Subcommunity Gladiatorial Competition: Civil Rights Leadership as a Competitive Process*

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As is often the case, the folklore of American politics contains two conflicting statements about the value of competition for political leadership. On the one hand, competition for political office is assumed to be the measure of a thriving democracy. On the other hand, we tend to think of intensely competitive politics as the breeding ground for the spectacular demagogue. In particular, the American Negro civil rights movement is seen as an example of a situation in which high levels of competition have promoted "irresponsible" leadership.[1] In this paper we will examine the civil rights movement in 14 cities, and present an analysis of the factors which cause variations in the degree and character of leadership competition and the way in which this competition has affected these movements.

THE PROBLEM

Much of the literature on the social bases of competition for leadership centers around the word "pluralism." One position is that stated by Kornhauser:

A plurality of independent and limited-function groups supports liberal democracy by providing social bases of free and open competition for leadership, widespread participation in the selection of leaders, restraint in the application of pressures on leaders, and self-government in widespread areas of social life. Therefore, where social pluralism is strong, liberty and democracy tend to be strong; conversely, forces which weaken social pluralism also weaken liberty and democracy.[2]

Here, the competition referred to is clearly functional to a democracy. While the mass society theorists claim that severe social conflict is prevented by these same forces which produce moderate competition, Gusfield has described ways in which pluralism can encourage such conflict.[3]

[1] As an example of this diagnosis, see Daniel Bell, "Plea for a 'New Phase in Negro Leadership'," *The New York Times Magazine*, May 31, 1964.

[2] William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1959), pp. 230–231.

[3] Joseph Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1963). See especially "A

This is clarified by James S. Coleman, who distinguishes between partici-pation in voluntary organizations which tend to integrate a community by weaving community-wide patterns of communication and influence, and attachments to ethnic and other subcommunity organizations which encourage a division of the community.[4] William A. Gamson's study of 16 middle-sized and small New England cities presented evidence to support this distinction, showing that rancorous conflict was more likely to occur in communities which had isolated subcommunities within their bound-aries.[5] By either argument, we might expect the pluralistic community, with a more elaborate network of voluntary organizations, and a larger supply of potential leaders, to provide the greatest degree of leadership competition, although whether such competition sustains or weakens democratic values is left an open question.

However, one apparent difficulty with the pluralism argument is that it would lead us to expect a fairly low level of leadership competition. There is no reason to expect a more elaborate structure of voluntary associations within the generally low socioeconomic status Negro community than in a white community of similar status.[6] And there is little basis for severe ideological cleavage on civil rights as major civil rights leaders command the overwhelming endorsement of the Negro community.[7]

There is another approach to the question which provides a somewhat different set of hypotheses; Ralf Dahrendorf has noted that one can con-trast an "integration" theory of society—stressing equilibrium and con-tinuity—with a coercion theory which emphasizes strains and change.[8] He accepts these as compatible viewpoints reflecting the "two faces" of society, but focuses on the coercion theory and writes:

I shall try to show how, on the assumption of the coercive nature of social structure, relations of authority became productive of clashes of role interest which under certain conditions lead to the formulation of organized antagonistic

Dramatistic Theory of Status Politics," chap. 7, pp. 166–188. See also "Mass Society and Extremist Politics," American Sociological Review, 27 (February, 1962), pp. 19–30.

   [4] James S. Coleman, Community Conflict (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957).
   [5] William A. Gamson, "Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics," American Socio-logical Review, 31 (February, 1966), pp. 71–81.
   [6] See Anthony M. Orum, "A Reappraisal of the Social and Political Participation of Negroes," American Journal of Sociology, 72 (July, 1966), pp. 32–46.
   [7] For national data see William Brink and Louis Harris, The Negro Revolution in America (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964), and for a local example (Durham, North Carolina) see M. Elaine Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern City (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1962).
   [8] Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (Stanford: Stan-ford University Press, 1959). See Part II, "Toward a Sociological Theory of Conflict in Industrial Society," pp. 157–318. He writes that the integration theory of society "conceives of social structure in terms of a functionally integrated system held in equilibrium by certain patterned and recurrent processes; the other one, the coercion theory of society, views social structure as a form of organization held together by force and constraint and reacting continuously beyond itself in the sense of producing within itself the forces that maintain it in an unending process of change" (p. 159).

groups within limited social organizations as well as within total societies.[9]

This suggests that in analyzing groups such as those of the civil rights movement, we should keep in mind the possibility that a seemingly stable status hierarchy within the Negro community can itself create competition and conflict. Dahrendorf's remarks lead us back to a traditional viewpoint which says that conflict in politics is to be expected as long as there are bases of power available to competitors.

Much of the existing discussion of the consequences of competition is irrelevant to our concern because it assumes a competition between stable two-party systems. Local studies of competition in nonpartisan or one-party political systems would be more relevant, but there is little material. V. O. Key and others have pointed out the way in which "every man for himself" politics in southern states rewards ideological extremists,[10] and several writers have noted that in Louisiana, where stable party factions have persisted for several decades, racism did not play a major role in electoral contests.[11] James Q. Wilson has noted that the structured politics of Chicago has produced Congressman William Dawson, while the unstructured (and probably more competitive politics of New York City has recruited Adam Clayton Powell.[12] Following this line of reasoning, Wilson has hypothesized that the growth of amateur political clubs in both major political parties has caused ideology to become more important in electoral campaigns and has tended to restrict the freedom of elected officials by binding them to more detailed party platforms.[13] Whether introducing ideology and platform loyalty are good or bad depends not only on one's point of view, but also on the particular community studied. Hunter, for example, suggests that the limiting of competition by the influentials of Atlanta has tended to discourage innovation and prevent the masses from winning new programs.[14]

There does seem to be one consistent finding: political party competition results in increased political participation. Milbrath found a high correlation between party competition and general turnout for senatorial and gubernatorial elections,[15] and Agger *et al.*, in a comparative study of four

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 165.

[10] V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949); Hugh D. Price, *The Negro and Southern Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1957).

[11] For a comprehensive analysis of the data see Robert Crain, Morton Inger, and Gerald A. McWorter, *School Desegregation in New Orleans: A Comparative Study of the Failure of Social Control* (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 1966), pp. 15–106.

[12] James Q. Wilson, *Negro Politics: The Search for Leadership* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960); and "Two Negro Politicians: An Interpretation," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 4 (November, 1960), pp. 346–369.

[13] James Q. Wilson, *The Amateur Democrat* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[14] Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision-Makers* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1954).

[15] Lester W. Milbrath, "Political Participation in the States," in Herbert Jacob and Kenneth Vines (eds.), *Comparative State Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1965).

cities, demonstrate how elite competition stimulates mass participation in politics.[16] This is especially true if the basis of the competition is ideological. Lane,[17] and Matthews and Prothro[18] have presented similar findings about contested primary elections and rates of voter turnout.

Similar themes have emerged from studies of leadership in the Negro subcommunity. Hunter found the Negro subcommunity of Atlanta had managed to sustain a monolithic leadership structure despite considerable competition for leadership.[19] Studies of Providence, Rhode Island[20] and "Pacific City"[21] suggest the same pattern. More recently, Ladd has found similar monolithic patterns in Greenville, South Carolina, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina.[22] However, Ladd notes that Winston-Salem does have considerable competition for leadership, and suggests that this is the pattern for the Negro communities of the "new South."

One study found that during periods of intense racial controversy new leaders appeared;[23] another study noted that during a similar controversial period, the opposing factions within the Negro subcommunity merged during the crisis.[24]

Both Glick[25] and Walker [26] hypothesize that competition within the civil rights movement has unanticipated consequences which benefit the Negro subcommunity. Walker concludes that "disputes among the leadership tend to increase, not decrease, the effectiveness of the Negro community's battle against the institution of segregation."[27]

In general, our analysis follows the essential questions being raised in this literature. After clarifying the concept of leadership competition in the civil rights movement, we will investigate: (1) What are the social

[16] Robert E. Agger, Daniel Goldrich, and Bert Swanson, *The Rulers and the Ruled: Political Power and Importance in American Communities* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964).

[17] Robert E. Lane, *Political Life: Why People Get Involved in Politics* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959).

[18] Donald R. Matthews and James W. Prothro, "Political Factors and Negro Voter Registration in the South," *American Political Science Review*, 57 (June, 1963), pp. 355–367.

[19] Hunter, *op. cit.*

[20] Harold Pfantz, "The Power Structure of the Negro Sub-Community: A Case Study and Comparative View," *Phylon*, 23 (Summer, 1962), pp. 156–166.

[21] Ernest Barth and Baha Abu-Laban, "Power Structure and the Negro Sub-Community," *American Sociological Review*, 24 (February, 1959), pp. 69–76.

[22] Everett C. Ladd, *Negro Political Leadership in the South* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966).

[23] Lewis Killian and Charles Smith, "Negro Protest Leaders in a Southern Community," *Social Forces*, 38 (March, 1960), pp. 253–257. Also see Tillman Cothran and William Phillips, "Negro Leadership in a Crisis Situation," *Phylon*, 22 (1961), pp. 107–118.

[24] Jacquelyn Johnson Clarke, "Standard Operating Procedures in Tragic Situations," *Phylon*, 22 (Winter, 1961), pp. 318–328.

[25] Clarence E. Glick, "Collective Behavior in Race Relations," *American Sociological Review*, 13 (June, 1948), pp. 287–294.

[26] Jack Walker, "The Functions of Disunity: Negro Leadership in a Southern City," *Journal of Negro Education*, 32 (1963), pp. 227–236.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

bases which generate and sustain competition? and (2) What are the social consequences of competition?

THE DATA

The research reported here is part of a larger study conducted by the National Opinion Research Center on decision-making with regard to school integration.[28] Fifteen cities were studied by teams of graduate student interviewers who spent from ten to 15 man-days in each city during the winter of 1964–1965. Techniques employed included (a) formal questionnaire interviews with decision-makers, (b) unstructured interviews (up to eight hours in length) with decision-makers and informants, and (c) collecting documentary materials. An average of 20 respondents were interviewed in each city, including an average of four civil rights leaders. In general, there was no difficulty in obtaining interviews with the leading civil rights leaders. The civil rights leaders interviewed included those with important formal positions (e.g., the NAACP president) and those identified as important actors in the school segregation issue. The sample is thus biased (partly, but not completely) toward those persons concerned with education.

The 15 cities included eight in the North, drawn from a sampling frame including all cities between 250,000 and 1,000,000 which were at least ten percent Negro in population. The cities were selected randomly, with substitutions then made for cities which had not faced demands for school integration. The seven southern cities were selected to maximize the range of behavior on school integration, and include three cities which are the largest in their state, three smaller cities from the same states for comparison, and a fourth small city; the smallest city contained 158,623 people. One small southern city is deleted from this analysis because of insufficient direct interviews.

VARIATIONS IN LEVELS OF COMPETITION

As the word is used here, competition for leadership includes competition for formal offices in the government and in voluntary organizations such as the NAACP; but also (and more importantly) competition for status, influence, and power, for the loyalty of masses of civil rights activists, and for control over the policy and the program of the civil rights movement. A civil rights leader may be one who has the reputation for leadership, has the loyalty of a following, holds a formal office, or who is able to use other sources of prestige and status to influence the white subcommittee regarding civil rights. A civil rights leader, by our definition, may be either white or Negro. While it follows that competition can occur in several different ways, the most important distinction is between organized and individual competition. By organized competition we refer to competition between competing organizations or groups, each committed

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[28] For the case studies and an analysis of the data, see Robert Crain, with Morton Inger, Gerald A. McWorter, and James J. Vanecko, *School Desegregation in the North: Eight Comparative Case Studies of Community Structure and Policy Making* (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 1966), and Crain, Inger, and McWorter, *op. cit.*

more or less permanently to a program or ideological stance. By individual competition, we refer to the competition between individuals for leadership in such as way that a majority of the civil rights leaders are not permanently committed to one side of a conflict. While in principle it would be useful to distinguish competition for leadership from conflict over ideology, in practice the two go hand in hand.

The variables were constructed primarily from the interviews with civil rights leaders. Our judgment of the leader and types of competition is based largely upon three factors—the response to sociometric questions about other leaders; the attitudes expressed by leaders about different civil rights organizations; and a detailed history of the relationships between the groups during the course of the school desegregation issue, which in the North was usually the most important civil rights issue. While the result is a largely impressionistic judgment, we are more confident about its reliability than we might otherwise be because of the great variance among the cities. The differences among cities is quite large, as will be shown when some of the cases are described.

In all 14 cities there is some degree of competition and conflict among civil rights leaders. However, in five of the cities the level of competition is so low that for present purposes we describe them as having minimal competition. These five cities are Baltimore and Miami, where most civil rights activity is handled by the NAACP and competition within the NAACP is light; Columbus, Georgia, where a "ruling elite" of five men work as a close-knit unit; and Pittsburgh and Buffalo, where various groups work in reasonable harmony, again with only a small number of highly active leaders. In all five of these cities, there are no civil rights leaders who were willing to criticize other leaders, and no case when a civil rights group opposed or criticized publicly a program advanced by another.

TABLE 1

Level and Intensity of Civil Rights Leadership Competition
in 14 Cities, by Region

Level of Competition	Region of Cities	
	North	South
Individual competition:		
Intense	San Francisco	Montgomery
Moderate	Oakland	New Orleans
	Boston	
Minimal competition	Baltimore	Miami
	Pittsburgh	Columbus
	Buffalo	
Organized competition	St. Louis	Jacksonville
	Newark	Atlanta

Four cities—St. Louis, Newark, Atlanta, and Jacksonville—fit our model of having intense organized competition. In all four cases, the conflict can be briefly described as between the establishment and the outsiders. The conflict tends to polarize the entire movement; even the leaders who try to think of themselves as nonaligned can only be understood by their relationships to one of the opposing factions. In each case, most leaders interviewed were critical, not merely of other leaders, but other particular civil rights groups as well.

The remaining five cities have individual competition for leadership. In two, San Francisco and Montgomery, the competition can be described as intense and persisting over long periods of time without clear factional alignments. In the other three—Oakland, Boston, and New Orleans—competition and conflict tend to come and go, and are often pushed into the background. Because, as we shall see, the cities without competition are in some ways intermediate between those which have organized competition and those which have individual competition, it is useful to present them graphically in the center of the typology. The civil rights leaders in these cities often qualified their criticism of other leaders in terms of how much support was offered or available for their own program. Since each actor appeared to be a free agent, everyone was considered a possible ally, as well as a potential enemy.

The five cities with individual competition have in common a volatile style of civil rights activity. In all five, since the temporary withdrawal of one or another leader can alter the picture considerably, it is difficult to predict the level and style of civil rights activity. This is especially true of Montgomery, whose leaders have been consistently drafted into the national civil rights movement. As new leaders appear, the pattern of competition changes, and civil rights programs change with them.

The Social Bases of Organized Competition

Let us first consider the roots of organized competition; later we will consider the causes of individual competition. In all four cities in this category, it is possible to locate sources of structural competition in the different bases of power available to competing factions. In the two northern cities the conflict is between the political "establishment" and militant neighborhood-based groups. In St. Louis, the demands for school integration were first made by the West End Community Council with the support of CORE. At first, the NAACP lent its support to the campaign, but later they began to withdraw. After some important victories, an open split between the militant grassroots groups and the NAACP brought about the collapse of the school integration drive. The militants generally accused the NAACP of being conservative and tied to the Democratic party organization in the Negro wards, though one of the militants used his civil rights activity to win control of one ward.[29]

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[29] A key actor in St. Louis described this pattern: "Traditionally there have been certain Negroes who are recognized as leaders and they start off as militant, but somewhere along the line they become part of the establishment. They first become

In Newark the pattern was nearly identical. The most militant leader in the NAACP was also a leader of the community organization in a middle-income integrated neighborhood. Under the stress of the school integration campaign, he left the NAACP and the community group continued to battle the school system without the NAACP branch's support. Again, the militants accused the NAACP of being too close to the ruling faction of the Democratic party.

The only other city in the sample with a strong patronage-based Negro political machine is Jacksonville, and here again the result has been organized competition for leadership. However, the cast is a bit different, since the NAACP is militant and anti-machine, and the machine leadership does not have a civil rights organization. In part, this is the effect of Jacksonville being a southern city; the NAACP is not legitimate enough to be accepted by white politicians, and Negro political leaders without autonomous bases of power cannot afford to be active in it. In addition, there is less distinction in the South between generalized community leadership and civil rights leadership, so that the Negro political leader does not need to be a representative of a civil rights group in order to claim status as a civil rights leader.[30]

The fourth city with organized competition is Atlanta. The competition here is between the generations, older and less militant leaders being attacked by young upwardly-mobile militants.[31]

A general but simple proposition fitting all four cities is that organized competition will occur if and only if one faction has access to status independent of an appeal to mass support, and the other faction can successfully appeal to the masses for its power. In the first three cities the political machine can supply patronage and other material incentives maintaining Negro political leaders without requiring that they make a mass appeal on ideological grounds. The competing group is a neighborhood-

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militant, and this is caused by being anti-establishment, and then they become part of the establishment—they shift from one position to another. Of course, you can't remain a revolutionary as part of the establishment."

[30] A clear example of this in Jacksonville occurred during a recent three-day school boycott run by a militant NAACP-oriented leadership. On the second day of the boycott, a major establishment Negro politician appeared on television to appeal to the Negro community to return to normal and send the children back to school. However, his appeal was not legitimated by his political role, but by his "leadership in many areas, such as civil rights, etc." Further, while appearing on television a NAACP sign was visible in front of him. He warded off charges of fraudulent representation made by NAACP, local and national officials, by declaring that his life membership allowed him such prerogative.

[31] The data were collected prior to significant changes in the political involvement of Negroes in the South, particularly Atlanta. Our findings are essentially similar to those presented by Walker (see Walker, *op. cit.*). After reapportionment in Georgia, the summer primary and general elections added up to two Negro state senators, and five Negro state representatives including Attorney Ben Brown and Julian Bond, both former leaders of the Atlanta Student Movement during 1960–1961 sit-ins. What seems to have subsequently developed is the abdication of leadership by the two key figures (one died, one moved to New York), which in effect has turned over the power to the younger more militant cadre of leaders.

based mass organization in St. Louis and Newark, and a traditional civil rights group in Jacksonville. Since their claim to leadership is based upon the loyalty of a visible group of followers, all three cities have engaged in considerable direct action. Neighborhood-based groups are more successful competitors to the NAACP than city-wide groups such as CORE, probably because they have a more committed following. Thus in all four cities the contest is between militant direct-action groups and moderates.

In Atlanta the same proposition seems to hold. One faction draws its power from its association with the elites of Atlanta's Negro business and academic communities. Of all the cities, Atlanta has the greatest amount of resources for such an elite; the second largest Negro-owned life insurance company and the second largest Negro-owned bank are in Atlanta,[32] in addition to seven Negro colleges and universities. These same resources (especially the colleges) have produced the following for the mass-oriented activists.[33]

To put it another way, the machine city makes it possible for the white leadership to offer resources to particular Negro leaders in exchange for conservative behavior on civil rights. It was probably once true that most cities were able to maintain a conservative group of leaders in this way by offering money or various symbols of honor and prestige. Indeed, the threat of physical violence in some cases might have made such an offering unnecessary. But in the eleven nonmachine cities in our sample, we found little evidence of this today. One reason is that the civil rights revolution has placed these Negro leaders under attack, and the white community has usually been unwilling or unable to counter by inflating their payments to them.

The white leadership also has a negative sanction; it can withhold recognition from civil rights leaders by simply refusing to deal with them. While we have no example of a city which was able to suppress an issue in this fashion, it seems probable that this tactic has increased the turnover of leadership as unrecognized leaders drop into the background. Actually, this is not an "effective" device; as we shall see, an increase in competition tends to increase militancy, so that the whites may find the new leadership more difficult to deal with.

At first it would seem that almost any city could provide a basis for power independent of a mass following, and hence have organized competition, but this is apparently not the case. In Boston there is only one Negro elected official and very few in appointed posts. In the other north-

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[32] Andrew F. Brimmer, "The Negro in the National Economy," in John P. Davis (ed.), *The American Negro Reference Book* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966), see especially the section titled "Negroes as Enterpreneurs," pp. 291–321.

[33] The largest Negro-owned bank and insurance firm are both in Durham along with a large Ph.D.-granting Negro university. At times, Durham seems to have a pattern of civil rights competition resembling Atlanta's. For a detailed analysis of Durham see Burgess, *op. cit.*; E. Franklin Frazier, "Durham: Capital of the Black Middle Class," in Alain Locke (ed.), *The New Negro* (New York: A. and C. Boni, 1925); and on the early development of Atlanta see August Meier and David Lewis, "History of Negro Upper Class in Atlanta, Georgia, 1890–1958," *Journal of Negro Education* (Spring, 1959), pp. 128–139.

ern cities the absence of a machine vote requires that ambitious political leaders take militant positions, or at least give public support to the militant leaders. Of the northern cities, none has the elaborate Negro economy of Atlanta; furthermore, the Negro economic leaders are sometimes either politically active or are newspaper publishers and therefore still dependent upon a mass following. Similarly, in the South, Jacksonville is represented as a home office of one of the large Negro-owned insurance firms but is otherwise not an important Negro economic center, and the other cities have even less Negro-owned business.[34] Outside of Atlanta, there are so few Negroes holding political positions that they can hardly constitute a fraction. One might expect competition on general ideological grounds between militants and conservatives, but there has been a constantly accelerating rise of militancy in the Negro community since World War II. Conservative ideologies no longer offer a competitive alternative to this increased militancy. Unless the "Uncle Tom" is propped up with a considerable number of favors from white sources, it seems he is fast becoming a mere anachronism.[35]

The general hypothesis predicts that one other type of city will not have organized competition; this is the city where there is no basis for a grass-roots movement. A city with a low-status population, without (for example) the resources of a Negro college, might fall into this class. But even here this is unlikely because of a strong general endorsement of civil rights activity by the Negro masses. If any city in our sample can be described this way it is Columbus, Georgia, where the "ruling elite" has up to now been able to handle civil rights activity with little competition from direct-action groups. Columbus has the lowest status Negro population of the cities in our sample; with a higher status population, there might be a conflict between the generations here as in Atlanta (but it is also possible that the elite might become more militant).

It would also be possible for a city to be led by a group of elites who have enough prestige to be "above criticism." This may have been the case in Montgomery during the early days of the Montgomery Improvement Association, when the MIA leadership combined their prestige as nationally recognized civil rights leaders with their local prestige as ministers of the church.[36] And of course this would have been more often the case before the current thrust of civil rights activities. But in most cities, the holders of traditional status can be attacked (with or without justification) as being conservative. Even when the traditional prestige hierarchy retains its importance, an increase in civil rights activity may encourage competition among elites for the leadership of the movement.

[34] Brimmer, *op. cit.*

[35] For a more detailed analysis of this pattern of increasing militancy see Louis Lomax, *The Negro Revolt* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); August Meier, "New Currents in the Civil Rights Movement," *New Politics* (Summer, 1963), pp. 7–31; and August Meier and Francis L. Broderick (eds.), *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965).

[36] For a general interpretive discussion see Martin Luther King's *Stride Toward Freedom* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1960).

The Bases for Individual Competition

If by individual competition we refer to competition between individuals without permanent factional coalitions or stable ideological differences, we can choose between two seemingly contradictory hypotheses. First, competition will be most present in the "mass society" since there will be few loyalties or agreements binding people into "follower" roles; anyone who wants to be a leader is free to do so. This is a special case of Coleman's hypothesis that a person without an elaborate network of social attachments is free to take controversial positions.[37] However, the more commonly accepted opposing hypothesis is that the pluralistic society, with its complex network of associations, is the training ground for potential leaders. The arguments are not really contradictory, and taken together suggest that we should find greatest competition in (a) the community with many leadership roles and many people in high-status positions, but with little in the way of interdependent relations and a weak internal prestige structure, and less competition in either, (b) the community with a large number of roles for training potential leaders, but with a stable prestige hierarchy and interdependence, or (c) the community with few leadership roles, which will not have competition even if it has an inadequate prestige hierarchy.[38]

We would expect a city of type (a) to have a fast growing middle-class Negro community which is partially assimilated. In such a situation, many persons with leadership skills will be holding "white" jobs, some of the civil rights leaders will be white, and there will not be a traditional prestige structure. All three of the northern cities with individual competition seem to fit this description. In Boston, San Francisco, and Oakland, a large number of civil rights leaders are either white, hold "white" jobs, or live in predominantly white areas. Thus they are autonomous vis-à-vis the Negro economic structure, and have ambiguous status in the Negro prestige hierarchy. Table 2a suggests the lack of autonomy of the Negro community in these cities compared to the less competitive Pittsburgh and Baltimore. In all three individual competition cities, Negroes are less segregated, and the lack of autonomy of the Negro community is reflected in the unimportance of the Negro press. The table also suggests that if it were not for the political organization of St. Louis and Newark, these two cities would have little competition—St. Louis because it has a Negro elite which would maintain considerable power, Newark because it has almost no basis for a grass-roots movement. In general, Table 2a indicates that in the non-machine cities of the North, the higher the status of the Negro community, the greater the individual competition. This pattern does not hold in the four southern cities which do not have organized competition.

In the South, Negro subcommunities are somewhat more self-sufficient, have more visible prestige structures, and have lower status populations.

[37] Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
[38] A possible fourth type, the community which maintains a stable elite but has no leadership roles, is almost an internal contradiction, and seems to be rare; but as we noted earlier Columbus, Georgia, comes close to this type.

TABLE 2a

Selected Social Factors Influencing Competition (North)

Level of Competition	Socioeconomic Status		Size: Percent Population Negro	Level of Segregation:	
	Percent White Collar	Percent High School Graduates		Index of Residential Segregation*	Importance of Negro Newspapers†
Individual competition:					
Intense:					
San Francisco	27	40	9.0	69.3	Low
Moderate:					
Boston	17	37	9.8	83.9	Low
Oakland	18	32	26.4	73.1	Low
Minimal competition:					
Baltimore	15	19	35.0	89.6	High
Pittsburgh	14	25	16.7	84.6	High
Buffalo	11	22	13.8	86.5	Low
Organized competition:					
St. Louis	15	24	28.8	90.6	Medium
Newark	11	22	34.4	71.6	Medium

* Data compiled from Karl E. Taeuber and Alma F. Taeuber, *Negroes in Cities* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co. 1965)
† Data compiled from *Negro Newspapers in the United States* (Jefferson City, Missouri: Lincoln University, Dept. of Journalism, 1964). The Baltimore *Afro-American* and the Pittsburgh *Courier* are well-known: the St. Louis *Argus* and the Newark *Afro-American* are weeklies with circulations of 9,000 and 7,000 respectively.

There is little variation in the degree of autonomy of these highly segregated subcommunities. Hence, we would expect them to have less individual competition. Two cities, New Orleans and Montgomery, do have a limited amount of individual competition, but this may be the result of unique historical factors in each case. A pioneering thrust of civil rights activity in 1955 established the MIA as the model for a mass-based organization in the South. However, several key leaders moved to regional and national levels of leadership, notably Dr. Martin Luther King and Rev. Ralph Abernathy (successive presidents of the MIA). At the time of our interviews, several leaders in the MIA were struggling to organize activity, and thus were competing for power. But our proposition holds that if a direct-action program was organized successfully, the level of competition would decline considerably. Similarly, this appears to be the case for New Orleans which has always had a relatively weak civil rights movement.[39] The cities without competition do have in common a lower supply of "troops" for mass demonstrations; neither has a Negro college whose student body could be used for demonstrations.

[39] Detailed analysis can be found in Crain, Inger, McWorter, *School Desegregation in New Orleans . . . op. cit.*, and Daniel Thompson, *The Negro Leadership Class* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

SOCIAL SOURCES OF COMPETITION: A SUMMARY

There seems to be some evidence in these data to support several propositions about the causes of competition.

1. A necessary condition for competition is an adequate supply of social resources.

2. A necessary condition for competition to be organized or factional is that there be distinctly different ways to mobilize resources. In our case, this means a choice between appealing for mass support and obtaining resources in other ways; in another context it would include appealing to different sectors of the population for support.

3. Individual competition is facilitated by a weak or ambiguous prestige structure. Social control over potential leaders and loyalty to factions can exist only to the extent that the Negro subcommunity is in fact a subcommunity with binding integrative attachment mechanisms.

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF LEADERSHIP COMPETITION

In a competitive environment, prospective leaders must make appeals for support. It is commonly assumed that this produces a more militant movement, and our data support this assumption. Without competition, leadership remains in traditional hands, which suggests that the leadership in noncompetitive cities will be older and have higher status. Our data indicate that this is also the case, at least partially. Table 3 gives the age, educational attainment, and income of the civil rights leaders inter-

TABLE 2b

Factors Influencing Competition (South)°

Level of Competition	Socioeconomic Status		Size: Percent Population Negro	Number of Negro Colleges†
	Percent White Collar	Percent High School		
Individual competition:				
Intense: Montgomery	14.3	17.8	38.1	1
Moderate: New Orleans	11.6	14.5	30.8	2
Minimal competition: Miami	8.5	18.1	14.7	0
Columbus	11.9	12.7	29.0	0
Organized competition: Atlanta	12.7	21.1	38.2	6
Jacksonville	10.7	18.2	23.2	1

° Importance of Negro Newspapers and the Index of Residential Segregation are not relevant to the study of southern Negro leadership: see text.

† Data compiled from Earl J. McGrath, *The Predominantly Negro Colleges and Universities in Transition* (New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, 1965).

viewed in each class of city; the data suggest that the noncompetitive cities have older leaders who have high incomes, but without especially high educational attainment. Howeyer, the South presents a reverse pattern with the noncompetitive cities having younger leaders who are better educated with lower incomes. In both of the noncompetitive southern cities, the leadership was occupied by upwardly-mobile professionals. The Negro professional holds an indisputable status in the Negro subcommunity functionally similar to that of a member of a traditional elite.[40]

Militancy is measured by a four-item scale from a longer agree-disagree questionnaire.[41] The meaning of this militancy scale is perhaps best captured by one of these items which asks the respondent to agree or disagree that "Too many times Negroes have compromised when they could have made more progress if they had held out a little longer." But another component of militancy is the willingness to disagree that "The average white man really wants the Negro to have his rights." Apparently the militant feels there is little to be gained from appealing to the better nature of whites, and therefore the only hope is to make discrimination so unpleasant or costly that whites will give in out of self-interest. In Table 4,

TABLE 3

Social Characteristics of Civil Rights Leaders, by Type of
Leadership Competition and Region

	Competition	Median Age		Percent With Professional Education		Percent Income Over $10,000	
North	Individual	33	(8)	67	(9)	50	(8)
	Minimal	41	(12)	42	(12)	67	(9)
	Organized	34	(6)	58	(12)	20	(5)
South	Individual	53	(7)	43	(7)	50	(4)
	Minimal	46	(7)	50	(8)	0	(6)
		49	(9)	44	(9)	67	(9)

[40] One can interpret leadership competition of the minority community as mechanisms of mobility. The northern pattern differs from the South in part because protest leadership is a functional alternative to establish routes of leadership mobility, whereas in the South it is ofttimes the same as the total minority leadership. This is particularly true in cities without established political leadership; thus, the one Negro attorney in Columbus being elected to the Georgia House of Representatives following reapportionment was predicated on both his station in the Negro community and moderate acceptability to whites.

[41] The two items not cited above are (a) "Unless you dramatize an issue through mass protests and demonstrations it seems that there is scarcely any progress made," and (b) "It is sometimes better to have white resistance to Negro requests, because then you have a basis for bringing the overall problem to the public's attention." Yules Q was used as a measure of association and produced the following matrix:

	2	3	4
1	.45	.73	.89
2	—	.62	.69
3	—	—	.54

we see that the cities with competition, both organized and individual, have more militant leaders. It is understandable that the southern leaders would generally be more militant than those in the North.

Thus far, we have observed that leadership in competitive cities differs in means-orientations. Let us now consider two other factors, differences in goal orientation, and differences in the actual amount of civil rights activity. Here we will draw upon the 15 case studies without attempting to present the data in each case. The reader is referred to the parent monograph for a more complete story.

One might suppose that under conditions of intense competition, the goals of the local civil rights movement might become more attuned to the national civil rights climate as competing leaders draw upon the idioms of the national movement for legitimation. This is partly true in cities where competition is individualized. In these cities the leadership goals have been set in an effort to bid for the support of the entire Negro community, hence the goals have been stated in the most diffuse way. In all three cities, the goals have stressed the elimination of *de facto* segregation and have been highly symbolic.[42] In the two cities with organized competition, the goals have been determined (it seems) by the need of the anti-establishment leaders to build a specific base in one sector of the community from which to wage war on the establishment. The result is that the stated

TABLE 4

Militancy of Civil Rights Leaders, by Competition Level
of City and Region*

Level of Competition	Region of Cities		
	North	South	Total†
Individual competition	2.14 (7)	2.74 (9)	.78 (16)
Minimal competition	1.30 (10)	2.00 (7)	.07 (17)
Organized competition	2.00 (9)	2.50 (10)	.72 (19)
Mean	1.77 (26)	2.42 (26)	.77 (52)

* Each civil rights leader interviewed was given a militancy score, the average number of militant responses to four statements. The possible range of scores is from very militant (score=4) to not militant at all (score=0).

† The total column is derived after reducing the southern militancy scores by .65 so that the North-South differences will not influence the result. In the total column the level of militancy in the two competitive cases are each significantly higher than the militancy in the minimal competition case (at the .05 level, one-tailed test).

42 In this discussion of civil rights goals we have employed two axes of differentiation, status (symbolic) to welfare, and diffuse to specific. Wilson clearly states that the first basis of distinction is between tangible *things* (welfare) and intangible *principles* (status or symbolic). See Wilson, *Negro Politics: The Search for Leadership*, esp., pp. 185–199. The second dimension concerns the level of specificity of the goals, the extent to which the goals reflect a limited set of concrete propositions as compared to an ever expanding set of general claims.

goals have been set to meet the particular needs of only one part of the subcommunity. In both cases, the base was a racially changing neighborhood which developed a mixture of city-wide and local goals (and a mixture of symbolic and welfare goals) designed to encourage whites to stay in the area and to meet the most salient needs of the incoming Negroes. The two southern cities with organized competition have also shown a tendency toward a mixture of "symbolic" and "welfare" goals; this is particularly true in Jacksonville. The three cities without internal competition developed a set of goals which are in some ways more traditional. Although they were generally city-wide in orientation, they tended to be more specific; in Baltimore and Pittsburgh, focus was upon techniques for eliminating overcrowding by an integration plan; in Buffalo, the movement stressed integration of particular schools.

In the South, there is a narrower range of alternative goals available since the elimination of *de jure* segregation has been the main target. In the one city where there is competition between civil rights groups and a Negro political "establishment," the movement has adopted a heavy welfare orientation which led to a three-day boycott aimed at forcing the upgrading of Negro schools. As in the North, the movements with individual competition for leadership (New Orleans and Montgomery) have stated their goals in abstract terms, and have not paid much attention to specific goals or goals designed to benefit any particular sector or neighborhood of the Negro community. Thus, the data suggest that individualized competition leads to diffuse goals stressing symbolic issues, that cities with organized competition become welfare-oriented, while the cities with low competition tend to stress general and symbolic goals phrasing them in specific terms.

This is only a general tendency, and the data are confounded by three factors. First, the high-status city can be expected to develop more symbolic and diffuse goals since it tends to have an audience for mass-media exhortations, and (we assume) weaker neighborhood orientations. But, as we have discussed above, the high-status cities have individualized competition. Thus our correlation of individualized competition and diffuse goal orientation may be spurious. Secondly, the movements with low competition for leadership are better able to negotiate (since the school board knows who it has to negotiate with), a factor which probably affects the kinds of demands developed and made. And third, the willingness of the school system to meet the particular demands affects the goals of the movement. Since these extraneous factors are important, it is probably wisest to conclude that competition is not necessarily the most important factor in determining the goal orientation of the movement.

Competition also places great pressure on leaders to achieve results. However, in the case of northern school desegregation, the movement has relatively little impact on the degree to which the school board will acquiesce to the demands made.[43] Therefore there is some tendency for the

[43] The major analysis of the parent study revealed that characteristics of the school board and its members so explained acquiescence that adding the effect of civil rights activity did not appreciably add to the predictability. Moreover, the explanatory re-

movement to become means-oriented and evaluate its leaders by their ability to put together a good demonstration or boycott. Again, it is easy to exaggerate the importance of competition in determining level of activity. Much depends upon the amount of resources—especially manpower—available to the movement; and much depends upon whether the school system chooses to be resistant and invite demonstrations. However, with these two qualifications, we can suggest such a pattern. Within the northern sample, both cities with organized competition tend to have aggressive demonstrations, although they tend not to be able to sustain civil rights activity over a long period of time. There is almost an element of desperation in the style of militant groups in these cities. In St. Louis, for example, a blockade of school buses was agreed upon late the preceding evening, and final plans were not developed until a few hours before the blockade. However, it is difficult to sustain civil rights activity without complete support of the Negro community, and in both cities the presence of an organized opposition group eventually crippled the movement.[44] In the three cities with individualized competition, demonstrations have been sporadic, but have continued over a long period of time. In the noncompetitive cities, as expected, the decision to demonstrate is a purely tactical one; the demonstration is regarded as the ultimate weapon and is infrequently used.

The same general pattern seems to hold in the South, even though activity in connection with court-ordered desegregation is quite different from activity generated within a northern context. In the cities with organized competition (Atlanta and Jacksonville), there has been direct action in connection with the schools; there has not been such action in the other four cities. Accordingly, in these four cities, it is difficult to establish a relationship between competition and activity, although the civil rights action does seem more predictable when there is little competition.

The most important effect of competition in the civil rights movement has been to make negotiation with white leadership much more complex. In all northern cities, the movements with individualized competition have been more unpredictable. The San Francisco school superintendent has had to deal with nine civil rights groups. In another city the civil rights movement virtually forced the board to break off negotiations so that a boycott could be held. In the third city, the demands were so vague as to be perceived as merely antagonistic slogans.[45] In the two cities with organ-

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lationship is opposite this, i.e., the initial reaction or acquiescence of the school board is a cause of civil rights activity rather than being caused by it.

[44] Related to a movement's resource needs for sustaining activity, there is probably an inverse relationship between the number of "troops" needed and the intensity/quality of commitment. But an opposition group affects both factors by drawing off some troops and immobilizing others, and providing alternative gratification which depletes the urgency of the initial controversy.

[45] Killian poses one explanation for cases when ". . . the Negro leader-agent takes the white agent's arguments as the rationalizations of a prejudiced person rather than the tactics of a bargaining agent. When he reiterates his demands, almost as slogans, rather than countering the tactics, he appears either unintelligent or unreasonable. This leads the white agent, in turn, into the psychodynamic fallacy, and he breaks off the

ized competition, the main difficulty with negotiations is that the school board could not know how large an element of the Negro community was "represented" by a group of civil-rights leaders vis-à-vis their opponents or competitors.[46] In contrast, the three cities with minimal competition have had much more orderly processes of negotiation—although in one case, the school board was so disorganized that the civil rights leaders didn't quite know with whom *they* should be talking.

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF COMPETITION: A SUMMARY

Table 5 summarizes the data presented above. From this summary table we can clarify Walker's contention that competitive movements are more successful in achieving their goals.[47] It is probably true that organized competition is beneficial to a civil rights movement in that it stimulates the most intense (though sometimes short-lived) activity. On the other hand, individual competition, which produces a constant circulation of

TABLE 5

Style of Civil Rights Activity, by City Competition Level and Region

| Region | Level of Competition | Style of Civil Rights Activity | | |
		Goals	Action	Militancy
North	Individual	Symbolic, Diffuse, City-wide	Demonstration (sporadic)	Medium
	Minimal	Symbolic, Specific City-wide	Bargain-table negotiation (extensive)	Low
	Organized	Welfare and Symbolic, Local and City-wide	Demonstration (intense, but short-lived)	Medium
South	Individual	Symbolic, City-wide	Court action (limited)	High
	Minimal	Symbolic, City-wide	Court action (extensive)	Medium
	Organized	Welfare and Symbolic, Diffuse, City-wide	Court action and demonstration (short-lived)	High

negotiations on the ground that the Negro is simply an agitator who makes impossible demands for the sake of 'stirring up trouble.' " See Lewis Killian, "Community Structure and the Role of the Negro Leader-Agent," *Sociological Inquiry*, 35 (Winter, 1965), pp. 69–79.

[46] School boards have normally faced the representation question with regard to teachers' unions and parent groups. But civil rights leaders face different problems because the above two are more easily defined constituencies, with longer traditions of negotiating with school boards, and are working within the context of a clearer uncontroversial set of legal guidelines.

[47] Walker, *op. cit*.

leaders, probably equips the movement best for sustained activity over a period of years. However, the city without competition is probably best able to carry out a tightly planned campaign to achieve specific goals, although in the process its small leadership may become stolid and lose the initiative to raise new issues or the courage to use ultimate sanctions.