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Cover Page Footnote

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Why Is Boston University Still in Chelsea?

Glenn Jacobs

In the face of obdurate social, educational, and political failures, problems, and obstacles, Boston University persists in its management of the Chelsea public schools. It also persists in its refusal to share power with such Chelsea citizenry as the resistant Latinos whose leadership the university seeks to discredit. Jacobs examines the historical background of the city and its schools to decipher Chelsea's economic dependency and repeated fall into receivership and privatization.

Since 1989 the nation has watched an educational reform unprecedented in boldness and scope — nothing less than the privatization of management of the complete urban school system in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Chelsea, a tattered industrial suburb of Boston largely framed by vice, corruption, and poverty, is a place where nary a week passes without a sordid news report of police and official corruption, robbery, murder, abduction, bookmaking, racketeering, and prostitution. Indeed, even a progressive psychiatrist and community activist who has spent a decade working in Chelsea has described the life of the poor of this city in similar terms:

Being trapped in an environment of intense affect surrounding an increased frequency of events . . . describes life in Chelsea. The people there seem to suffer an endless sequence of things. Fires, accidents, crimes, illness, moving, job loss, pregnancy, marriage, divorce, birth, death — hardly has the person recovered from one wave of change than another comes along. . . . The pattern of adverse life events . . . is not experienced as a sequence of waves so much as a whirlpool.¹

Lately, boasts of miracles in the making by caretakers from outside have sought to modify the sordid image. There is the widely publicized resurrection of Chelsea's fiscal solvency — with strong infusions of state and state-related aid — by the city's receivers, and there is Boston University, which, for more than four years, has undertaken complete management and reformation of Chelsea's schools. On the other

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hand, obscured in the media is the mobilization of Chelsea's minority population, especially its Latinos, in response to the privatization of its schools.

"Why is Boston University still in Chelsea?" in one sense belabors the obvious. Of course, Boston University remains in Chelsea because the terms of the contract signed with the city in 1989, which also exempts the university from some of the strictures encumbering public bodies, specify a ten-year commitment for the university to run the schools. Nonetheless, in a city so mired in structural problems emanating from national economic and political forces — not to mention the ineptitude, corruption, and mismanagement in pathetic little Chelsea — *any* party attempting comprehensive educational reform might be doomed to failure.

Rumors have circulated that members of the management team and other university officials privately admit that Chelsea is a sinkhole that is bleeding the university of resources. It has been said that perhaps the only reasons why Boston University has stayed in Chelsea are the stubborn pride and political ambition of John Silber. Were it not for these — and the opportunity to be the impresario over Chelsea's \$92 million school-building project — rumor has it that Boston University would move out lock, stock, and barrel. As we shall see, Silber's pride and ambition belie a more complex institutional *modus vivendi*.

The absence of significant program achievement by the Chelsea project, coupled with Chelsea's acute fiscal crisis and fall into receivership in 1991–1992, also fueled rumors of Boston University's evacuation. Nevertheless, the university's public demeanor has been one of staunch perseverance, and its spokespeople waste no time in proudly proclaiming that "we didn't back away" from fiscal catastrophe. In its 1992 report to the Massachusetts legislature, the university explained away poor test scores and teacher absenteeism as products of stretched resources. Moreover, it predicted vastly improved test scores for grades three, six, and nine on full completion of the project's preschool program by entire student cohorts.² A September 6, 1992, *New York Times* article suggested that reading and math scores, the drop-out rate, and teacher absenteeism remained virtually the same as when the university took up management of the schools. Yet Boston University and its president are loath to admit failure where more prudent parties would at least register a modicum of self-doubt.

To rescue a city's schools from a laundry list of educational and social maladies is a Promethean task. It is no surprise that such an undertaking would be attempted by John Silber and his university. Having ridden herd over his own university through methods of corporate control for more than a decade and a half, finagling a large university budget for entrepreneurial purposes with a collusive covey of trustees and playing the urban real estate game with the aid of a former Boston mayor, Silber at last had a chance to actualize a dream held even longer than the span of his exploits at Boston University: to have complete control and influence over the minds of a community's children.

Thus, the murky question of why Boston University remains in Chelsea resolves to the matter of *how* it pursues its agenda there. Silber, through his pride, his and his university's ambition to mold a community and its schoolchildren, and the unwillingness to admit defeat after so much of the university's resources have been invested, bespeak a kind of collective cognitive dissonance not unlike the persistence of a more powerful nation's costly aggressive intervention in the affairs of a small poor country. Popular resistance to the more powerful party's presence is met with rigidity, intransigent incomprehension of the "ingratitude" of the "natives," and outright hostil-

ity. This, indeed, is the posture typifying the university's community relations. But it is only part of the story. The coming of both Boston University and receivership to Chelsea fits a historical pattern of many older "dependent" cities in the United States.

I examine the Boston University/Chelsea project as a point along the trajectory of Chelsea's social history. It is clear that Boston University and the receivership are simply successors to caretakers in Chelsea's past. Moreover, the university management team's *modus operandi* and community relations are significant telling points of the paternalism evinced by a university refusing to acknowledge a client population as social and political equals. The story of the community's resistance to the incursion of private interests into the public realm comprises a case study of the object lessons of privatization. In discussing the "politics of information" of the project — the university's reluctance to evaluate itself and its cynical use of data derived from it — I show how privatization intrinsically walls itself off from openness and accountability. In this case, an exposé by a Latino community organization remained the sole safeguard for the public's right to know. This incident and the larger struggle for Chelsea's schools hold important implications for cities steadily forced into the maw of privatization.

Chelsea's History: Shirtsleeves to Shirtsleeves in One Century

Chelsea's history has spanned a trajectory from old-style urban machine politics through receivership of the city government by a Control Committee following a devastating fire in 1908 and a subsequent return to its patronage and graft-prone system in 1911, to a "leveraged" takeover of its schools by a private — "nonprofit" — corporation in 1989, and a full circle return to receivership in fall 1991. The dynamic in motion here represents social, economic, and political factors that have operated both locally and nationally to make Chelsea dependent.

By the 1860s Chelsea's Protestant "old settler" families and colonial heritage were being eclipsed by immigrants, first, around 1875, from the British Isles, then, after 1890, southern and Eastern European immigrants, with Russian Jews being — and remaining for many decades — the most numerous, with smaller admixtures of Poles, Italians, French Canadians, Slavs, and other groups leavening the ethnic mix.³ As Edward Kopf informs us, "By the early twentieth century, Chelsea was not merely a specialized section of the larger metropolis [i.e., Boston].⁴ It was, rather, a comprehensive industrial suburb, encompassing all of the virtues and defects, all of the classes and activities, of a fully developed urban area."⁵

A fire in 1908, the third largest in the history of the nation,⁶ destroyed about 40 percent of the city and served as a historical precedent⁷ for privatized management of Chelsea's affairs because the city had to be virtually rebuilt — public buildings, residences, businesses, and most of its infrastructure. The business establishment — local manufacturers, bankers, and professionals from Boston — organized relief, convened, and promoted the placement of the city into virtual receivership by suspending its aldermanic/mayoral government and vesting governing authority in the hands of a Board of Control for three years. Testimony at public hearings called to discuss petitioning the state for suspension of the regular city government and formation of the Control Committee was prescient for the Boston University question eighty years later. Clearly, confidence in and by the business community was considered

the most valuable asset in rebuilding the city, as reported in a May 3, 1908, *Chelsea Gazette* article.

We must have the best men possible to restore confidence. . . . It is necessary to restore confidence, both in the people and in those who have been forced out . . . and what is much more important, the confidence in financial men in the future of that city. We have got to have large amounts of money poured into the city to rebuild it.

The graft-fraught and patronage-ridden local government was derided. As William E. McClintock, future chairman of the Chelsea Board of Control, was to put it two years later in a retrospective *New England Magazine* article,⁸ "After the fire there was a widespread feeling that the city could not be quickly and economically rebuilt and remodeled by the Mayor and the Aldermen."⁹

The Mugwumpish "old [white Protestant] settlers," who had guided Chelsea's early growth and resisted annexation by Boston in the previous century, had their second chance for supreme control.¹⁰ Clearly, then as now, the caretakers of the city saw crisis as an opportunity to solve problems that representative — immigrant-saturated — government had allowed to get out of hand.

More popularly based, that is, ethnic-working-class, opinion, then as now stressed local self-reliance and the importance of safeguarding the franchise of voters. In a city hearing on the commission question, "Enthusiastic Meeting" in the *Chelsea Gazette* of May 9, 1908, a Mr. Doherty, who in conformity with the prejudices of the day was portrayed as an Irish rustic, adumbrated later popular views concerning privatization in Chelsea.

"What we want to know about this commission is, what good is it going to be for the city of Chelsea? What authority will it have? Will we have any guarantee that they will govern our city any better than our present government has? Will the city of Chelsea have to pay the bills? I guess so. If the city of Chelsea is going to pay the bills they ought to have the right to say who is going to spend the money. If the money lenders won't lend the money, what guarantee will you have that they will lend it to the commission?"

Mr. Doherty's questions have been succeeded by contemporary ones coming from quarters also viewed as naive and, alternately, as obstructive and nonrepresentative of the community. Driven by their anxieties and aspirations, the business elite were convinced that the problems might be solved if the "best people" governed once more. After all, a precedent had been set by the installation of the first city commission in Galveston after its 1901 flood. However, as Kopf points out, "To the immigrants, commission government was not reform; it was disenfranchisement." Ironically, one of the results of the fire was an expansion of the immigrant component of Chelsea's population. The fire prompted the desertion of the city by many of the "natives" (white Protestants). "By 1915 the numbers of aliens and their offspring had increased to 140 percent of their 1905 levels. Immigrants and their children constituted two-thirds of Chelsea's people in 1905; this proportion had increased to 84 percent in 1915, just seven years after the Fire."¹¹

At the Vanguard: Chelsea Schools Pioneer ESL Instruction

Research on Chelsea's public school history indicates that "immigrants arriving in the period 1890 to 1930 found a school system similar in *structure* to the one we know today, but one . . . which did not expect to retain all students even through the end of 9th grade."¹² Earlier, virtually all of Chelsea's immigrant population was English speaking, but a threshold was crossed with the second and larger wave of Poles, Russian Jews, Italians, Lithuanians, Armenians, French Canadians, and others. Between 1890 and 1925, coterminous with this wave, the population of children of compulsory school age grew threefold, from 4,445 to 13,019.

In other words, a qualitative transformation emerged from the increase in numbers and diversity of Chelsea's immigrants. The "schools recognized this diversity largely as an issue of language,"¹³ and from 1890 on the increased diversity of the city and student body prompted revision of the "terms of incorporation" — a revision of school policy regarding the education of immigrant children. Non-English-speaking students were sent to ungraded classes in the primary school until they acquired sufficient linguistic ability to be mainstreamed. Called the Non-English-Speaking Department, these special classes functioned as an intensive English as a second language (ESL) program.

Far from being characterized as intolerant, one scholar tells us, "the 'sink or swim' submersion approach was regarded as the only or best possible arrangement for English acquisition." Nevertheless, the tendency toward experimentation concerning incorporation of the linguistically different into the schools was "limited and conditioned by the overriding concerns with crowding." Just as noteworthy was Chelsea's reluctance to respond to state mandates regarding truancy and vocational training programs.¹⁴

What is to be learned from all of this? We are informed that on the one hand, "Chelsea's educators showed a willingness to experiment and creativity within, or as a result of, the constraints imposed by limited resources. The 'special classes' afforded more concentrated attention by teachers and were a departure from a very standardized norm."¹⁵ On the other hand, these efforts were sabotaged by the school committee's noncompliance with state mandates. The contradiction, however, is only superficial.

Chelsea's industry until the late 1950s was largely owned by Chelsea or Boston-area residents. In a small city there was no question about the congruency of private with civic interests. Since it was in the factory owners' interest to have available an ample, *minimally educated*, compliant local labor force, in the spirit and practice of the times it was standard assumption that the school life of non-English-speaking students would be short, that is, it would not continue after they reached the age of fourteen, when attendance was no longer compulsory. Most high school-age students were destined to work, "an option that was perhaps less desirable in 1890 than it had been in 1850, but which remained more acceptable in 1890 than it is in 1990."¹⁶

The contradiction for that time was between the goodwill of the teaching corps toward their polyglot charges and the constraint of limited resources within a context specifying limited schooling for the city's children. This was constituted by the relations — between workers and employers — of production in Chelsea, which demanded exactly what was given educationally and remained true and was reinforced following the 1908 fire.

Entering the Vestibule of Dependency

Massive immigration ended with the restrictive laws of 1921 and 1924, essentially stabilizing the composition of Chelsea's population through the 1950s. During 1930–1954, the local press conveyed an image of the schools congruent with Mark Peterson's. Overcrowding appears to be a perennial issue, but a dissonant note concerning the physical obsolescence of the schools and of the school system intruded in the 1950s. Glimmers of an impending crisis appeared but are never acknowledged as such until the 1970s.

What prompted this apprehension? Perhaps it was the shock to the city and its image evoked by the building of the Mystic-Tobin Bridge, a long, elevated eyesore completed in 1951, which bisected the city and obliterated some of its old neighborhoods. The bridge, later to be a flaking-lead-paint nightmare, was, like so many other urban renewal projects, selfishly conceived as a quick way to the North Shore for more affluent suburbanites. Also, the good fit between the school system and the city's economy and political structure began to unravel. With the white European population commencing its trek out of Chelsea — there no longer being an industrial base to employ them — the school board was faced with an obsolete system, but with few resources or ideas on how to change it. Indeed, the city was about to be left stranded — a familiar story for most older industrial cities beleaguered by capital flight.

Thus a Harvard Graduate School of Education field study of the schools, *Chelsea, the City and Its Challenge*, is a significant document. Commissioned in 1954 by Mayor Andrew Quigley, it was published in an interregnum of the city's having passed its industrial heyday and its white population on the verge of leaving.¹⁷ The report, a glossy prospectus for school rebuilding and reform, sounds a prophetically ominous opening note.

A living city is a visible sign of great common purpose. When cities are alive, the most advanced art, powers, and standards of civilization flower in them. A collection of people no longer mobilizing their powers to create civilized values beyond those previously attained marks a declining city.¹⁸

Having underscored the necessity of replacing much of the physical plant, the document notes that nearly one-half of the Chelsea teachers were employed before 1935 and turnover was quite low. Judging by the results of a questionnaire submitted to teachers, it "*was difficult to find any agreement among the Chelsea staff as to what the objectives of the Chelsea school system are.*"¹⁹ This anomie certainly speaks to the obsolescence of the Chelsea school system. An incredulous tone pervades the report, which decries the city's inertia in its toleration of such an anachronism. The handwriting was on the wall in the 1950s; in the 1970s it would be replaced by the graffiti of urban decline.

The invocation of Harvard in 1954 and Boston University in 1985 bespeaks Chelsea's propensity toward dependence. Mayor Quigley was exercising an old reflex — calling in the experts — that served as a dress rehearsal for Boston University's entry three decades later. Reprivatization of the management of the city's affairs structurally and functionally reflects cycles of uneven growth and episodes of economic retardation that have come to typify the urban landscape of the United States.²⁰ It is an

inclination typifying our society's predilection for associating success with individualized effort in the pursuit of profit.

Enter Boston University: Reprivatizing Chelsea

The Boston University/Chelsea project grew out of the 1985 request of school committee member (also former mayor, state representative, senator, and publisher of the *Chelsea Record*) Andrew Quigley to John Silber for Boston University to manage the Chelsea schools after the city of Boston refused Silber's offer. Claiming that the Boston system resembled a 747 without control panels, Silber managed to alienate the Boston School Committee with his offer of strong management. Boston School Committee president John Nucci's rejection anticipated later criticisms of the university's top-down management style and privatization of the Chelsea schools. After quarreling with the encumbrance of Silber's estimated per pupil cost on the Boston school budget, Nucci took up

the final and most important flaw in Dr. Silber's proposal — the lack of accountability to the residents of the city. Silber boasts almost frighteningly that he could run the schools free of "political pressures." In my opinion this is a clever way of proposing capricious management, without any degree of responsiveness to, or access by, those paying for and affected by the system. Without the accountability that is demanded of elected officials, the result would [be] an insensitive and even greater bureaucracy than now exists. With all due respect to a fine institution, Boston University, under Dr. Silber's guidance, has not exactly been a model of sensitivity and concern for its neighboring community and the city-at-large.²¹
[Italics added.]

According to a May 3, 1990, interview with its dean, George McGurn, the School of Management, not the School of Education, initiated the project, because U.S. business was worried about "our global competitiveness and schools of education were part of the problem." Moreover, they desired "a broad spectrum on management's impact on society. The university's criticism of the Chelsea schools in its 1988 report was a response to the schools' substandard educational conditions, viewing the city and its school system as a hollow entity without extant viable leadership or an adequate social and political substrate to sustain an adequate civic school culture. This assessment reflected the management school's and President Silber's business-oriented disdain of national and local educational conditions.

Boston University's report on the Chelsea public schools, "A Model for Excellence in Urban Education," underscored the Latino community's isolation and alienation. The report noted that parents felt excluded from their children's education by virtue of strained communications between the families and their schools and the parents' "inability to feel in control" and concluded,

Lack of community support and parental involvement in the schools is a widespread problem, but is particularly noticeable in Chelsea's Hispanic and Asian communities. Most teachers, administrators, and other white elites ascribe the problem to apathy, disinterest, and cultural barriers. The minority leaders we have talked with, however, place the problem along class and racial lines. With

anecdotal evidence, they argue that their constituents have been denied access to government, schools, jobs, housing, health care, and other community institutions.

It added that efforts to mobilize support for minority candidates failed "due to fractured alliances, lack of money, and the inability to overcome competing interests with common concerns," but wrongly predicted, "It is unlikely that these minority groups could effectuate change through the political process, even if they could coalesce"²²

Boston University's assessment of Latino isolation and alienation was not matched in its stewardship of the public schools by a foretelling of the politicization of Latinos, nor by sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of the Latino community. The report context was shaped by an agenda of managerial control of the schools, and perhaps of social services and community development. In short, juxtaposed with the university's responses to Latinos and Latino and non-Latino agencies and organizations, the report can be viewed as a kind of manifesto in the service of community manipulation.

The university's dealings with the Hispanic community are detailed further below, but examples of the university's posture of engulfment and occupation toward the community and its agencies starkly contrast with a more supportive role that might have been taken. One case, concerning small day care providers, which came before the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC) on February 25, 1991, and the State Oversight Panel on March 12, 1991, illustrates Boston University's opportunistic mien. Representatives from local day care programs, which rely on grant money, came to those meetings to complain that Boston University, planning programs of its own despite its promises of accommodation and compromise, was ignoring the local centers and appeared to be going ahead with plans to seek funding via grants. A second case concerns Choice Thru Education, which for more than two decades has administered Upward Bound and other high school supplementation programs in the city. It was about to apply for federal Talent Search funds for Chelsea in 1991 when it was learned from Boston's Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation that HOPE was also applying for this grant to operate Talent Search in Chelsea. Superintendent Diane Lam had bypassed Choice and gone to HOPE to support its bid for the project. When representatives from both agencies learned of these facts, HOPE pulled its grant application on the grounds that it would be unethical to compete with a Chelsea agency that was qualified to run Talent Search.

These cases illustrate an institutional reflex of opportunism as opposed to a seeking of common ground, a posture which, even when reined in because of protest, is predaceous. Such insensitive community relations and the imperviousness of the city government to Latino needs and interests earlier prompted Latinos to elect their first public official, school committee member Marta Rosa, in 1989.

The management team's operating style would reflect the earlier stance of the Chelsea project's planners. As noted, the would-be caretakers, initially invited into Chelsea as consultants, saw the city and its school committee and administrative complement as bereft of educational resources. (Information gleaned from interviews with Dean George McGurn and Chris Allen on May 3, 1990, and Robert Sperber on April 27 and May 11, 1990.)

Adherence to this premise prompted Boston University's insistence on nearly absolute contractual authority in its management arrangement with Chelsea. As education school dean Peter Greer put it in a February 16, 1990, interview, "We were going to

take all the risks. Why shouldn't we have full control?" The sentiment is identical to Dean McGurn's earlier pronouncement, "'We want the control, the responsibility and the accountability, and that's what management is all about.'" ²³ Presumably, wanting the accountability meant control of information and immunity from disclosure. Early project manager Chris Allen's recollection is that after looking at the school committee, there was no foundation to build upon: only a small number of administrators in the school system were committed to change, and among the teaching ranks "there was little on an organizational level — no cohesive group you could point to and say this is a model to build upon" (interview, May 30, 1990). Dean McGurn, alluding to a pantheon of urban problems, observed, "'Chelsea is on top of every list you don't want to be on'" ²⁴ and, delivering a back-handed compliment, exclaimed, "'The brilliant thing about Chelsea . . . is they recognize failure when they see it, even if they're responsible.'" ²⁵

The approach taken by BU was hierarchical, that is, top-down and emphasizing complete control of the school system's finances and personnel. What is more, it would never vary appreciably. It would seem as if Chelsea's Lilliputian size (1.86 square miles) tempted management school Dean McGurn to exclaim (interview, May 3, 1990), "It was so small you could wrap your arms around it. It was microcosmic. Frankly, if you were to take over the Boston system, who would ever know?" Such paternalism verged on pathos when McGurn stated, "We have to remember that Boston University is larger than the population of Chelsea. We can't be like Lennie in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, who breaks the neck of a mouse." ²⁶

John Silber's Mission: A City of One's Own

Clearly this was to be no "experiment," as it has often been loosely characterized. It is a project initiated with the conviction of the university, its president, and all who have administered it that it would be a precedent-setting solution to the ills of urban education. "I hope to change the national view on education," Silber is quoted as saying. ²⁷ The BU report asserts: "Boston University is willing . . . to assume the authority and responsibility to assure that Chelsea's public schools become a national model of urban education." ²⁸ The goals of the project thus transcend education, as management team members Carole Greenes and Peter Greer suggest when they stress that "the moral climate of a school has an effect on learning," and that "character formation will be stressed and civic virtue reaffirmed." ²⁹ This is closely aligned with John Silber's emphasis on combining education with heroic ideals. That civic virtue might be conceived differently by Latinos and other dissenters has been anathema to Boston University. This speaks to the question of why there is a complete absence of university-sponsored evaluation of the Chelsea project: such paternalism cannot countenance criticism, constructive or otherwise. I later detail the significance of this vis-à-vis the manner in which the project and its representatives deal with evaluation, research, and information.

For Silber the project is the actualization of a vision of wider social reform conceived in the 1960s when his "Proposal for a Measure Attacking Poverty at Its Source" was entered in the *Congressional Record*. ³⁰ A program for preschool education, it contained the premise that "children born into Negro families and families whose native language is other than English [read Latinos] are not sufficiently

stimulated verbally or are insufficiently trained in English to compete successfully in the public school whose programs are designed for English-speaking children." The proposal provided for education "of mothers of slum children," schools in "renovated slum houses," tutoring, remedial summer schools, and, presciently, "a massive crash program in one or two communities of a moderate size."³¹ Not only would Silber and his university have the opportunity to run "a massive crash program," but in Chelsea they would actualize Silber's dream of early childhood training with a pre-school program.

The Latino Struggle to Be Heard

When the Hispanics joined the debate over the city's prospective contract with Boston University, the legitimacy of their participation was denied. In the school committee's deliberations over the impending contract in 1988, Latinos were largely absent from public hearings, but in early 1989 they turned out in force. They contended that little information had been disseminated to the Latino community in English or Spanish and that the Latino leadership was ignored by the school committee, aldermen, mayor, and PTA.³² In February the Hispanic Commission wrote to Boston University management team chair Peter Greer, "We, the Hispanic population, have been neglected. Considering that over 50% of the school population is Hispanic we should have direct input into the proposed plans."

This is not surprising in the context of race relations in our society. The charge of repressive invisibility reverberates more widely than its metaphorical imagery when one considers the stereotypical and selective media treatment of and Anglo elites' denial of the representativeness of minority leadership. Hence, the simplistic assertion that the contract issue had been aired in the *Chelsea Record* for some time begged the question, since the *Record's* long-exhibited antipathy to Latinos, whom it depicted stereotypically, encouraged civic apathy in the community. Moreover, Chelsea Latinos made headlines only in the *Record's* police report; community and individual achievements went largely unreported.³³

As for the city government's attempt to communicate, there was no felt need to do so. No wonder that the March 1989 imbroglio at the final School Committee hearing, after the placid hearings of July through November 1988, came as a shock to Chelsea's Anglos. It was as if it had come *ex nihilo*. Who would have expected a pariah population to become civic minded, particularly over such stereotypically Anglo concerns as education?

Therefore the belated activism on the part of the Latinos was the end of an era of political submersion. The Latinos' late entrance into the public forum is perceived by proponents of the contract as forfeiture of the Hispanics' prerogative to participate in the public debate. Implicit in this denial is a judgment of the Latinos' competence and right to participate. Hence, their clamor to be heard has been perceived by the pro-BU forces not as a will to democratic participation but as obstructiveness. How could such tunnel vision accommodate the stirrings of a minority community for self-determination? Mayor John J. Brennan, Jr., the late Andrew Quigley, Alderwoman Marilyn Portnoy, and Rosemarie Carlisle, president of the PTO, among others I have interviewed, echo the sentiment that "[Latinos] had their chance" and flubbed it by their belated entrance into the arena. Boston University's bestowal of the mantle of

invisibility, as we shall see, has been to cast the Latino activists as obstructive impos-
tors and to insist on the color blindness of their praxis.

A typical response was that of Rosemary Carlisle, Quigley's replacement on the school committee, who has now been reelected. When asked if she thought that Hispanics have been excluded from the process of installing the contract, she briskly replied,

Hispanics were never excluded — and I don't know where you got that information. They had all the rights as I did as a citizen of Chelsea to be active in the BU partnership. . . . I attended numerous open meetings, I went to the state house. I was aware of the contract and of the problems that were in the contract and I voiced my opinion, so the Hispanic community were never deleted from any of it as far as I'm concerned.

When I asked, "Why do you think they were so upset at the time?" she answered,

Because they came in too late in the process. If they had come out when Boston University first came here a year and a half ago and kept on track on top [*sic*] of everything, they would have been able to voice their opinion like all of the other citizens. I have no idea why it took them so long to voice their opinions. They should have voiced them earlier like we [i.e., the rest of the community] did.
(Interview, April 10, 1989)

She denies that racism and exclusion have been the lot of minorities in Chelsea, and when I questioned her on why the PTO is devoid of Hispanics, blacks, and Cambodians, she blankly said she didn't know. This point of view articulates well the motivation of many who, in and out of city government, welcomed Boston University into Chelsea largely as a remedy for the incipient dilution of white dominance and the chronic fiscal embarrassment of the city. Thus, accusing the Hispanic activists of being Johnny-come-latelies is emblematic of a rhetoric of exclusion, as if to say "Better never than late!"

What is/are the agenda(s) of the supporters of Boston University's "experiment"? As we know, the lineaments of Chelsea's school system, originally designed to provide limited education for its first- and second-generation immigrant factory labor, including intensive ESL instruction, had not changed appreciably for better than a half century. By the 1970s urban "blight," the depletion of its industry and more mobile white populations, had made inroads into all Chelsea's public institutions, and by the mid-1980s the "boodle" had run out for Chelsea's patronage-driven city government.³⁴ The school system, originally designed to prepare a white ethnic working class for local industrial employment, in tandem with the other municipal institutions, could be said to have been in crisis, but this "crisis" had been going on for more than a decade, when in 1985 Boston University's president, John Silber, was asked to intervene.

The real crisis was that of the white-dominated political machine and its voter base, which was threatened by a burgeoning Latino and Southeast Asian population. Hence the crisis may more usefully be seen as a "moral panic" wherein a cry for help was issued to Chelsea's new great white hope for gentrification and dilution of its minority population.³⁵ In other words, "crisis" is a term, like "terrorism," that serves as

a mordant for the facticity of the status quo and its “natural” enemies. In this case, the natural enemy of the city is blight, which is incarnated by the perception of threatened whites in minorities and in the run-down neighborhoods where they are forced to live. One antidote for urban decline may be conceived as “whitening” or gentrification. As Mayor Brennan explained (interview, January 22, 1990),

All of your middle-class middle-aged people are going . . . There’s no more children of the white middle class. That’s what I honestly see. I think with BU here and a new school that we hope to build, I believe then that we’ll draw people in a financial bracket that can pay for a good home and not be able to pay for private schools.

After he had rattled off a list of changing Boston neighborhoods whose refugees might make good prospects as Chelsea residents, I asked, “What about blacks and Hispanics?” He replied, “Oh yeah, and them too.” Thus the halcyon dream of Chelsea’s earlier white working class for middle-class respectability would now, it was hoped, be vouchsafed in the postindustrial age.

As for the growing minority populations, their invisibility had become transmogrified into the blur of an advancing wave of color and culture, which could be stemmed only by forceful intervention, in this case, in the school system. On the other hand, with renewed vigor, a larger population, and a new crop of young leaders, Chelsea Latinos would find in the school question all the material they needed to launch a revitalized organization and an electoral campaign destined to change the contours of Latino politics. As James O’Connor says, crisis is “social struggle and reintegration” and the “greater the threat from emerging centers of power . . . the greater the resistance thrown up by the old.”³⁶

The Transformation of Latino Leadership

Marta Rosa, president of Chelsea’s Commission on Hispanic Affairs and member of the Chelsea School Committee, recalled (interview, February 8, 1990) that 1988 and 1989 were watershed years for the commission, for they mark a kind of “changing of the guard of the Latino leadership.” It was a time when people were ready for new leadership and more influence on civic affairs. Her recollection was that there were many veteran activists on the commission.

People who had been around a long time, had worked in the community with . . . different organizations — LUCHA and Comité Latinamericano, people who had given a lot already . . . They wanted to be involved but were really burnt [out] at the time. A core group of those people, people like Ceferino, Elma Richard, Pat Vega, stayed with the commission . . . Apericia Rodriguez . . . These are people who had been working in the community for years . . . When I was in high school these people were working. People were ready for something.

Marta Rosa hadn’t been an activist long enough to be burned out, so when she and others such as Juan Vega came along, new blood blended with the old and reinvigorated activism in the city.

Prior to this, Chelsea Latinos had attempted for more than a decade to secure a foothold in the city’s civil service and political affairs. A variety of organizations, represented by moderate figures, emphasized accommodation to the white Demo-

cratic leadership of the city. In the 1970s through the mid-1980s confrontational groups such as LUCHA found themselves beleaguered and neutralized by hostility and harassment from City Hall.³⁷ The Hispanic Commission, initially chartered under Mayor Nolan in 1987, was an accommodationist group, but as noted, the events of 1989, including the hiring of a Puerto Rican community organizer by the teachers union to stimulate Latinos to support an opposition school committee slate to Boston University, succeeded in transforming the organization into an autonomous activist one.³⁸

The year 1989 also was important because of the confluence of events surrounding Chelsea's contract with Boston University and the commission's alliance with Multicultural Educational Training and Advocacy (META), an organization that had achieved national recognition for its advocacy work with linguistic minorities. Marta Rosa became acquainted with META through Felix Arroyo, a prominent Puerto Rican educational activist — later, a Boston School Committee member — who suggested a meeting with the Chelsea Teachers Union. At that meeting toward the end of January 1989, she encountered Javier Colon, a META lawyer, and several meetings ensued between the two organizations (Rosa interview, February 8, 1990).

Collaterally, as this popular group became allied with META, so did Boston University receive succor from the conservative New England Legal Foundation, which joined the legal battle presumably to determine the constitutional constraints of the case.³⁹ As the conflict grew more intense, the commission found itself casting an eye toward elective office. To accomplish this the Latino electorate had to be aroused. Voter registration would be required.

Voter registration added grit — toughness and tension — to the process of acquainting Latinos with their prospective representatives and themselves. It became an important agent of politicization in the community. Resistance was high within and outside the Hispanic orbit, but it provided a current for change agents to work with: pushing it here, guiding it there, and navigating its currents to achieve greater empowerment.

Angel (“Tito”) Rosa, Marta's husband, organized the voter registration drive. The election of Marta Rosa in 1989, among a slate of Chelsea School Committee candidates cosponsored by the Chelsea Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Chelsea Teachers Union, and its parent the American Federation of Teachers, evidently represented a victory for a popular front against the long arm of privatization and white supremacy. It fits an emergent trend in the evolution of Latino politics: the appearance of autonomous grassroots leaders.⁴⁰ Lyn Meza, a veteran Chelsea activist who served as Marta Rosa's campaign manager in the 1989 and 1991 elections, noted that the time was ripe for change (interview, April 24, 1990). Meza could not refuse Rosa's request that she manage the election campaign because “this was something that we had been waiting for, working for, hoping for years in this community — for responsible leadership to develop.”

The Politics of the Revolving Door

I have suggested that Boston University employs a “revolving door” strategy of community relations, typifying the manner in which dominant power holders seek to manipulate minority group organizations. When minority leaders or other autono-

mous community representatives do not fall into line with majority group strategies, they are discredited as not being truly representative of their constituencies. Majority leaders and caretakers then threaten to work around these "false" leaders, that is, to work with the "true" community.⁴¹ Boston University did this when the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC), a mandated body, showed signs of independent thinking in 1990: Peter Greer accused CEAC of pretending to be "another school committee" and threatened to "work around" that body.

Boston University is chagrined at the resistance put up by Latino community representatives; when it cannot control them it strives to discredit them and support other leaders it considers more worthy. In 1991 the management team strove to insinuate itself into the Latino community by offering blandishments to El Centro Hispano and frequently alluded to its harmonious relations with El Centro when the issue of the team's poor record of community relations was publicly raised. El Centro's current director, José Fernandez, has been trying to navigate an autonomous course for the organization and has assiduously steered it away from the shoals of internecine conflict while resisting the seductions of the university to render material aid and other support. More recently, the university, with the aid of a former El Centro board member, sponsored a Latin American festival committee. Previous festival committees have put on beauty pageants; the activities and operations of these organizations typically have been riddled with conflict over the use of funds. Unfortunately, this is the best the university can do with its community relations.

While election of minority leaders is a source of strength and pride to these groups, it is a threat to established interests. In an *Education Week* article, Peter Greer complained about citizen groups in Chelsea who "see the university's presence as a grand opportunity to gain power — even at the expense of students" through a "vote counting back door."⁴² Marta Rosa had already been elected (November 1989) and the innuendo concerning a "vote counting back door" implied that her election somehow was underhanded — *sub rosa*, as it were!

The management team has insisted from the outset that the community was wasting its time demanding inclusion instead of allowing the team to carry on its business. During the contract dispute of spring 1989, the commission and META attempted to carry on negotiations with Boston University on bilingual education, parent participation, and other matters. The university would relay signals of willingness to talk and then balk. Finally, in April 1989, it issued a memorandum saying, "The University is unable to make agreements on behalf of the Chelsea school department until the University is officially managing the Chelsea schools on behalf of the Chelsea School Committee."⁴³ The university never again showed willingness to negotiate with the community.

Thereafter the university intoned a "troublemaker" theme, casting the Hispanic leadership as obstructionist. At the height of debate over the contract, an *Education Week* article quoted Greer as saying, "The Hispanic community happened to gear up at an untimely moment — the very moment when the agreement was about to be signed." While Greer thought that it was "really healthy" that Latinos were forming to fight for education, he preferred "to see them expend their energies on implementing the project rather than trying to hold it up."⁴⁴

Only one month earlier President Silber had accused the discontented Latinos of being manipulated by the Chelsea Teachers Union, implying they lacked the

autonomy and judgment to act on their own.⁴⁵ In a press release issued the same day, March 31, 1989, the Hispanic Commission had asserted that Silber's accusation was insensitive and that their dissent was based on "legitimate concerns regarding bilingual education in the proposed early childhood program and with the level of parent involvement in the implementation of the B.U. plan." Rather than manipulation, concern about the quality of education of Hispanic children and respect for cultural identity prompted the Latinos' outcry.⁴⁶

Almost a year later the accusation of obstructiveness and opportunism would be leveled again, this time in response to Chelsea activist Tito Meza's charge that Silber was making premature and false claims about the project's success in his gubernatorial campaign propaganda and that the project was an exercise in government by secrecy. A diatribe from Greer, in the BU student *Daily Free Press* asserted, "I don't really take that criticism seriously. . . . The Hispanic leaders are just trying to get more power, and I think it is totally unfair to use John Silber as a means to gain power." Moreover, claiming color blindness, Greer asserted, "Our view is that students are students, not Hispanics, whites, or blacks." He criticized the Hispanic leaders for wanting a majority of members on the CEAC "because the council is supposed to represent all of the groups in Chelsea . . . not just the Hispanics." Therefore, "Instead of fighting, we decided to work with the people through other groups and simply bypass the leaders."⁴⁷ The fatuity of this statement lies in its smug presumption of both the university's awareness of the community's needs and the congruity of the university's and community's goals.

The university's aggrandizement of power obviates the pursuit of an enlightened community relations policy. An example is its hiring in 1989 of a Hispanic superintendent of the Chelsea schools, Diana Lam, which was intended to score points with the Latino population. Lam would need all the courage and risk taking she professed for the job, for she was not welcomed with open arms by Chelsea's Latinos. Claiming to run an open superintendency, she acquired a reputation for stubbornness and resistance to unsolicited community input that marked her as a Boston University functionary. At the end of January 1990, intending to forge a consensus, Lam convened a meeting with the Latino leadership. However, she became evasive and defensive at the leaders' insistence that she respect their grievances with the university, with the result that the boundaries remained drawn as before. A disappointed Lam lamented, "It looks like what we're going to get out of this meeting is another meeting" (my notes, January 24, 25, 1990). Having already been reprimanded by Boston University vice president Westling for her voiced admiration of Nelson Mandela at a school assembly, Diana Lam, no matter how competent and feisty she seemed, was structurally compromised. She was, after all, the university's employee and throughout her stay, until the spring of 1991, when she announced her ill-fated candidacy for the mayoralty of Boston, she walked a tightrope.⁴⁸

While the dissent of an ethnic minority offers the most dramatic case of the university's intolerance, other examples offer compelling evidence of the dangers of circumventing public control of education. Recently, at the urging of the receiver, Harry Spence, attempts were made by Boston University to revive the inactive Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee. CEAC was created under the terms of the contract to provide advisory input on educational policy by representatives of community constituencies. Throughout CEAC's history the university intimidated its chair — under the aegis of assisting in defining the body's proper "role and responsibilities" —

patronized it as a group, and failed to provide timely information and documentation on school system policy changes and program developments. The most recent attempts at resuscitation appear deadlocked, with the university resisting at every turn the coexistence of critical opinions of groups such as the Hispanic Commission. It appears that even criticism coming from the quarters of a "mock parliament" such as CEAC will not be countenanced by the management team. What with the dialogue comprising a series of "retreats" guided by a BU-funded facilitator, attempts are being made to finagle a consensus. Some constituents feel this violates the spirit and original intent of CEAC: Why shouldn't opinions vary — even if disagreeable — and accurately represent the diversity of public opinion about the schools in Chelsea?⁴⁹

The Politics of Information and the Chelsea Project

In the social sciences, questions concerning the treatment of research subjects and the uses to which data are put are customarily posed under the rubric "research ethics."⁵⁰ In universities, self-study — the gathering of data pertaining to a school's institutional activities and the like — comes under the heading "institutional research." However, when the academy engages in educational or social reform, it is doubly imperative that it engage in self-study and submit to outside evaluation.

A crucial aspect of any alteration of institutional arrangements is the manner in which knowledge about the new configuration is gathered and disseminated and the uses to which such knowledge is put. Assessment must be made concerning which social and political interests benefit from such knowledge. Appraisal of the ethics of knowledge gathering and evaluation becomes a *sine qua non*, since not only are the safety and confidentiality of "research subjects" at stake, but that of the public interest is as well. When there is a tendency to overlook, deny, conceal, and even distort findings for the (frequently manipulative) purposes and interests of the reformers, the validity of the project and the ethics and legitimacy of the managers are called into question. As noted earlier, the Boston University Chelsea Project has tended to avoid evaluation, preferring to elevate the loftiness of its own and the university president's goals over any qualifications raised about results.

When educational expertise operates in the social world, it must be subject to the same constraints that guide other public policy. If educational reform in the *name* of the public is otherwise immune to public review, it is accountable only to the "experts" sponsoring it. Where then are the safeguards against the malpractice of the managers when the experts and managers are the same? Thus, the absence of a self-study component cast a shadow on an otherwise exemplary Chelsea program project, the Early Learning Center, which had suffered with problems — poor supervision, lack of a curriculum, unsanitary facility, overcrowding — requiring replacement of its director. Asked by a reporter how its operations were evaluated, John Silber, who loudly touted the center during his campaign for the governorship, baldly replied, "By just going in there and watching those children." Silber's exclamation made it appear as if his judgment was synonymous with common sense!⁵¹

Accusations would be leveled against the management team at a spring 1992 joint meeting of that body and the Chelsea School Committee that a highly strained school budget had disproportionately allocated moneys to the showcased preschool program, much to the neglect of older students' needs. The sacrifice was defended by manage-

ment team strategist Robert Sperber as an important priority in which “somebody’s got to lose.”⁵² Here we see the interrelatedness of the issues of public accountability and evaluation. One suffers in the absence of the other; both can brake the excesses of expertise and the vanity, pride, and ambition of institutions and institutional caretakers. For Boston University, the administrative imprimatur suffices to underwrite the quality of the project and its programs. Evaluation studies are not viewed as necessary or useful. At other times the management team has simply deferred the task of evaluation to outside agencies. During the controversial preliminary period of approval for the contract, Peter Greer said that the need to hire an outside evaluator of the project was critical,⁵³ but the university has never sponsored evaluation from within or outside the Chelsea project. The State Oversight Panel has continually underscored the need for evaluation. At the panel meeting/hearing in Chelsea on December 12, 1990, after the management team made their presentation, including a turnout of uniformed members of the Chelsea High School rowing team, panel member John T. Dunlop dryly commented,

Someday down the road somebody in the state or federal government is going to write this story. Was it good, or how good, and I regret to say, whether you like it or not, putting together a set of numbers is going to be a large part of the story. There ought to be one or two people developing indices on a time series basis. . . . One of these days somebody’s going to want to look back and measure the change. I would feel more comfortable if somebody was devoting some time to do that. I know one or two people in your establishment is competent to do that. (Notes, December 10, 1990)

In response to this statement, Superintendent Lam said, “I think you’re absolutely right that we need a data base, and with the limited resources we have, I can’t promise you that.” She added that Pelavin Associates, an outside consulting firm hired by the federal government to evaluate the Chelsea project, were setting up a data base. Panel member Irwin Blumer responded by inquiring about the university’s role in acquiring quantitative data and requested that the management team devote time at the next panel session to answering that query. Lam went on to excuse the lack of such data on technical grounds, because there had been no computerization of records prior to the coming of BU. (Notes, December 10, 1990)

At a January 26, 1993, session of the State Oversight Panel in Chelsea, Blumer reiterated the “need to get into quantitative evaluation to determine if you’re meeting your goals,” noting that this was one of two cardinal concerns, the second being public access (notes, January 26, 1993). At the oversight panel hearing on June 11, 1993, Blumer’s request for quantitative evaluation of the project was once again met with silence. Thus, it is clear that the call for evaluation is still a cry in the wilderness.

Superintendent Lam’s allusion to Pelavin Associates is noteworthy. Presumably, objectivity would have been vouchsafed, until we learn that Pelavin Associates and its proprietor, Sol H. Pelavin, served the Reagan administration and its secretary of education, William Bennett, by helping to “hatchet” bilingual education by writing reports critical of bilingual programs and of research on such programs.⁵⁴ It is a well-known fact that management team chair Peter Greer served as an undersecretary to William Bennett before coming to Boston University and the Chelsea project. Also

widely known is John Silber's hostility to bilingual education.⁵⁵ Here such an "objective" evaluation implies collusion.

In a city where more than 65 percent of the public school students are Latino (54.5%) and Asian (11.9%), Chelsea's educational caretakers' stance toward scientific appraisal of this "experiment" gives one pause as to the real possibility of achieving an objective evaluation of the Chelsea project. Moreover, it points toward a collusive alliance against the interests of linguistic minorities and their children.

Tuning Out Chelsea Parents

But this constitutes only a portion of the problems concerning the politics of information and the Chelsea project. Another cause for consternation is what happens when the project and its acolytes carry out research on the project and programs connected with it. Such is the case of the "Tuning In to Chelsea Parents" survey carried out in May 1990 and reported in the press six months later.

Commissioned by the superintendent of Chelsea schools Diana Lam, the survey was conducted under the auspices of the Institute for Responsive Education, with its research design and data analysis subcontracted to the Boston Urban Research and Development Group headed by Yohel Camayd-Freixas, a former researcher for the Boston public schools.

The survey was designed to assess respondents' perceptions of the schools and program needs through a wide variety of checkoff items under the general rubrics of community needs, school effectiveness, and family health. Opinions and preferences were solicited regarding actual and desired parent participation in school activities and home learning, attractiveness of school programs, for example, affecting school choice, effectiveness of school-home communications, and so on. Included with the survey was a "Parents' Confidential Report Card on the Schools," asking parents to "grade" the Chelsea public schools on discipline, physical condition, books and materials, curriculum, safety, homework, written communications, drop-out prevention, tutoring, opportunity for parent involvement, teacher and teaching quality, performance of administrators, and performance of the superintendent.

Based on a stratified — by ethnicity and race — random sample of 466 parents, 388 interviews were completed. These were done through door-to-door and telephone interviews conducted either in English or the respondent's native language, Spanish, Vietnamese, or Khmer. While the survey report's opening pages assert, "Overall, the degree of certainty in the accuracy of the survey for the entire population is quite high," the report's appendix and other related documents tell quite a different story.⁵⁶

Appendix A of the report, comprising survey methodology, indicates that "three of the five major racial-ethnic groups in Chelsea, the Latino, Black, and Vietnamese communities fell below critical research targets." The percentage of Latino sample households not reached — almost half — was significantly greater than for others, which averaged 41.75 percent. Moreover, "and more importantly, respondents in the Latino community were skewed towards those easier to reach." Thus, while the research protocol required field-workers to make three attempts to telephone poll respondents, "this protocol [*sic*] was not followed." Of the total sample of 388, 71 homes received only one or two calls. Latino households comprised 82 percent of these cases, hence undersampling "the harder-to-reach households, which may tend

to underrepresent more recent immigrants, the poorest families, or those in greater need of support.”⁵⁷ As the Institute for Responsive Education survey report admits, “Of the 72 home visits to Latino households required by the sample plan, only 15 (21%) were conducted because of time limitations. This bias can be expected to compound the bias identified above.”

This error was compounded by the fact that Latino families without telephones were undersampled. The survey’s data base contained 1,721 Latino children, 11 percent of whom lived in households without telephones. Moreover, the service of 23 percent of the Latino households with listed telephones had been disconnected at the time of the poll.⁵⁸ Given that 36 percent of all Latino households in Chelsea have no phone or disconnected service, “this suggests a bias towards those Latino families in higher than average socio-economic classes.”⁵⁹

In view of these errors, the report concludes, “The resulting Latino survey sample is biased beyond the control of statistical adjustments.” Moreover, “these data, then, do not represent the views of the lowest socio-economic segments of Latino families in Chelsea. As a result, no statistical analysis or inference may be drawn beyond descriptive considerations.”⁶⁰ These are quotes from the introduction to the section entitled “Field Work Bias,” a compendium of preliminary findings submitted to the Institute for Responsive Education by the Boston Urban Research and Development Group a month earlier.⁶¹

Thus, sampling bias, unrepresentativeness, and invalidity of the survey’s data were clearly acknowledged. This did not deter Boston University and Diana Lam from releasing the results of the survey to the press. On December 11, 1990, a *Boston Globe* headline read, “Chelsea Schools Please Parents.”⁶² Carefully omitting Latino responses and the disclaimer regarding the flawed sampling and unrepresentativeness of the data for Chelsea’s ethnic groups, the article reported the results from the “Report Card” section of the survey, noting that “70 percent of the parents questioned gave the school system an ‘A’ or a ‘B,’ and only 2 percent gave the system a failing grade. Cambodian parents were most satisfied with the schools, while whites and blacks said they wanted more from the schools.”⁶³

The report also qualified the validity of the “Report Card on the Schools” survey, since it was based on volunteered parental responses and was “non-scientifically administered” and “therefore . . . statistically suggestive, rather than predictive, in nature.” Hence, “the data are not meant to be generalized at all.”⁶⁴ The *Globe* article did not convey these qualifications but reported a generally positive and valid parental evaluation of the schools and of the Chelsea project.

Members of the Hispanic Commission were outraged at this presumption of unanimous community approval verging on fraudulent use of the survey. In view of the intense and lengthy struggle to make their concerns heard, their leaders recognized, and to deflect the nearly constant stream of abuse spewed by Boston University at dissenters, the Hispanic Commission had their turn to embarrass the management team. Strategy sessions were held, at which it was decided to go to the press.

Muriel Cohen, the *Boston Globe*’s educational columnist who had issued the original laudatory story on the survey, was telephoned. She said that her article was based on information provided by Superintendent Lam. Of course, Cohen also had a copy of the survey with its methodological appendix warning of the invalid data, but the unquestioned legitimacy of the project and its functionaries often has served as a vaccine against the truth. It is no wonder that Cohen did not sift through the report

before accepting the received wisdom of Superintendent Lam's and Peter Greer's glowing testimonials. Cohen promised to send a reporter to get the commission's side of the story and hear its rejoinder.

Also contacted were the Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts Boston, the Institute for Responsive Education, and Seth Racusen of the Boston Urban Research and Development Group. The Gaston Institute, after reviewing the survey report, sent a letter to Daniel Viggiani at the Hispanic Commission essentially summarizing the list of defects reported above.⁶⁵ Don Davies, director of the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE), which is housed on the BU campus, was telephoned and insisted that the report was honest in owning up to its defects and, furthermore, that the institute's integrity was not at issue.

Davies claimed that the institute was an autonomous organization un beholden to the university. Nonetheless, Davies was a member of the Boston University education faculty and dissertation advisor to Diana Lam. How independent could the IRE be in this case? Seth Racusen, a research associate at the Boston Urban Research and Development Group, was appalled by the egregious flaunting of the survey data qualifications his organization had attached to its report to the IRE. In a letter to the *Globe* editor summarizing the data's defects, he concluded, "On a project whose content concerns Boston University, this institute is not an 'independent' research organization, as the *Globe* article claimed."⁶⁶

The Hispanic Commission issued a press release on December 21, 1990, outlining the survey's defects. The release said, "The use to which this questionable information has been put seriously compromises the credibility of the entire project and speaks poorly of the BU Management Team's professionalism." Moreover, it raised questions concerning the aforementioned conflict of interests of the Institute for Responsive Education and accused the university of contriving the appearance of popular consensus about the Chelsea project in the shadow of a State Oversight Panel's criticism of the university's high-handed treatment of the community. It concluded: "Chelsea's Latino community has long borne testimony to concerns about the BU Management Team's presumption, arrogance and willful disregard of community sentiment. We resent this further encroachment on the autonomy of Chelsea's Latino population."⁶⁷

Shortly afterward the Hispanic Commission spoke with a *Boston Globe* reporter who wrote a detailed article rectifying the mistakes of the previous piece. In it both Superintendent Lam and IRE director Don Davies acknowledged "some statistical problems with the survey," but said, "the findings were never meant to be construed scientifically and should be used for informational purposes only." What "informational purposes" meant was not clarified. If Diana Lam's excuses for such distortion were to be taken as a definition, namely, "'Research wasn't the end. . . . Changing the practices of the school and the community were the end,'" then collusive manipulation of public opinion using the trappings of science is the most plausible interpretation left open for such behavior.⁶⁸

What are we to make of such cynical uses and abuses of information on the part of a university, an institution whose president has repeatedly railed against academic "well poisoning" and inveighed against the tainting of the "free marketplace of ideas" by "false advertising," "negligence," and the like?⁶⁹ Beyond its obvious hypocrisy, we must conclude that no matter what the institution, if as Lam said, "changing

the school and the community were the end,” then, as *realpolitik* dictates, the end justifies the means. In our cynical age this is no revelation; for any of those who still hold to the ideal that the institutions housing the “free marketplace of ideas” are the most fit stewards of educational reform, let them be reminded that the structuring of reform and its regulation or exemption from regulation in the public interest will ultimately determine the behavior of the reformers.

Boston University came into Chelsea by legislative dispensation as an exception to the public management of municipal education, specifically in regard to immunity from the state’s “sunshine laws” pertaining to the openness of organizational records and meetings. As a university it has not chosen to evaluate its own performance. It and its functionaries have distorted the findings of a study carried out under its auspices to determine parents’ sentiments about the Chelsea schools and other educational matters. These betoken an important social fact: institutions that are allowed to evade the norms governing the use of information important to the public welfare can be expected to disclaim those norms only when they interfere with its private aims and agendas. Moreover, such behavior bespeaks the kind of blurring of boundaries between the public and private spheres that students of privatization have warned us about. Hence, the kind of fuzziness and sleight of hand involved in the definition of the Institute for Responsive Education as “autonomous,” when clearly it and its director’s behavior and role at best represent a conflict of interest, are to be expected when a dangerous muddling of boundaries between public and private interests occurs.

Privatization Is Not Partnership

At a March 2, 1991, talk before the National Education Association Higher Education Conference, Marta Rosa characterized Boston University’s management of Chelsea’s schools as an “arranged marriage.” Others, suggesting that “the proper role of a major university would be to offer to direct its resources . . . in an open accountable manner,” have called it a “leveraged buyout. The residents of Chelsea feel ‘taken over.’”⁷⁰ Rosa asserted, “My greatest criticism of the project is that there is a lack of understanding on the part of BU of the culture of the community.” She reported that her constituents feel ignored, frustrated, and apprehensive and are confused over the roles of parents in the project. Criticizing the management team’s eagerness to score public relations points in the name of hastily conceived programs, she asked, “Is this so-called partnership empowering the community? Is it addressing the causes of the downfall of public education in urban communities?”⁷¹

Here the literature on educational partnerships is instructive. Those partnerships between universities and school systems which work best eschew corporate models, hierarchical and elitist arrangements, and favor participational/egalitarian ones.^{72,73} An appraisal of university–public school partnerships categorizing these arrangements into three models — university control, allied elite, and participational — fits the Chelsea project into the first, university control, and concludes, after examining this conflict-ridden arrangement, “While we vigorously applaud Boston University’s vision, boldness, and comprehensiveness, we have several concerns about the appropriateness and feasibility of the Chelsea Project — especially as a model for other universities to emulate.” Their concerns “are directed primarily toward the *style* of

the reform — the structuring of roles and relationships of the Chelsea Project,” which in the context of a “privatized . . . urban school district . . . is expert-driven, unidimensional, and only marginally participatory.”⁷⁴ Finally,

There is persuasive documentary evidence . . . that the University has exacerbated the tensions that would normally be expected in the kind of change proposed for Chelsea. Rather than build alliances with teachers, administrators, and parents, Boston University officials have ignored the concerns of these groups at critical junctures, eschewed their participation in significant planning and decision-making, imposed the University’s agenda as a set of non-negotiable demands, and reacted indignantly to criticism from these quarters.⁷⁵

It has been suggested that school reform might be a proxy for societal reform. The recurrence of educational reform often reflects “economic instability, shifts in population, and social change [which] uncover[s] tensions.” Media and other groups “translate the unrest into recommended policies for schools to enact.”⁷⁶ Social concerns “overflow” during times of economic and social crisis into the most vulnerable institutions capable of eliciting the appearance of change — schools. No matter that educational institutions cannot by themselves solve or resolve social, political, and economic problems; these socializing institutions become the screens for our projected fantasies of how we would like to have grown up and for how we wish society to work — mock societal reform!

On the other hand, when minorities and the poor struggle in the educational arena for their communities’ educational rights, reform holds real promise, because the struggle for schooling is central to bringing minorities together “as a group with particular political demands and a distinct history of political practice centered around education issues.”⁷⁷ In Chelsea, educational privatization catalyzed a community struggle whose educational horizons have transcended the narrow and self-serving designs of the privatizers.

It is tempting to portray Boston University merely as a villain, but it is more fruitful to understand events in Chelsea as a struggle against privatization. In impugning the legitimacy of the Hispanic Commission and casting aspersions on the political purity of Marta Rosa’s election, the management team is enacting an erstwhile scenario of privatization: discrediting the public sphere⁷⁸ and substituting, that is, inverting the inviolability of one realm, the public, by another, the private. In this case, the public forum as well as public service is discredited institutionally and ideologically. This can be done openly through discrediting criticism and dissent, or, as shown earlier in the case of the “Tuning In to Chelsea Parents” study, by blurring the two realms.⁷⁹

A 1991 essay on the privatization controversy adds to the familiar list of attributes most often cited by the promoters of privatization — cost effectiveness, efficiency, and choice — the criteria of accountability, empowerment, and legitimacy. The essay suggests that “citizens have the opportunity to control their own destiny by making decisions that affect their lives” (empowerment), that provision be made for periodic review by voters (accountability), and that citizens believe the decision-making processes under privatization are fair (legitimacy).⁸⁰

Boston University has satisfied none of these criteria. Noting that “privatization leads to loss of control and a decline of citizen participation in government,” Al Bilik

identifies the Chelsea project, and the contract wherein Boston University has sought immunity from state laws requiring open meetings and public records, as a quintessential evasion of democratic accountability.⁸¹

In this connection, we may view the university's strategy as follows: (1) to maintain primacy in public opinion and mass communications by privatizing public opinion, that is, pressuring dissenters to keep their opinions to themselves; (2) to control information input, public relations output, and public opinion on the project; (3) to redefine ideologically the standards of proper conduct of individuals and groups, that is, to redefine civic roles in Chelsea, as expert- (read BU-) driven; and (4) to seek political advantage in the local and national arenas for the university's dominance and for Silber's designs on public office. Some of Boston University's tactics look like sophomoric debating team maneuvers, but with its considerable resources and sizable public relations machinery, it has controlled the public image of the project. In attempting to shift the center of gravity for the standard of appropriate individual and group behavior from the public forum to the private sphere, the university has sought to arrogate to itself the authority to decide when, where, and how discourse on public issues shall be framed. However, the university's attempts to vitiate Latino community empowerment have had the opposite effect of boosting morale and increasing animosity toward its attempts at defining participational legitimacy in Chelsea.

The challenge to Chelsea's Latinos is to maintain the momentum in their efforts to secure self-determination while contending with a myriad of political, economic, and social forces sweeping through their neighborhoods. On the other hand, were there to be a real educational partnership in more than words alone, the community's leadership would find itself less besieged by energy-draining combat with a repressive intruder and could devote itself solely to the tasks of community building. Nonetheless, as I have noted elsewhere, combat with an opponent evincing such power, legitimacy, and acumen has provided this community's civic activists with opportunities and experiences in which new civic roles could be learned, novel social and political strategies deployed, and new avenues of public discourse explored.⁸²

The Chelsea experience contains apt lessons for other Latino communities and may, indeed, provide leads for resistance to the even more massive assaults on the public weal lying in store for our society as our economy and society steady their course on chronic recession and purposive erosion of the welfare state.

Addendum

As of May 1994, the basic lineaments of Boston University/Latino community relations have not changed. In addition, the school issue has been temporarily eclipsed by governance issues in Chelsea where, at the behest of receiver Harry Spence, a charter preparation team, within the context of a community process mediated by outside facilitators, is nearing the end of redrawing the city charter.

Interestingly, a major sticking point has developed over the composition of the school committee: Chelsea's old-line leadership has opted for it to be elected at-large; the Young Turks, led by Tito Rosa, are championing a mixed committee of at-large and district members.

At the April 25, 1994, convening of the State Oversight Panel, the gallery of fronts to which spectators have become accustomed materialized again. Of the approximately forty people in attendance, only fifteen were non-Boston University, nonschool, or non-school committee personnel. With a \$94 million school building program to dangle before the public, Boston University presented all the trappings it could muster — architect's drawings, building-use plans, and a veneer of fashionable educational bric-a-brac adorning the projected curriculum ("ideas bySizer . . . small is better . . . schools within a school . . . a job-skill-specific program").

Just as we thought that the latest version of CEAC (Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee to the BU management team) was a dead duck, out popped a new, resurrected group with a revamped roster including mostly new members — only two from the previous version remain — all "self-selected" according to management team member Robert Sperber. Panel members were given a five-page outline of "CEAC II" setting forth its goals, objectives, organizational structure, and constituent roles. This body, now dubbed the Chelsea Education Advisory Council, is ready to make another try at democratic community input into BU-led educational policy-making and administration. I am not putting my money on this apparition's being a phoenix; it will more likely be a zombie!

At the meeting the Bilingual Parents Advisory Committee presented its list of grievances, underscoring their weariness at having to do so repeatedly. It included nonexistence of a bilingual special education program, a still-vacant bilingual director's post, the mandate to forbid students from speaking Spanish in the schools, the lack of vocational programs — for a suit is pending against the Chelsea schools — the charade of parental and community involvement in the hiring process, particularly when candidates of color are screened (the typical response has been that there are insufficient qualified candidates), demeaning treatment of Latino students, the superintendent's use of meetings as stalling tactics, and so on. The panel's yearly report on this so-called partnership is due to appear. It will be interesting to hear their verdict on yet another year of dismal community relations.

The university's *Second Report to the Legislature* (September 1, 1993) announced "modest improvements in [standardized] test scores." A glance at Massachusetts Department of Education printouts of scores and changes for 1988, 1990, and 1992 indeed confirms that changes are modest at best. A perusal of figures for Lawrence, a larger city with a similar ethnic profile and demographics and a Latino community of comparable longevity, presents a similar picture. Since Lawrence has not undergone school "reform," what are Chelsea parents to make of this? Is it the best they can expect of this "partnership"?

Boston University maintains that the abysmal performance of the twelfth grade is to be expected, considering that the older students have not had the benefit of the much publicized preschool program. The university contends that dramatically improved scores await the end of its ten-year contractual tenure in Chelsea, when more age cohorts will have reaped the benefits of the reformed school system, which is special pleading. To argue that horrid high school scores are due to high transiency is to deny responsibility for the education of older children.

The issue is a bone of contention between the Latino parents and Boston University. It has been galling for the parents to hear the management team defend inordinate budget allocations for the preschool program at the expense of resources for the upper grades as a necessary sacrifice. Must they await the *end* of the univer-

sity's allotted time in Chelsea before reaping the benefits of its already questionable praxis? In the meantime, captive students and their parents must endure mediocre educational performance and abusive community relations.

Significantly, the sole attempt at evaluation of the project, indicated in the current legislative report, is the university's proposed engagement of an evaluator of the standardized test scores.

Chelsea Latinos continue to plug away at improvement of their lot. Chelsea's Commission on Hispanic Affairs has launched an economic development initiative and is securing funding for a Small Business Resource Center in addition to nurturing a flourishing Hispanic Business Association, which has celebrated its first anniversary. The commission, in partnership with the Gaston Institute for Latino Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts, has undertaken a leadership education project comprising small business workshops and skill development of community activists, businesspeople, and professionals. Its economic development work is a cornerstone for the Gaston Institute's state-funded Latino Business Development Center serving communities throughout Massachusetts. The commission, which supports and advises a tenants association and the Bilingual Parents Association, is guiding the development of a housing collaborative to develop affordable housing in Chelsea.

One marvels at the contrast between the stasis defining the relationship between the forces of the university and Chelsea's plain folks and the resourcefulness and versatility of the latter as they strive to expand the theater within which they can transform their world amid their allotted adverse social and economic conditions. ♪

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Notes

1. Matthew P. Dumont, "An Unfolding Memoir of Community Mental Health," *Readings: A Journal of Reviews and Commentary in Mental Health* 4 (September 1989): 5–6.
2. Boston University, *The Boston University/Chelsea Partnership: Report to the Legislature*, September 1, 1992, 42–45, 48.
3. Edward J. Kopf, "The Intimate City. A Study of Urban Order: Chelsea, Massachusetts, 1906–1915," Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1974, Table 2, 43. Kopf informs us that in 1905 the number of native-born in Chelsea was 11,686, or 31 percent of the total population; in 1910 it had dropped to 6,969 or 22 percent; by 1915 it was 7,168 or 16 percent, the total population having risen from 37,300 in 1905 to 32,500 in 1910 to 43,400 in 1915. The foreign-born as a proportion of the total population increased from 37 percent in 1905 to 43 percent in 1910 to 46 percent in 1915.
4. *Ibid.*, 25.
5. Abraham Samuel Rosen, "A Survey of the City of Chelsea," M.A. thesis, Tufts College, 1928, 13–15, called it "a city of industries," asserting that the fire "hastened the [modernization of the industrial] process," in effect creating an opportunity for a prototypical urban renewal. "It is easy to see the results that in all likelihood could scarcely have been achieved had it been necessary to raze built-up property to make room for the magnificent center of public buildings which Chelsea possesses today."
6. *Ibid.*, 54–55.
7. William E. McClintock, "The New Chelsea," *New England Magazine* 5, no. 42, 1910.
8. *Ibid.*, 16.

9. On June 3, 1908, in pursuance of an act of the state legislature, the acting governor of Massachusetts, Eben S. Draper, appointed the five-member Control Board, which assumed the direction of the city's rebuilding and governance until December 31, 1913. It is interesting that McClintock's commemorative magazine article, "The New Chelsea," contains numerous pictures of Chelsea's leading industries, rebuilt public edifices, schools, and churches but not homes. Graphically and textually it is an iconography of privatism. Here too, market forces were encouraged to take the lead. There had been suggestions for the state to take fire-razed land by eminent domain as the developer and for a quasi-public "dwelling association" to build tenements at a reasonable cost, but these were disregarded. See Kopf, "The Intimate City," 83–84.
10. Ibid., 59.
11. Ibid., 68, 65.
12. Mark LaCelle Peterson, "School Policies and Immigrant Incorporation: A Historical Case Study from Chelsea, Massachusetts," 1990. Peterson's work is doctoral research under the supervision of Marta Monteiro-Sieburth, a seasoned scholar with long experience on the Chelsea scene. For an in-depth contextual analysis, see Monteiro-Sieburth and LaCelle Peterson, "Immigration and Schooling: An Ethnohistorical Account of Policy and Family Perspectives in an Urban Community," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 1991, 300–325.
13. Peterson, "School Policies and Immigrant Incorporation," 26.
14. Ibid., 34–35, 32–33.
15. Ibid., 38.
16. Ibid., 30.
17. In a January 23, 1990, interview, the late Mayor Andrew P. Quigley, a long-standing school committee member, told me, "I was instrumental in bringing them in." At the time Quigley was taking courses at Harvard with TheodoreSizer, among others, and felt that it was an "opportunity to find out what experts thought of our facilities and what we should be doing." There was no perceived crisis, "just a thought of a young mayor looking into various aspects of the city."
18. Harvard University Graduate School of Education, *Chelsea: The City and Its Challenge* (Cambridge, 1954, n.p.).
19. Ibid.
20. William K. Tabb, "The Long Default: New York City and the Urban Fiscal Crisis," *Monthly Review*, 1982, 9–35, and Paul Kantor, *The Dependent City: The Changing Political Economy of Urban America* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman/Little Brown, 1988).
21. John A. Nucci, "Silber's Plan Is Long on Criticism, Short on Facts," letter, ca. August 1985.
22. Boston University, "Boston University's Report on the Chelsea Public Schools: A Model for Excellence in Urban Education" (Boston: Boston University, 1988), VI: 38, 18.
23. Dana Fulham, "BU Chelsea School Plan Criticized: Specialists Cite Loss of Local Control as One Potential Problem for City," *Boston Globe*, July 31, 1988, sec. 2, 34.
24. Helle Bering-Jensen, "A Last Ditch School Remedy Gets a Go-ahead Near Boston," *Insight*, August 15, 1988, 15.
25. Fulham, "BU Chelsea Plan Criticized," 34.
26. Bering-Jensen, "A Last Ditch School Remedy," 17.
27. Charles A. Radin, "Silber Plans to Take Aim at Poverty," *Boston Globe*, August 17, 1988, 2.
28. Boston University, "Report on the Chelsea Public Schools," 1:2.
29. Carole Greenes and Peter Greer, "A Private Approach to Public Schools," *Philanthropy*, July–August 1989, 15.

30. U.S. Congress, "Senator Ralph Yarborough Entering John Silber's Proposal for a Measure Attacking Poverty at Its Source into the *Congressional Record*," *Congressional Record*, April 9, 1965, 7351–7352.
31. *Ibid.*, 7352.
32. Noteworthy are the public forum at Saint Rose's Church on March 22, 1989, the school committee meeting and vote on the contract and hearing on March 29, and the aldermanic meeting to vote on the enabling legislation for the contract on April 24. Here the themes of accountability, responsiveness to Latino and other groups' needs concerning bilingual education, and dissemination of information were reiterated. All these concerns have not been abated, and if anything, have intensified under the current receivership.
33. For an excellent analysis of the treatment of Latinos by the *Chelsea Record* and other print media, see Frank S. Neidhart, *Chelsea's Hispanic Community: How Is It Served by the Local Print Media?* (Boston: Center for Community Planning, CPCS, University of Massachusetts Boston, 1990).
34. For example, in 1985 the state had to bail Chelsea out of financial distress with a \$5 million "cherry sheet" loan safeguarded with the creation of a Financial Control Board whose powers were basically limited to oversight. More recently, with receivership, the oversight functions of this board have been obviated by the receiver's wholesale reformation of the city's financial practices and organization. It was learned, for instance, that up to the time of receivership, the city treasurer's office operated checking accounts with unnumbered checks!
35. James O'Connor's little known but useful volume, *The Meaning of Crisis: A Theoretical Introduction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 125, makes the point that the word *crisis* is ideological when it is "inappropriately substituted for . . . social movements seeking forms of self-management and democracy," that is, when it is used as a ploy to facilitate "restructuring." Used in this way "it legitimates demands by capital and state for the top-down reorganization of the economy, political system and state, and social life." Thus, privatization has come upon us at such a time of alleged crisis.
36. *Ibid.*, 146.
37. Glenn Jacobs, "Latinos Confront Leviathan: The Paradox of Isolation and Activism in a Small Eastern City," paper presented to the Mauricio Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy Researchers Seminar on Latinos, Poverty, and Public Policy, September 13, 1991, 11–12.
38. *Ibid.*, 12–14.
39. Carolee Morrison, "Foundation Lawyer Fights for School Takeover," *Lawyers Monthly*, April 1989.
40. James Jennings, "Puerto Rican Politics in Two Cities: New York and Boston," in *Puerto Rican Politics in Urban America*, edited by James Jennings and Monte Rivera (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984), 84–85.
41. Glenn Jacobs, "Education or Manipulation? What Boston University Needs to Learn About Community Relations," *El Faro*, November 1990, 4–7.
42. Peter Greer, "Boston University and Chelsea: First Lessons," *Education Week*, May 16, 1990, 32, 24.
43. Management Team, "Continuing Discussion with Colon, Rice, et al.," April 20, 1989.
44. William Snider, "Management Plan for Chelsea Schools Is Approved," *Education Week*, April 5, 1989, 5.
45. Peter B. Sleeper, "Silber Hits Union Foes of Chelsea School Takeover," *Boston Globe*, March 31, 1989.
46. Chelsea Commission on Hispanic Affairs, press release, March 31, 1989.

47. Alan Benson, "Chelsea Committee Blasts BU's Treatment of Hispanics," *Daily Free Press* 19, January 19, 1990, 1.
48. Hans Schattle, "Acting BU President Backs Away from His Remarks about Mandela," *Boston Globe*, March 1, 1990.
49. For greater depth on the history of CEAC and its travails, see Glenn Jacobs, "CEAC: The Sabotage of Democracy," *El Faro*, June 1993, 4.
50. See, e.g., Paul Davidson Reynolds, *Ethics and Social Science Research* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1982).
51. Jon Keller, "Child-care Hype: Internal Turmoil Slows Down BU's Chelsea Program," *Boston Phoenix*, August, 16-22, 1991, 16-17.
52. Glenn Jacobs, "Joint Meeting of School Committee and B.U. Team Discusses School Shortcomings," *El Faro*, April/May, 1992, 8.
53. Muriel Cohen, "While Pupils Play, BU Plans to Run Schools," *Boston Globe*, August 13, 1989.
54. See, e.g., Keith Baker and Sol H. Pelavin, "Problems in Bilingual Program Evaluation," n.d., and Orestes I. Crespo (Pelavin Associates), "Selection Procedures for Identifying Students in Need of Special Language Services: Final Phase I Report," submitted to U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Budget, and Management, Contract No. 300-84-0268, September 1985).
55. John Silber, *Straight Shooting: What's Wrong with America and How to Fix It* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 24-31.
56. Institute for Responsive Education, *Tuning In to Chelsea Parents: A Survey for the Superintendent of Schools by the Institute for Responsive Education* (Boston: IRE, 1990), 11.
57. Ibid., 63.
58. Ibid., 59.
59. Ibid., 64.
60. Ibid., 59.
61. Boston Urban Research and Development Group, *Tuning In to Parents Study: Chelsea Public Schools* (Boston: Boston Urban Research and Development Group, September 1990), n.p.
62. Muriel Cohen, "Chelsea Schools Please Parents," *Boston Globe*, December 11, 1990, 21.
63. Ibid.
64. IRE, *Tuning In to Chelsea Parents*, 12. See also page 64.
65. Ralph Rivera letter, December 20, 1990.
66. Seth Racusen letter, *Boston Globe*, January 4, 1991.
67. Chelsea Commission on Hispanic Affairs, press release, December 21, 1990.
68. Peggy Hernandez, "BU Faulted on Survey of Chelsea Parents," *Boston Globe*, December 23, 1990, 26.
69. Silber, *Straight Shooting*, 93-117.
70. Bernard J. Fine, "BU 'Takeover' of Chelsea Schools," *Science*, November 1989, 984.
71. Similar ground is covered by the evaluation of the State Oversight Panel in its report on the project's first year, which underscored the need for the university to improve its community relations, abjured the management team's "arrogant" manner in dealing with minority parents and its advisory committee and emphasized the need to "create an atmosphere of inclusion for community groups and others in school policy decision making." See *Chelsea Oversight Panel Report on the First Year of Implementation of the*

Chelsea School Committee–Boston University Agreement 1989–1990, November 20, 1990.

Boston University's November 20, 1990, reply to the report contends that the panel's criticisms overstep the boundaries of the legal contract, i.e., "the Panel has no mandate to re-do the agreement between the School Committee and the University." Technically correct, this argument holds serious implications for the privatization of government services.

72. John I. Goodlad, "Linking Schools and Universities: Symbiotic Partnerships," *Occasional Paper #1* (Seattle: Center for Educational Renewal, College of Education, University of Washington, 1987), 1.
73. Tom McGowan and Jim Powell, "Understanding School–University Collaboration Through New Educational Metaphors," *Contemporary Education* 61 (Spring 1990): 112–118.
74. Ira Harkavy and John L. Puckett, "Toward Effective University–Public School Partnerships: An Analysis of Three Contemporary Models," 1990, 12.
75. *Ibid.*, 13.
76. Larry Cuban, "Reforming Again, Again, and Again," *Educational Researcher* 19 (January 1990): 9.
77. Ira Katznelson and Margaret Weir, *Schooling for All: Race, Class and the Decline of the American Ideal* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 190.
78. Paul Starr, "The Meaning of Privatization," in *Privatization and the Welfare State*, edited by Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 43–44.
79. Note, e.g., how deliberately Silber muddies the public–private boundary in his opening statement to the chapter entitled "The 'Private' Sector and the Public Interest," *Straight Shooting*, 158, pleading for higher education tuition vouchers.

Higher education is bedeviled by a number of superstitions . . . Perhaps the most dangerous of these is the belief that there is such a thing as a private college or university. There is not. . . . The fact of the matter is that all so-called private institutions are open to the public, serve public needs, and are gravely influenced by public deliberations. Some argue that only those institutions owned by the government are public, but that is as ridiculous as arguing that because our airlines are not owned by government, there is no public air transportation in this country — as ridiculous as believing that because the telephone companies are privately owned, the telephone system is not public.

Silber confuses the definition of a public service with the matter of public *interest*. He does so perhaps as a matter of serving his university's, his own, and his trustees' quite private interests, as the state attorney general's investigations into Boston University's finances have shown. As one student of the accountability of nonprofit, but none-theless private corporations tells us in reference to the BU case, "The purpose of intervening in nonprofit organizations is to protect the public's ownership interest in the nonprofit enterprise and, when necessary, to restructure the board of trustees to be more in line with the trustees' obligations." This "fiduciary principle" does not make nonprofit corporations public services, but regulates them in the public interest.

See James C. Baughman, "BU's Trustees Are Accountable to the Public," *Boston Globe*, May 8, 1993, 11, and Stephen Kurkjian, "Audit Said to Urge Change at BU," *Boston Globe*, May 6, 1993, 33, 44.

80. William T. Gormley, Jr., "The Privatization Controversy," in *Privatization and Its Alternatives*, ed. William T. Gormley, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 8.
81. Al Bilik, "Privatization: Selling America to the Lowest Bidder," *Labor Research Review* 9 (Spring 1990): 7–8.
82. Glenn Jacobs, "History, Crisis, and Social Panic: Minority Resistance to Privatization of an Urban School System," *Urban Review* 25, no. 3 (September 1993): 175–198.

“I submit we have the school system we want. But even if we can’t change schools, we still may be able to change education.”

— Dale Mann