. David Myers, ed., *Toward a History of the New Left: Essays from within the Movement* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1989), pp. 65–66, is quoted at the beginning of the epilogue. For other early eulogies, see Carl Oglesby, "Notes on a Decade Ready for the Dustbin," *Liberation* 14 (August–September 1969), reprinted in Myers, ed., *Toward a History of the New Left*; Paul Buhle, "The Eclipse of the New Left: Some Notes," *Radical America* 6 (July–August 1972): 1–9; James O'Brien, "Beyond Reminiscence: The New Left in History," *Radical America* 6 (July–August 1972): ii–48.

2. On the left, see George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston: South End Press, 1987); on the right, see Roger Kimball, *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990).

3. Jeff Jones, interview with author, 16 and 23 February 1993; "economy furniture workers," *Rag*, 7 August 1969, Cuney and Nancy Sweeney started the group, which at first they had thought to call "the New Patriots, A 'New' Left Organization." "New Patriots," *Rag*, 7 August 1969.

In general, on the new left's support for labor unions in its later years, see Peter B. Levy, *The New Left and Labor in the 1960s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 108–127, 147–166.

<sup>4</sup> "United Farm Workers," *Rag*, 2 October 1972; "Three Strikes," *Rag*, 18 September 1972; Judy Smith, "Which Side Are You On?" *Rag*, 8 December 1968; quotation from "With Love—Pat," *Rag*, 9 November 1970. The owner of the low-wage furniture factory, Milton Smith, was a member of the Austin Human Relations Commission and, along with his wife, Helen, a recipient of the B'nai Brith National Humanitarian Award in 1969. "Enough to Make You Gag," *Rag*, 3 June 1969.

<sup>5</sup> "Go Strikers!" *Rag*, 15 September 1969.

<sup>6</sup> Peter J. Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism: Edward Bernstein's Challenge to Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 266.

<sup>7</sup> Colin, "Political Independence," *Rag*, 6 November 1972.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Alexander, Martin Murray, David Allen, John Houghton, Martin Wigington, Nancy Allen, Gary Fitzgerald, letter, *Rag*, 31 January 1972; Mike R., "New American Movement," *Rag*, 14 February 1972.

<sup>9</sup> J. William More, "The New American Movement," *Space City!* 17–23 February 1972, remarked on the resemblance of NAM to the early SDS.

<sup>10</sup> Staughton Lynd, "Prospects for the New Left," *Liberation* 15 (January 1971): 13–28, is a lengthy analysis of the twentieth-century American left's failings that called for "a kind of mass organization in which the qualities most important to the New Left will not be lost" (p. 13). James Weinstein, "Reply to REP," in Harold Jacobs, ed., *Weatherman* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts, 1970), p. 399, called for "a mass, democratic organization encompassing and at the same time unifying the diverse needs of the *entire proletariat*" (emphasis added), by which he meant college-educated workers as well as others. Weinstein founded the journal *Socialist Revolution*, a theoretical organ in search of a party, which by 1978 made its peace with political reality by renaming itself *Socialist Review*.

<sup>n</sup> Harrington, who had a destructive falling-out with SDS at the Port Huron Conference of 1962, tried to pick up the pieces of a shattered left in later years. He helped found the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) in 1972, after leaving the Socialist Party (SP). This moved his politics somewhat to the left of the SP's cold warrior stance, but DSOC was still mainly a group of older social democrats, of Irving Howe's "musing generation," and it still aimed to work within the councils of the Democratic Party. As I indicate, however, new left radicals were doing this as well, often on a local basis. DSOC was not an activist organization, and Harrington in 1982 negotiated its merger with NAM, creating the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), effecting a generational entente. But this was a peace between fragments of past left-wing movements, not the beginning of a new one. Robert Gorman reports that NAM had attracted a maximum of fifteen hundred members. Robert A. Gorman, *Michael Harrington: Speaking American* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 144–145.

12. David Riesman, with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950; rev. ed., 1989), pp. 304–307.

13. Peter Cileck, *America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 1960s and '70s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), makes a convincing case for the left's lost monopoly on the search for authenticity.

14. See E. J. Dionne, *Why Americans Hate Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), pp. 31–54, for a blunt argument along these lines. The new left's loathing of the state clearly antedated the escalation of the Vietnam War, as Stanley Aronowitz, "Towards Radicalism: The Death and Rebirth of the American Left," in David Trend, ed., *Radical Democracy: Identity, Citizenship, and the State* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 8–101, indicates.

15. Mariann Garner Wizard, interview with author, 8 July 1992.

16. James Weinstein, *Ambiguous Legacy: The Left in American Politics* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), pp. viii, 140.

The pluralism that raised the new left's hackles was exemplified in Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs?: Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961), which asserted a dispersal of political power among organized interest groups. Leftists attacked this view of things for its complacency, for its apparent denial of disempowerment and political inequality. For critiques from the left, see Grant McConnell, *The Decline of Agrarian Democracy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959); and Grant McConnell, *Private Power and American Democracy* (New York: Knopf, 1966), which lament the demise of popularly based political party structures and the ascendance of elitist interest-group pluralism. On a theoretical plane, see R. Jeffrey Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism: The Origins of Modern American Political Theory, 1880–1920* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982); and for a powerful combination of theoretical and empirical argument, see Michael P. Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967), pp. 9–35, 261–282.

David Hollinger notes with insight that "pluralism" got such a bad name among leftists in the 1960s that in later years when many of them embraced pluralism, cultural and political, they had to invent a new word for it. Hence "multiculturalism." David A. Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), pp. 99–100.

17. Randolph Bourne held out the cosmopolitan hope of "trans-national America," which Hollinger updates in *Postethnic America*. Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America," in David Hollinger and Charles A. Capper, eds., *The American Intellectual Tradition: A Sourcebook*, vol. 2, 1865 to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 179–188.

18. Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wrecked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995), p. 97.

19. Ibid., pp. 96–104.

20. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: Norton, 1992); Robert Hughes, *Culture of Complaint: The Fraying of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*. None of these is quite the revisionist text one might think from criticism on the left (I say more about Gitlin's book later). Still, the rather obvious similarity of identity politics to interest-group pluralism makes these liberal critiques, all with a keen eye for the shocking example, ring a bit hollow. Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* (New York: Free Press, 1991), is both more honest and downright dishonest; the first because its author cares not a lick for pluralism and the second because he is a rightist posing as a liberal (and because his reporting is typically, let us say, embellished).

21. Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, p. 100. It would be less than fair to characterize Gitlin's book as merely the plaint of a white male leftist who wishes to reverse the tide of "difference," as I have heard some do. There is truth in Gitlin's narration of the left's collapse. As I explain, I think there are hidden resonances between the new left's politics and the identity politics of latter days. Gitlin himself concedes that "there is no golden past to recover" (p. 103), but his book evokes such a past nonetheless.

22. Herbert Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2 (1979): 1–20, is the classic exposition.

23. For an unusually frank discussion, see two essays by Barbara Epstein: "'Political Correctness' and Collective Powerlessness" (quoted at the beginning of the epilogue), in Marcy Darnovsky, Barbara Epstein, and Richard Flacks, ed., *Cultural Politics and Social Movements* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995); and "Radical Democracy and Cultural Politics: What about Class? What about Political Power?" in Trend, ed., *Radical Democracy*, pp. 127–139. Others disagree. One approving view, from a former Trotskyist, of identity politics as a postmodernist successor to Marxism is Carl Boggs, *The Socialist Tradition: From Crisis to Decline* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 181–220. His account is notable for its emphasis, contrary to Gitlin, on the continuity between the post-1960s "new social movements" and 1960s radicalism.

24. Oglesby, "Notes on a Decade," p. 37, emphasis in original. In 1969 he called this politics the "new anarchism." Only his insistence on an urban anarchism was off base.

25. Epstein, "'Political Correctness' and Collective Powerlessness," p. 18. Also see Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*, pp. 151–165.

26. Trend, ed., *Radical Democracy*, is one attempt to reverse this tide on the left.