Undermining Racial Justice

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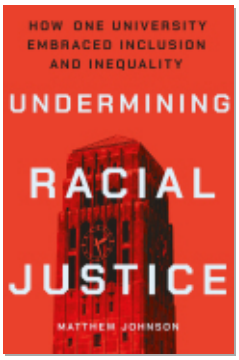

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Chapter 3

Rise of the Black Campus Movement

University of Michigan leaders weren't ready for black campus activism. In the first half of the 1960s, administrators felt the victories of the black freedom movement largely through the actions of the federal government. They took comfort in the fact that black activism was still something unfolding off campus. That all changed in the late 1960s.

Weak federal coercion proved easier to co-opt than protest. Black activism that took over buildings and shut down classes threatened university operations. The activists also offered more radical visions of inclusion than federal bureaucrats had. Black campus activists didn't want new policies that fit easily into the existing values and priorities of the university; they wanted to create an institution that saw racial justice as the driving force of its mission.

A new president led the University of Michigan through these protests. Arriving at the university in January 1968, Robben Fleming introduced a new managerial strategy to co-opt activism. He introduced new measures to get black student activists to work with officials to create institutional change rather than resort to campus disruptions. His efforts worked briefly to stem the tide of black student protests in the late 1960s, but they ultimately failed when Fleming didn't provide the types of policies and initiatives that would satisfy activists. By 1970, black student activists organized the most successful

student strike in the university's history, calling into question whether UM leaders could retain control of the meaning and character of racial inclusion.

There wasn't much that campus leaders feared more in the late 1960s than campus unrest—not federal intervention, nor a few vocal black faculty members calling for change on committees. By 1967, campus rebellion—and the potential violence that came with it—was a real possibility on college campuses.

Initially, UM leaders most feared the New Left. These were students who, in historian Robert Cohen's words, were "'committed to redressing social and political inequalities of power,' challenging cold war nationalism, and renewing 'the atrophied institutions of American democracy' by creating 'new institutions of popular participation to replace existing bureaucratic structures.'" The free speech movement signaled a shift in campus activism at HWCUs and introduced higher education leaders to the threat of the New Left. In fall 1964, students, led by Mario Salvo, applied the civil disobedience techniques of the civil rights movement to challenge a ban on political advocacy in a formerly designated free speech area on campus. On October 1, students formed a blockade around a police car as police officers arrested a prominent violator of the political advocacy ban. In the months that followed, students used tactics that would become commonplace on college campuses in the 1960s, such as staging sit-ins.[1]

By 1966, the New Left's antiwar protests began to dominate campus activism. The close connection between higher education and the Vietnam War made campuses a natural site for protest. Draft boards depended on postsecondary institutions to provide information about the eligibility of their students. Some universities provided research for the military; many more provided space for the military and companies that manufactured weapons of war to recruit new soldiers and employees. While 1966 saw a growing number of protests, 1967 proved to be a turning point. Antiwar activism enveloped campuses across the country as students marched and occupied campus buildings, sparking direct confrontations between student activists and police.[2]

Although administrators at UM avoided the violent conflicts between students and law enforcement in 1966 and 1967, UM leaders knew the campus wasn't filled with apathetic students. In fact, it was becoming one of the epicenters of the New Left. UM students, like Tom Hayden and Bill Ayers, were important figures in one of the New Left's most prominent organizations, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). It's no coincidence that UM was also home to the first teach-ins on the Vietnam War. Especially frightening to campus leaders, students started turning to some of the confrontational actions they had seen at other universities.[3]

The black campus movement didn't raise the same concerns among UM leaders in the mid-1960s. UM's black students had yet to organize a formidable protest organization. In fact, black students at UM received criticism from their white peers for being too moderate, too slow to put up a significant fight for racial justice on campus. Nevertheless, a black campus movement was building across the country. Black campus activists took, in historian Joy Ann Williamson-Lott's words, "Black Power principles and molded them to fit their specific context." The movement took Black Power's emphasis on racial pride and called for an intellectual and cultural revolution on college campuses that saw the value of black culture and history. The movement also adopted Black Power's international perspective, especially the intellectual framework of colonialism. The black campus movement called on universities to use their resources to empower black communities and make them more autonomous. Finally, black student activists used Black Power's principle of self-determination. For some, this meant creating autonomous universities. For most, though, it meant gaining more autonomy within their own institutions, as they demanded that black students control programs and spaces on campus and influence admissions and hiring decisions.[4]

In 1966 and early 1967, the black campus movement didn't garner the same media attention that the antiwar movement received. Still, the movement was gaining strength. Black student unions, which would become key organizations in the movement, formed at HWCUs across the country. At Merritt College, future Black Panthers Bobby Seale and Huey Newton successfully fought for the nation's first black history course at a historically white institution. Activists at Merritt built on this success to fight for a full-fledged black studies program. Especially in the early years, though, student activists at HBCUs drove the movement. Howard University students fought for a "militant Black university" and organized a strike in May 1967. Students at Texas Southern University rose in rebellion in the spring of 1967 and faced violent repression, as police fired 3,000 bullets into a dormitory and arrested 488 students.[5]

If the black campus movement seemed like a distant threat to UM administrators, one event reminded them that black activism wasn't far from UM's doorstep. The Detroit Rebellion of 1967 began in the early morning hours of June 23. The city's entrenched racial inequality and police abuse in black communities sparked the uprising. By the time the rebellion ended, 43 people were dead, and 657 were injured; about 2,500 buildings were damaged; and 132 city blocks had seen fires. No urban rebellion of the 1960s matched these numbers. It's difficult to underestimate the role of the Detroit Rebellion at UM. Once black students at UM organized and began protesting, the Detroit Rebellion hung over their demands. Unfolding just 45 miles from UM's campus,

it provided a reference point for administrators as they thought about the potential consequences of dissent.[6]

In the midst of campus and urban uprisings, the University of Michigan searched for a new president. In March 1966, Harlan Hatcher announced that he would retire as president of the university at the end of 1967. The regents saw Hatcher's retirement as an opportunity to hire someone who could guide the university through what they expected would become a new period of campus demonstrations. It was clear that the regents needed a president who had experience managing dissent. At that time, there were different models available to administrators for dealing with campus unrest. Repression represented one popular response. Some university and college leaders saw the police and National Guard as frontline deterrents for campus activism and were quick to turn to guns and batons. University of Michigan regents decided to pursue a different model to control activism. They were looking for a president who could prevent violent confrontations between students and the police, while still limiting dissent.[7]

Robben Fleming emerged as the regents' top candidate. Fleming was especially attractive because, as chancellor at the University of Wisconsin (UW), he had experience managing student dissent. The Madison campus was quickly becoming a hotbed of antiwar activism. Just a few months before his interview, Fleming had defused a seventy-two-hour sit-in at UW's Administration Building without a violent conflict between students and law enforcement. Fleming sympathized with some of the students' antiwar and civil rights positions and believed that activism, within certain constraints, had a place on campus. He also hesitated to use the police, fearing the bloody scenes that unfolded on other campuses. Student activists certainly didn't see Fleming as a great ally, but he also didn't win any friends among hard-line Wisconsin politicians, UW faculty members, and regents. On one of the rare occasions in which the police intervened and arrested students, Fleming bailed them out with a personal check.[8]

Fleming's long career mediating and studying labor disputes was also attractive. Before taking on executive administrative duties, he served as a professor and director of the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Wisconsin and then as the director of the University of Illinois's Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations. He also served as an arbitrator for labor disputes, ranging from the medical claims of a particular worker to a longshoremen strike in New York. In Fleming, the regents weren't hiring the typical campus administrator; they were getting someone who had dealt with labor strikes and student protests, had been yelled at in negotiations, and was confident that a resolution could be reached in even the most difficult circumstances.[9]

When Fleming arrived in Ann Arbor to interview for the job in 1967, he spent almost the entire evening with the regents discussing how he would handle student protests. Unlike some presidents, who preferred to shut down dissent with guns and billy clubs, Fleming told the regents that he saw the police and the National Guard as last resorts. This was the type of answer most of the regents were looking for. The regents hired Fleming because they thought he was best qualified to quiet student unrest without the use of force.[10]

Just a few months after Fleming left the University of Wisconsin, his successor took a harder line against student activists. Fleming left behind a growing antiwar movement that was becoming more confrontational. When students occupied another building on campus, police in riot gear stormed the building, some swinging night sticks at students' heads. As the tear gas evaporated, the bloody scene became clear.[11]

Fleming didn't think that he was going to escape these types of confrontational protests at UM. When Fleming took the job at Michigan, university presidents, in his words, "were falling like flies." He thought he had a 50 percent chance to survive as UM's president without getting fired. Despite his experience as a negotiator, there were too many things that were out of his control. Before he accepted the job at UM, he asked himself if he really wanted to be president anywhere. The answer was yes, but he took the job with much trepidation about the future.[12]

When Fleming took over the position at UM on January 1, 1968, the black campus movement that was making its mark on other college campuses was still small and fledgling in Ann Arbor. Fleming thought organizations like SDS would take up much of his time. He didn't know that his predecessors' resistance to reforms proposed by black students and professors had created an environment of discontent.[13]

Before Fleming arrived at UM, black students had yet to lead a protest, but they were proposing reform. In 1966, Richard Ross, a black student at UM, submitted a proposal for a black history course taught by a black faculty member. The chair of the history department, W. B. Wilcox, responded to Ross with a simple message: nobody in the history department was prepared to teach a course on black history, and there were no "qualified" black scholars that UM could hire. Ross returned with a virtual who's who list of established and up-and-coming black historians, including Vincent Harding and John Blassingame. Wilcox then offered another rationale for his resistance. Focusing too much on racial identity, Wilcox surmised, would undermine race relations. In Wilcox's eyes, the course would "emphasize . . . separateness at just the time when their assimilation is the crucial problem before the country." Ross wasn't

ready to organize a formal protest movement just yet. He created a petition drive to show widespread support across the campus for a black history course. In March 1968, Ross submitted the petition to Wilcox with 498 signatures. Wilcox again changed his position. Now he claimed to be sympathetic to black students' cause. He believed the history department needed a black history course but reminded students that finding a qualified person to teach it would be difficult. He asked the students to be patient.[14]

By 1968, it was difficult for black students to be patient because the black history course wasn't the only inclusion initiative that the Hatcher administration had failed to implement. The struggle for a black history course unfolded as UM continued to resist Walter Greene's proposed reforms. Black students watched as black faculty members fought, and largely failed, to implement Greene's policy suggestions.

In the mid-1960s, black students didn't have any strong allies in executive positions to fight for change. The two black officials involved in OAP represented the only full-time positions devoted to implementing racial inclusion. There wasn't a single African American who held a post as an executive administrator. Every dean was white. The president and all the vice presidents were white. And until 1967, all the regents were white. Despite UM's affirmative action admissions program, UM administrators marginalized black voices.[15]

Only one official committee on campus incorporated black voices to make recommendations concerning racial inclusion. Allan Smith, the vice president for academic affairs, created the University Steering Committee on the Development of Academic Opportunities in 1965. The committee chair, engineering professor Norman Scott, called the committee the university's "conscience." Even this committee was overwhelmingly white, but it included two of the earliest black professors in UM's tenure system, Ralph Gibson and Albert Wheeler. Gibson graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from UM in 1945. He decided to stay at Michigan for graduate school, earning a master's degree in 1947 and a PhD in 1959. After serving as an instructor in the Department of Pediatrics, he was hired as an assistant professor in 1963. Albert Wheeler also had a long history at UM. He earned his PhD in public health from UM in 1943, became a research assistant at the university the next year, and was hired as the university's first black tenure-track faculty member in 1953.[16]

In the years before Fleming arrived, Wheeler, in particular, used his position on the committee to pressure executive administrators to implement Greene's recommendations. He was especially interested in placing African Americans in administrative positions. In his mind, UM's policy decisions suffered from an absence of black perspectives. He pointed out that administra-

tors' confidence that they were doing everything they could to implement racial inclusion was only possible because they didn't consult blacks within the university community. As a starting point, Wheeler wanted the president to follow Greene's recommendations and create a civil rights office, with a director and staff directly responsible to the president. This person would develop and implement an affirmative action hiring program at the university. A black official should lead this office, Wheeler suggested, but not just any black official. "A warm, brown body" shouldn't be the only qualification, he explained. Wheeler was well aware that institutions practiced what he called "Administrative Nullification"—the practice of hiring and rewarding black officials who were easily intimidated and unwilling to critique the policies of their white supervisors. In an environment like Michigan's, where critical black voices faced retribution, Wheeler wanted black administrators with activist experience who wouldn't be intimidated.[17]

In the end, the steering committee didn't go as far as Wheeler would have liked. Still, the predominantly white committee developed a set of policy recommendations that pushed executive administrators in unprecedented directions. The committee's recommendations, which they sent to Vice President Smith, didn't include a civil rights office with a black leader, but the committee suggested that the university create a budget reserve designed to hire black faculty members and offer postdoctoral fellowships or instructor positions to help minority candidates gain the experience necessary to be competitive for tenure-track positions. The committee also offered affirmative action hiring recommendations, suggesting that departments should offer jobs to minority candidates over whites if their qualifications were equal. Finally, the committee developed an affirmative action plan that required departments to report the steps they would take to improve black representation. As part of this plan, departments needed to include numerical goals to increase black graduate enrollment, nonacademic staff, and faculty.[18]

Smith accepted some of the recommendations, but he was never willing to use the full power of the executive administration to influence hiring decisions within UM's schools, colleges, and departments. There were no consequences for any department that chose not to set up a reserve fund or create postdoctoral fellowship positions for black candidates. Smith also didn't provide incentives to encourage departments to pursue affirmative action policies. For example, he didn't offer to fund or partially fund any budget reserve or fellowship. By the summer of 1968, only the Medical School had set up reserve funds to hire black candidates. Not surprisingly, the university's student newspaper reported that affirmative action hiring initiatives were "sporadic and decentralized."[19]

Smith proved more open to centralized planning to advance racial equity in staff positions. In summer 1967, the personnel office hired a new black official, Clyde Briggs, to increase minority representation in nonacademic staff positions. In less than a year, Briggs had set up an administrative internship program, a fellowship program that provided experience in UM's health science laboratories, and a program that provided work experience as dental assistants. All these programs recruited students from HBCUs. Briggs was also responsible for the university's public relations efforts, educating minority communities about UM's affirmative action hiring plans. Finally, he set up training programs to make UM minority employees competitive for promotions. All these efforts led to greater minority representation in nonacademic staff positions. By April 1968, forty-three HBCU students had taken advantage of the internship and fellowship programs. Furthermore, Briggs's programs had brought hundreds of new minority employees to campus in nonacademic positions. Still, Briggs's position speaks to the areas where white administrators were willing to give black officials the power to make significant institutional changes. Most of these placements were in service positions. Only seven minority candidates were hired in professional and managerial categories. White officials were comfortable giving Briggs the power to transform hiring practices for low-level nonacademic staff positions, yet white leaders on campus were unwilling to give black officials the authority to transform administrative and faculty hiring.[20]

This was the environment that Fleming walked into in 1968. Black students were frustrated. Trying to work with administrators through petition drives and meetings just led to excuses and requests to wait a little longer. At the same time, they watched university administrators ignore most of Walter Greene's recommendations. They saw few new black faces in faculty and administrative positions. By April 1968, administrators' resistance to the inclusion initiatives proposed by black students and faculty members produced the kindling for protest that just awaited a spark. That spark came from a bullet in Memphis, Tennessee.

On April 4, 1968, just three months after Fleming took the helm at the university, a white supremacist killed Martin Luther King Jr. Within hours, cities across the country exploded in rebellion. In Washington, D.C., alone, twenty-one thousand people were arrested. UM administrators realized that King's assassination could spark campus protest. Even before UM's black student activists could organize a demonstration, administrators offered reforms to try to avoid disruptions. On April 8, William Haber, dean of LSA, wrote to Ross that the history department would conduct a "vigorous and affirmative

search for a Negro scholar" and create a new lecture series on black culture. Haber's efforts didn't have the intended effect.[21]

At 9 a.m. on April 11, the phone rang at the president's campus home. Fleming learned that more than one hundred black students were occupying the Administration Building. The students, who had arrived two hours earlier, carried all the necessary tools for a building occupation: blankets, food, and pillows. Within thirty minutes, the students had chained the doors of the building shut and posted a list of demands. They then prepared to watch King's funeral on television.[22]

The students' demands were short but ambitious. They demanded that the university create a Martin Luther King scholarship program and a faculty chair in King's name. The students called for "University activity in the community" and the implementation of Walter Greene's recommendations. Finally, the students wanted the athletic office to appoint blacks to the athletic staff and replace a black admissions official who had recently resigned.[23]

Outside the building, staff and students tried to figure out what was going on. It was their first encounter with black campus protest in the 1960s. White employees gathered in the parking lot and waited for instructions. White students who were sympathetic to the protest quickly gathered on the Administration Building's steps. Some made signs—"Support Our Black Brothers" and "Ann Arbor—All American City for All." Others collected money to buy lunch for the protesters. Some simply sat on the steps to show their support.[24]

Around noon, after the television coverage of King's funeral had ended, Fleming arrived in front of the chained doors. The discussion was quick, and the students agreed to leave in exchange for a meeting with the president the following Monday. Just like that, the occupation was over. Five hours. No arrests. It lacked the drama of the well-covered black campus protests of 1968, and yet the brief occupation led to important reforms. In the months that followed, the university created the Martin Luther King Memorial Scholarship Fund, hired more black instructors, appointed a new assistant director of admissions, hired two black assistant coaches, and started plans to form a closer relationship with Ann Arbor's black community. UM also created a black studies major, something that hadn't been included in the demands. The concessions represented the first major victory of the black campus movement at UM.[25]

Fleming didn't want to be known as the president who could settle building takeovers quickly; he wanted to set up an environment that would prevent disruptions altogether. He wanted activists to work with bureaucrats for a change, rather than protest. This was the goal of his co-optation strategy: limit

campus disruptions and move dissent into the institutional bureaucracy, where campus leaders could exercise as much control over the implementation of racial inclusion as possible.[26]

Black students' lack of faith in campus administrators represented an early obstacle for Fleming. The Hatcher administration had marginalized black voices, leaving students to believe that they had to protest in order to make their voices heard. Thus, making students feel like their voices mattered to administrators represented the first step in co-opting dissent. In the aftermath of the lock-in, campus leaders began criticizing past methods of dealing with black students' proposals. Leaders painted Wilcox, the chair of the history department, as the villain of the building lock-in and a symbol of bad management. Administrators believed that Wilcox's resistance to a black history course had caused the frustration that led black students to take over the Administration Building. As one regent told Fleming, Ross's moderate approach, which he called the "polite and courteous 'please'" of meetings and petitions, was the type of dissent that the administration needed to encourage. The way to inspire black student activists to work within administrative channels was to reward activists who politely asked for reforms by complying with any request that administrators felt was reasonable. Wilcox's resistance to Ross's moderate tactics was "absurd," the regent told Fleming.[27]

Fleming tried to signal to black student activists that the administration valued their voices by defending the students involved in the lock-in, calling their demands "perfectly legitimate." He also decided not to punish the students involved in the protest. "We've had this terrible, terrible tragedy," Fleming said of King's assassination. "You can't expect the normal rules to apply." He also testified in front of the U.S. House of Representatives Special Subcommittee on Education, justifying black students' protests as a response to the "dreadful inequities which continue to exist." In his testimony, he criticized politicians who wanted to take federal financial aid away from individual students who participated in campus demonstrations. In defending black activists in public, he legitimized the claims and grievances of black students.[28]

Fleming's endorsement of black student activists infuriated some alumni and put Fleming on the FBI's radar. Alumni filled Fleming's mailbox with angry letters that criticized his defense of black student protesters and his refusal to use law enforcement or disciplinary codes to punish them. The FBI also noticed Fleming's response to activism. COINTELPRO, an FBI domestic counterintelligence program that J. Edgar Hoover started in 1956 to challenge the Communist Party USA, found its way onto the University of Michigan's campus in the 1960s as the program expanded to target the New Left and Black Power groups. Just two months after the Administration Building lock-in, a

COINTELPRO report raised concerns that a "new, weak President" who was "adverse to having any 'show-down' with agitators" now ran the University of Michigan. Some of the critical letters that Fleming received likely came from the FBI. The bureau believed that UM was susceptible to public outcry because the university depended on alumni donations. Part of the FBI's counterintelligence strategy included sending letters to UM administrators and board members, complaining that university leaders weren't doing enough to suppress campus protests.[29]

Fleming also tried to signal to students that inclusion was a priority by devoting his own time and effort to securing scholarship money. Inclusion was rarely on the radar of President Hatcher after he endorsed OAP in 1963. The day-to-functions, long-term planning, and publicity all fell to the black officials running the program. Fleming, in contrast, made more of an effort to act on behalf of inclusion. He proved especially important in winning donations from wealthy donors to support the Martin Luther King Memorial Fund. The fund represented one of black students' most important demands. Activists wanted to increase the number of black students on campus, but they knew that any recruiting effort would require more money. The months following the lock-in brought additional urgency to the King fund. Black student applications to OAP rose, but OAP's financial aid funding didn't immediately increase in the spring and summer of 1968. OAP could have accepted an additional one hundred students for fall 1968 if it had had the money.[30]

Fleming understood the importance of the MLK fund—especially since he didn't want to redistribute significant resources from the university's general fund to OAP—and knew that the program couldn't rely solely on small individual donations. The state's largest corporations would have to support the scholarship program, he concluded. So Fleming started courting the state's automakers. The ways in which Fleming solicited these funds helped reinforce the relationship between affirmative action admissions and federal affirmative action hiring policies that put pressure on companies to expand their minority workforce. Writing to the vice president of public relations at General Motors, Fleming suggested that the University of Michigan and the automaker "share a common dilemma—access to an adequate pool of trained leadership among non-white and disadvantaged." Fleming emphasized the benefits General Motors would receive if UM graduated more black students. General Motors and other manufacturers had made great strides in expanding opportunities for the "lesser skilled," according to Fleming, but "trained and talented black people for managerial and supervisory positions are scarce." UM could expand that pool of prospective black managers and supervisors for GM if the corporation helped fund more scholarships at the university.

The argument worked. GM and Ford made donations to expand funding for black students.[31]

Fleming's actions were part of a larger strategy to wrestle control of inclusion from protesters. He made visible efforts to win the faith of black student activists by showing that his administration was committed to institutional change. He hoped that faith would push black students to abandon confrontational protests and work within the university's bureaucracy to create reforms. The bureaucracy was a place where Fleming and other campus leaders felt they could exercise significant power and influence over the future of inclusion. More protest, on the other hand, could lead to concessions that administrators felt were unviable and violated the university's priorities.

If the goal was to get students to work within the university's bureaucracy for change, Fleming needed to give them bureaucrats to work with. Fleming and his fellow administrators created an unprecedented number of full-time positions devoted exclusively to developing and implementing new racial inclusion practices. All these new positions marked the rise of an inclusion bureaucracy—a new set of positions devoted to working with black student activists, listening to their concerns, and proposing institutional reforms. The bureaucracy was set up to move dissent into institutional channels that administrators felt they could control. It was also set up to anticipate dissent and create initiatives that could stymie activism before it started.

Fleming created an assistant to the president position, filled by a new black administrator, to oversee this inclusion bureaucracy and help manage black student dissent. He hired William Cash, a black UM alumnus, who joined the University of Michigan as a professor of education in 1968. Fleming's plan was to bring all the staff involved in inclusion initiatives together in a single committee called the Human Relations Committee (HRC). Cash, as the chair, would provide oversight and coordination of all initiatives.[32]

The HRC brought together inclusion officials around the university hired before and after the 1968 lock-in. LSA dean William Haber hired two black officials after the Administration Building lock-in. Like Fleming, Haber believed that if the university didn't address black students' concerns quickly, administrators could expect more protests. J. Frank Yates became assistant to the dean to develop new programs that would prevent further unrest. Yates was still a graduate student in the psychology department when he took the position. Now, while working on his doctorate, he was tasked with developing new inclusion initiatives in UM's largest college. Haber didn't stop there. He also appointed Nellie Varner, a black political science professor, as special assistant to the dean, to develop new courses on "Negro affairs" across LSA.

Haber saw the calls for black history as just the first step in a larger movement for curricular reform. He wanted Varner to create new courses before black students began demanding change.[33]

George Goodman rounded out the new black officials hired to fulfill inclusion initiatives. Goodman's position represented one of black student activists' demands during the 1968 lock-in. The only black admissions official had left, and the students wanted the position filled immediately. What students didn't know was that they almost prevented Goodman's interview. Goodman arrived for his interview on the day of the lock-in. When he walked up to the Administration Building, he found a group of black students guarding chained doors. "I'm here for an interview," Goodman told the students. "I understand there is a position open and I'm trying to get hired." The students removed the chains, let him enter, and immediately locked the door again. In doing so, the students fulfilled one of their demands without knowing it.[34]

A few officials already working at the university also joined the Human Relations Committee. John Chavis and Clyde Briggs, two black officials hired in previous years to lead affirmative action initiatives, also served. Joining them were white officials, such as John Feldkamp, director of housing, and William Haber, who had stepped down from his position as dean not long after the lock-in to lead the university's efforts to hire more black faculty members.[35]

Showing what happens when black officials are allowed to weigh in on policy decisions, the committee immediately challenged long-held assumptions. Chief among them was that improving race relations hinged on downplaying racial difference. The committee went to work crafting innovations that used the university's resources to embrace and promote black cultural identity. White executive leaders accommodated these ideas within limits as campus leaders tried to keep tight control of the inclusion bureaucracy.

HRC officials were most successful in reforming UM's curriculum. Since 1966, black student activists had been pushing for a curriculum that addressed black students' needs. It's not a surprise, then, that curricular reform was high on the committee's priorities. The earliest initiative, though, came from a professor outside the committee. Otto Graff, a professor in the German department and director of the Honors College, hired Harold Cruse to teach a new course: The American Cross Cultural Phenomenon in Black and White: Interpretations and Reevaluations. Cruse was one of America's most famous black intellectuals, as he had just published the highly touted *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. Wilcox, the chair of the history department, saw an opportunity. He still hadn't hired a scholar to teach a black history course. Cruse was only supposed to be at UM for one semester in the Honors College, but Wilcox

convinced Cruse to stay for another semester to teach a black history course. Cruse ended up staying at the University of Michigan for almost twenty years.[36]

The HRC worked to build on Cruse's position by creating new classes on the black experience. Nellie Varner led this effort. Varner's actions could have led to a disconnected web of courses in the college's various departments, but Varner helped turn the dean's vision for new courses on "Negro affairs" into the University of Michigan's first black studies degree program. The process took a year, but in spring 1969 the program began to take shape. It included three introductory courses, a senior seminar, and five interdisciplinary courses that would all be requirements for the program. The foundational introductory course was the class on black history that Ross and his supporters had been calling for since 1966. In April, the faculty of LSA voted without any recorded dissent to approve the University of Michigan's first black studies major.[37]

By that time, black students had become better organized and began to shape the future of black studies. In 1969, undergraduate students formed the Black Student Union (BSU). From the start, Ron Harris led the organization. The BSU wanted to institutionalize the university's commitment to research on issues relevant to black people by creating a center to oversee black studies. The center, according to the BSU, would help black students develop racial pride and better understanding of black history and culture. Students' proposal for the center also offered a new vision of the university's responsibilities to black communities outside the university. UM didn't simply have an obligation to admit "disadvantaged" black students and move them into the professional class. The university needed to train people who could return with the technical skills to help black communities. Still, the students argued, the "problems of the community are too critical for" the University of Michigan "to rest solely on the development of formally educated black citizens" who would use their skills to help black communities. The center was supposed to directly aid black communities through "technical assistance and the short-term transmission of relevant and useful information."[38]

Members of the new inclusion bureaucracy worked to make black students' proposal a reality. J. Frank Yates, a member of the Human Relations Committee, developed the formal proposal for the center. Yates proved to be a strong supporter of black student activists during his career and sympathetic to the ways black students framed their grievances and demands. His efforts to rewrite the proposal, though, show that uneven power relationships put black officials in difficult positions. To pitch the center to white faculty and administrators, Yates removed the psychological language and need for racial pride that filled the original proposal. He found black students' goal to push the university to use its resources to serve black communities in the state easier to

pitch to white administrators. Yates included strong statements about the university's duty to "re-orient itself toward the black community and racial issues . . . through various auxiliary functions." To do this, Yates played on administrators' fears of another Detroit Rebellion, promoting the center as an intellectual hub that would help prevent future urban uprisings. As mentioned before, the 1967 rebellion made black protest more threatening and helped motivate administrators to make preemptive reforms. At the same time, the rebellion made studying the problems that black communities faced all the more pressing to UM administrators and faculty members. Yates's proposal gained Fleming's support. The president approved a committee of faculty, administrators, students, and community leaders to create plans for the new center.[39]

Yates's influence reveals how co-optation could work subtly, seemingly outside the hands of white administrators. Black officials rarely enjoyed the autonomy and independent funding necessary to create programs on their own; instead, they had to appeal to white supervisors for financial support and policy approvals. It's one of the reasons campus leaders felt they could control the inclusion bureaucracy. It's also the reason black officials often felt that they had to make difficult choices between policy victories and the framing that activists preferred. To win important reforms, black officials reframed some of black students' language in ways that would appeal to white administrators and faculty. The consequence, of course, was that reframing language often meant muting the problems black students wanted to emphasize. Before proposals reached the hands of white administrators, then, the process of co-optation had often already begun.

During the 1968–69 academic year, the inclusion bureaucracy was working as Fleming had envisioned it. Black students were working within institutional channels, and proposals for institutional change had replaced building takeovers. Accommodating demands, however, became more problematic when black students and inclusion bureaucrats began challenging executive administrators' vision of a model multiracial community.

"My own feeling is," Fleming wrote in November 1968, "that we were doing something good, we deliberately desegregated dormitories. Perhaps this was in error, and doubtless we were too insensitive to the wishes of the black students." Fleming wrote this just after meeting with a group of black campus activists calling themselves "Pro-Black Students," led by Ron Thompson. The students complained about UM's color-blind housing policies. According to the group, the tension between black and white students assigned to live together resulted in students finding ways to change rooms in order to live with

members of their own racial group by the end of the semester—even though university policy prohibited this practice. Allowing black students to room together from the beginning of the academic year, Thompson told Fleming, would help them avoid the uncomfortable feelings that accompanied rooming with a white student.[40]

Demands like these tested Fleming's managerial strategy. Listening to black voices and confirming that their critiques were legitimate represented vital tools in preventing black activism, he thought. But allowing black students to choose to live separately challenged all his assumptions about race relations. Fleming, like campus leaders in previous decades, wanted to set up a model multiracial community at UM. He wanted to use the campus to address white prejudice and improve the interactions between white and black students. One of the basic tenets of post–World War II racial liberalism still carried great weight among white administrators when they thought about how to create this model community. Recall that racial liberalism suggested that universalism and interracial contact were key to creating a new world without racism. In the late 1960s, administrators began to question universalism, slowly embracing the idea that celebrating cultural difference was compatible with the model community. They were unwilling, though, to reconsider the idea that interracial contact offered the key to improve race relations. Any effort to create spaces for black students to socialize or live together was met with skepticism or, more often, outright resistance.

The Detroit Rebellion of 1967 only made the model community more pressing to UM administrators. It also heightened their concern about the consequences of segregation. The Kerner Report, the government study commissioned to diagnose the causes of urban uprisings in the 1960s, reinforced Fleming's commitment to interracial contact. The report's most famous line resonated with Fleming. The report's authors claimed that America was becoming "two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." To Fleming, this meant that racial separatism was at the heart of America's race problems. He later used the quote when he testified on student unrest in front of the U.S. House of Representatives Special Subcommittee on Education, adding, "We are losing our last real chance for a society in which we can be one people." As the future of race relations seemed to be at stake, administrators saw demands for racially exclusive spaces as counterproductive to the model community.[41]

Still, Fleming worried about simply rejecting Ron Thompson's proposal. When Fleming responded to Thompson by writing that "doubtless we were too insensitive to the wishes of the Black students," he employed a common tactic in his arsenal by suggesting that black students' concerns were legiti-

mate. Then he delegated the job of creating an alternative housing reform measure to the vice president of student affairs, Barbara Newell, who then delegated the job to John Feldkamp, the university's twenty-nine-year-old white director of university housing and HRC member.[42]

The problem with accommodating black students' demands was that Feldkamp shared Fleming's commitment to improving race relations and believed that interracial contact was vital to the model community. Feldkamp had been on the front lines of the fight to implement racial integration policies at UM. Until 1959, housing applications gave students the option of living with members of their own racial group. When the housing office took questions of racial preference off applications, Feldkamp and other housing officials had to defend the policies of integration against white parents' objections. He worried that returning to old policies, which allowed students to choose roommates based on race, would "accommodate Black identity desire but would also cater to elements of the White community who are highly prejudiced to other races."[43]

Still, by the end of 1968, Feldkamp understood that the practice of assigning students to dorm rooms without regard to race was not playing out the way he had hoped. Racial tension continued, and black students were clearly suffering. As he evaluated black activists' housing proposal, alternatives to color-blind housing assignments were already available at a few other universities. Cornell University, for example, created separate residence halls for black men and women who chose to live there voluntarily. Feldkamp, though, was uncomfortable with solutions that gave black students their own living spaces. He went to work trying to craft a living space that preserved interracial contact while also emphasizing the value of racial identity. Feldkamp suggested that the housing division could designate a specific building with a "pro-Black, Black, or Afro-American identity." Black students could choose to live there on a voluntary basis, but to continue facilitating interracial interaction, white students who were "sincerely interested in Blacks" could also live in the building.[44]

Even after Feldkamp reframed the proposal to fit with white administrators' interest in improving race relations, the plan never came to fruition. Feldkamp told black activists that the plan wasn't feasible for the next school year, as the planning process for housing was already underway. He also warned them of the contentious political process that came with trying to implement such a plan. It's unclear who ultimately squashed Feldkamp's proposal, but it disappeared from the housing office's discussions in 1968. The housing office wouldn't face another proposal for black living units until 1972.[45]

While the proposal never came to fruition, Fleming began to emphasize the university's commitment to celebrating black identity. Fleming had already

embraced proposals, like black studies, which suggested the university was slowly rejecting the ideal of assimilation. But he had yet to articulate publicly how black culture was now part of his vision of a model multiracial community. On the one-year anniversary of Martin Luther King's assassination, Fleming laid out his new vision of racial inclusion in a public speech. "If I understand what my white eyes tell me," he explained to the audience, "there is no necessary conflict between Black pride, Black consciousness, Black dignity, Black power, and an integrated society." Then, in what could have come out of the mouth of any of UM's black student activists, he said, "The Black man, like the white man, needs pride, dignity, and confidence. Having been nurtured for so long and under so many circumstances in a culture which deprives him of these qualities, is it to be expected that he can participate in an integrated society on an equal basis?"[46]

Fleming's message resembled how administrators had seen the value of international students for decades. Seeing nationalism as a major problem that led to world wars, UM officials had argued that promoting and appreciating other countries' cultures would improve international relations. Now Fleming saw cultural appreciation as a tool to solve racial tension on campus. Changes unfolding at the national and local levels likely helped him apply this approach to relations between white and black students. In the late 1960s, black cultural expression found a new place in mainstream popular culture, and these changes were visible in Ann Arbor. Blues festivals, black poetry readings, and black art festivals became popular in the city. African Americans weren't the only ones attending these events. Black culture was suddenly becoming cool among white students—something to be consumed. It would have been unlikely for Fleming to see the expression of black identity as a pathway to better race relations if he didn't see white students' growing interest in and respect for black culture.[47]

The end goal for Fleming, though, was always for students to see their common humanity. Fleming hoped that even when the university celebrated cultural differences, race would become "accidental differences," and people of all races would see each other as "members of a human brotherhood." This was Fleming's effort to reconcile universalism and the celebration of racial identity. To see their common humanness, students needed to meet each other on equal cultural footing, the argument went. Respect for another's culture was the pathway to seeing a common human bond.[48]

Fleming's speech and the rejection of the housing policy showed how administrators kept control over the priorities of inclusion. Although administrators modified racial liberalism, they never reconsidered the purpose of the model multiracial community. Black activists argued that the merits of inclusion initiatives shouldn't be judged on whether they improved how white and

black students interacted; they should be judged on whether they improved African Americans' experience on campus. In the hierarchy of institutional priorities, though, improving race relations always trumped addressing black students' social alienation on campus. These goals were not always mutually exclusive, but they weren't always mutually reinforcing, either. The problem for black students who called for racially exclusive space on campus was that the poor racial climate for black students had never been enough to justify an inclusion program. Any program that black students proposed would have to also explain how white students would benefit. Conversely, programs designed to improve race relations never faced the burden of showing how they would address black students' social alienation.

Perhaps most frustrating to black activists, UM administrators still made little progress in implementing Walter Greene's recommendations—one of the demands of the 1968 lock-in. Greene had focused on initiatives that increased black student and faculty representation on campus. The HRC tried to develop policies that advanced Greene's policy suggestions, but the committee once again ran into obstacles, as executive administrators exercised control over the outcomes of the committee's work.

Increasing the number of black students at UM was at the top of the committee's agenda. The MLK fund would help support more students whom the admissions office deemed "qualified," but that wouldn't be enough to make significant gains, committee members thought. Part of the problem was that George Goodman worked within a difficult set of circumstances. UM provided only enough resources for one OAP recruiter. Goodman, alone, had to travel the state, recruit students, and teach them how to identify themselves on the admissions application.[49] William Cash and his fellow committee members also believed that OAP admissions requirements were too strict. There were many black applicants, they thought, who could graduate from UM but weren't given a chance because of OAP's admissions criteria.[50]

Cash wanted a new admissions program—what he called a "high-risk" program—to expand OAP. To do that, the committee needed to tackle the problem of attrition. OAP students left UM before graduating at twice the rate of non-OAP students. The program's attrition rates made it difficult, at least in the eyes of white administrators, to justify significantly expanding OAP. When Cash's committee addressed the issue, the popular assumption on campus was still that students left UM before graduating because they were academically underprepared. Consequently, all the early research conducted at UM tried to find better ways to predict which black students could handle the academic demands of the university. Researchers examined students' SAT scores, high

school GPAs, high school class standing, and curricular choices once on UM's campus, but they were stumped. The tools officials had available to predict black OAP students' academic performance at Michigan offered little value in predicting whether they would graduate. In some cases, the lower students scored on traditional admissions tools, the better they performed. None of this evidence, though, suggested to administrators and researchers that factors other than academic preparation could explain attrition.[51]

The HRC disrupted white social scientists' control over knowledge about black students and gave black officials a voice in interpreting black student attrition rates. J. Frank Yates led the way. White officials who embraced the narrative of racial innocence rarely looked for deficiencies in UM's practices. Black officials, in contrast, often assumed that the institution bore some responsibility for the problems black students faced. Yates believed that relying on the admissions office to find the "right" students in order to reduce attrition rates ignored the things that the university could do on campus to improve retention. Rather than viewing attrition rates as an admissions problem, Yates blamed OAP attrition on the university's poor supportive services programs. According to Yates, university administrators failed in their duties to create an environment that helped black students succeed. For example, throughout the first six years of OAP, only one counselor was assigned to provide services for all the black students in the program. If the university was committed to increasing black enrollment and graduation rates, Yates suggested, it would need to shift its attention from better prediction tools to better academic support services.[52]

Yates also called attention to the role of the racial climate in attrition. Until Yates took his management position in 1969, no UM official had recognized that black students' social experience on campus could help explain their higher attrition rates. Affirmative action admissions, academic support services, and programs that affected black students' social lives were all intimately connected in Yates's eyes. Evaluations of black students' performance, he argued, overlooked the "psychological problems" black students faced in adjusting "to the University atmosphere." The experience of living as a black student in an overwhelmingly white space was inherently problematic and created intense feeling of alienation, he argued. The social alienation that black students faced at a predominantly white institution, then, needed to be addressed if the university wanted to lower OAP attrition rates. This represented the first time an official at UM had claimed that the university's racial climate could help explain black student attrition rates.[53]

In 1969, Yates proposed the Freshman Year of Studies program, which would seek to address these issues through counseling and study sections. An

important part of the program identified courses that OAP students struggled with the most during their first year on campus. These included introductory courses in English, chemistry, botany, physics, zoology, and mathematics. The program would require OAP students to sign up for an additional section attached to these courses, which would offer help in preparing for exams and assignments. The second piece of the program required more black counselors to help black students deal with issues of social alienation they experienced at the University of Michigan.[54]

The "high-risk" admissions program attracted the support of the new LSA dean, William Hays. "I think it's important that we now begin to recruit a larger number of Black students, and that . . . almost certainly means that we should begin to explore some relative relaxation in admissions standards," Hays wrote. The dean liked the program because it addressed his own concerns that a more aggressive affirmative action program would lead to higher attrition rates. The admissions program could only work, he surmised, if the university implemented an equally aggressive support program.[55]

Once Yates proposed the program, he learned a lesson that many black administrators would learn throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s: grand programmatic visions were difficult to pursue with little power and money. Assistant to the dean might sound like an important position, but it was a position created to provide recommendations for new programs. Yates had no power over personnel or money to pursue programs on his own. Hays supported the project but didn't fund it. Instead, Hays wrote to President Fleming to ask for $15,000 to $20,000 to implement the program. Fleming wrote back that he had "committed my own free funds rather heavily in the direction of disadvantaged students, and I'm not sure I can justify using more of them for this one purpose." In 1969, it seemed that Yates's initiative was dead.[56]

The results from the University of Michigan's affirmative action hiring policies for faculty represented another disappointing inclusion initiative for black students. During the 1968–69 academic year, 40 of 2,356 (1.7 percent) UM faculty members were black, and 74 of 4,168 (1.7 percent) full-time professional staff were black. In contrast, African Americans made up 40 percent of UM's service workforce. Black students who protested in 1968 called on administrators to implement Greene's recommendations to increase black faculty and administrators. The initiatives UM leaders introduced in the late 1960s didn't suggest that those numbers would improve anytime soon.[57]

In the aftermath of the 1968 lock-in, Allan Smith, vice president for academic affairs, developed the university's first official affirmative action plan. Smith informed units that "preference will be given to minority group applicants

for employment, with special cognizance being given for potential growth" as long as "minimum qualifications are met." Smith also forced units to create affirmative action hiring goals and explain the "positive compensatory action" that the university was taking to increase black representation. Smith's plan, though, didn't introduce a system of accountability. It was especially difficult to hold units accountable when the university kept no official records of the racial background of individual employees.[58]

Again, William Cash proved important in offering policy solutions. For years, UM leaders were uncomfortable with recording an individual's racial background. But by the late 1960s, HEW began demanding more accurate data on race and ethnicity from universities and colleges. During the 1969–70 academic year, HEW postponed its compliance reporting requirements to allow universities to improve their racial collection techniques. Cash took advantage of this environment to convince campus leaders to change the way the university recorded racial identity. He introduced a new system of counting employees that no longer hinged on the visual counts of departments. Employees were now asked to provide their racial identity for record-keeping purposes. The process was voluntary, as employees had the option not to identify themselves. Nevertheless, Cash believed this system was much more reliable than asking supervisors to look at each employee and report their racial identity.[59]

If Cash hoped that better reporting would lead to better accountability, he would be sorely disappointed. The university's 1969 Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action Plan was essentially an education program. Cash was tasked with making sure the people who did the hiring knew how to recruit and interview minority candidates. The plan also included a program to analyze data "for effectiveness and for areas of improvement." Yet there was no plan to build on Greene's intervention and continually update affirmative action hiring goals. More importantly, there was no plan to hold anyone accountable for not meeting goals. According to the plan, Cash would conduct periodic audits of a unit's affirmative action program in order to offer "counsel and assistance regarding equal employment opportunity matters." There were no consequences for refusing to take affirmative action seriously.[60]

Cash found himself in a common position for a black official. Essentially, he served as an educator to white people on campus. He documented problems and recommended new policies, but this black official assigned to oversee affirmative action hiring had no power to hold anyone accountable.

When HEW officials arrived for a compliance review in 1969, government officials found that the university's affirmative action hiring program was inadequate. The university clearly wasn't measuring progress against any goals. As part of the review, UM agreed to start setting firm hiring goals, regularly

reporting its hiring decisions, and measuring equal opportunity progress against its affirmative action goals. Still, it would take more black student activism for university leaders to translate this agreement into policy.[61]

By the beginning of the fall 1969 semester, it seemed like Fleming's co-optation techniques were working the way he had envisioned. Even though many of black activists' demands remained unresolved, Fleming could still show activists concrete changes. The MLK fund and Goodman's recruiting efforts raised black enrollment to 1,000 students—709 undergraduates and 291 graduate students—for the first time in UM's history. A black studies program was already underway, even though the black studies center was moving slowly through administrative channels.[62] New offices and positions, filled mostly with black officials, were there to listen to black students' concerns and create policy proposals—even if those proposals didn't always lead to concrete initiatives. Importantly, all the initiatives in place didn't reroute significant resources away from programs that Fleming considered vital to the university's quality. The true measure of the effectiveness of co-optation, though, was the lack of black campus protest.[63]

During the 1968–69 academic year, Fleming watched black students at UM work within the inclusion bureaucracy for change while hundreds of protests for racial justice enveloped college campuses. Historian Ibram X. Kendi has called the 1968–69 academic year the "apex year the movement" for a reason. It was a year when demands for inclusion eclipsed antiwar demonstrations on college campuses. One of the most significant began in November 1968. Black students at San Francisco State University (SFSU) led the longest demonstration in the black campus movement's history, lasting five months. S. I. Hayakawa, SFSU's president, turned the campus into a police state. Hundreds of protesters were jailed, including 450 on a single day. Others were beaten, carried off with their clothes covered in blood. At Cornell University, black student protesters took over a campus building, demanding, among other things, a campus investigation into recent racist incidents on campus. After the negotiations ended, cameras flashed as the students walked out of Straight Hall armed with guns. At Columbia University, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and Student Afro-American Society (SAS) protesters took over five buildings on campus, protesting a gymnasium that would take away important public space for the black community. Over 720 students were arrested, many of them beaten and dragged out of buildings.[64]

Some of the most violent police reactions to protests unfolded at HBCUs. At North Carolina A&T University, campus activists joined with local high school activists protesting a school board decision. As police arrived on campus,

Willie Grimes, a North Carolina A&T student who wasn't involved in the protest, was killed on campus while walking to a restaurant. The campus exploded. Students exchanged gun fire with law enforcement officials. The National Guard arrived with a tank and air support, which dropped tear gas from the sky onto students in a dormitory.[65]

While black student activists at UM were working for change within the university's bureaucracy during the 1968–69 academic year, other groups on campus showed Fleming what could happen when his co-optation techniques failed. SDS frightened Fleming. In response, he tried to use some of the same co-optation techniques to tame the organization. He accommodated as much protest as possible to avoid police confrontations and spoke out against the Vietnam War, but SDS continued to protest.[66]

In May 1969, Fleming contacted a local attorney for advice. He was interested in potentially suing the campus chapter of SDS, placing a financial burden on the organization that might lead to its demise. He even considered suing the parents of SDS students involved in property damage.[67] He was so frightened about contact between the police and SDS that he also wanted advice on the measures he could take to avoid violence. In case he did have to call the police, would officers be willing to accompany Fleming into an occupied building unarmed, Fleming asked? No, the lawyer answered. Could he ask police officers to retreat if they experienced forceful resistance from students, Fleming inquired? Probably not, the lawyer answered. "Retreat is much more difficult once open defiance occurs." The attorney advised that Fleming stood the best chance of avoiding confrontation if campus leaders worked with the police and carefully selected which officers entered the building.[68]

A month after Fleming asked the lawyer for advice, he watched as his nightmare became a reality. The confrontation between law enforcement and students, along with members of the Ann Arbor community, began on June 16, 1969, when a police officer pulled over a motorcyclist performing stunts on South University Avenue, which runs through the main campus. A large crowd gathered, threatening the officer. When the officer retreated, the crowd took over the street and threw a party. The next day, local activists and students tried to barricade South University Avenue and create a "people's party." When a police officer tried to remove the barricade, a brick or a bottle flew at the police car. The crowd grew, and police with riot gear arrived on South University Avenue. When law enforcement officials asked the crowd to disperse, more bottles flew at police.[69]

On the second day, Sheriff Doug Harvey arrived. Harvey was well known among campus administrators. "He was just like the sheriffs that were depicted in parts of the South," one administrator remembered. "He'd shoot students

in a minute if you gave him the chance." Campus leaders knew that Harvey had introduced police dogs to control crowds and was known to walk around with a two-by-four during demonstrations. When Harvey arrived, he and his deputies started throwing tear gas. Law enforcement officers in riot gear chased people through campus. Students banged on Fleming's door, just steps from South University Avenue, trying to escape Harvey's forces.[70]

Fleming joined with city officials the next day to try to avoid another violent confrontation between demonstrators and police. The city and UM organized a rock concert on campus next to the Administration Building. Thousands attended the concert, while police in riot gear and an armored car mounted with a machine gun stood on South University Avenue. The concert proved successful in avoiding further conflict. Still, the incident proved a reminder to Fleming of what could happen when police met demonstrators. The violence stayed with Fleming and informed his future decisions regarding how to manage protest.[71]

When the fall semester began, Fleming's battle with SDS resumed. The organization had been leading a fight for a student-run bookstore on campus for several years. Fleming and the regents refused to meet all the organization's demands. On September 25, SDS led about one hundred students into the LSA building and refused to leave. The building takeover tested Fleming's fear of the police. He used the knowledge he had gained from the attorney over the summer and tried to control the police intervention as much as possible. When he finally felt that the Ann Arbor police wouldn't instigate violence, he allowed them to enter the building and arrest the students. Fleming watched from the roof of the Administration Building at 4 a.m. as a bus carried police officers to the LSA building. The students were arrested peacefully.[72]

When black students prepared for their own demonstration a few months later, Fleming's fear of campus violence was the greatest of his career. Fleming saw what could happen when he couldn't control law enforcement. Fleming's experience with SDS would hang over Fleming's response to black student activism during the 1969–70 academic year.

By fall 1969, the slow pace of change put stress on Fleming's managerial tactics to co-opt black campus activism. Fleming's techniques depended on black activists' faith that administrators were working on their behalf—faith that activists could win institutional change by working within the bureaucracy. By winter 1970, that faith had disappeared.

In January 1970, black activists from organizations across campus joined together in a mass meeting to craft a list of demands to present to the regents during their next meeting. Members of the BSU, the Black Law Students

Association, the Association of Black Social Work Students, and students from other departments without official organizations were present.[73] Fleming invited black activists to his home for dinner to discuss their concerns. It was one of Fleming's classic moves. He would listen to black student activists and show his sympathy with their concerns, hoping to show them that working for change within bureaucratic channels was still viable. It didn't work out that way. By the time they arrived, the student activists were calling themselves the Black Action Movement (BAM). BAM members didn't sit down for dinner. They knocked on Fleming's door and then read their demands in his front yard. The students' first demand created the most controversy. They insisted that black students represent 10 percent of the student body by the 1973–74 academic year. In the short term, BAM understood that much of the recruiting and admissions process was already complete for the following year. So they demanded that the incoming class in fall 1971 include 450 black first-year students, 150 undergraduate transfers, and 300 black graduate students. To fund this growth, the students insisted that the university increase financial aid for minority students. The students also believed that any new admissions program would have to be coupled with a robust supportive services program. They wanted the university to implement J. Frank Yates's Freshman Year of Studies proposal, which Fleming refused to fund in 1969. Black faculty hiring, students also demanded, must become a priority. Other demands focused on strengthening the connection between the university and the local black community. They wanted a black student center in a location that would link the university to Ann Arbor's black neighborhoods. They also wanted to ensure that African Americans in Ann Arbor would have a voice in the Center for Afro-American Studies, which was under development. Furthermore, the students demanded that all university administrators, faculty, and staff stop using the term "Negro" and begin using "Black" instead. Finally, the students called for the university to admit fifty Chicano students by the fall semester. This demand revealed an alliance black student activists had formed with Chicanos for Michigan, a small organization of seven UM Chicano students.[74]

The demands showed that students were learning from Fleming's methods. "We do not expect the university to procrastinate and sub-committee these demands," the document read. "They are for immediate and positive action." Black student activists saw committees as a management tool that administrators used to stall and eventually reject demands. Black student activists also recognized that abstract demands gave too much power to administrators to craft inclusion policies, which rarely fulfilled activists' goals. To address this issue, black students included a list of policies that could be implemented immediately. For example, rather than simply demanding that black students

comprise 10 percent of the student body, they laid out a plan to increase black representation. The students asked for seven full-time graduate recruiters and nine new undergraduate recruiters. Understanding that OAP's exclusive focus on in-state students would hamper their 10 percent demand, they asked for an out-of-state recruiter to build networks in "Black population centers." The recruiter would also have the money to provide scholarships for out-of-state black students. Students' financial aid policy recommendations were even more specific. They suggested new ways to create more accurate estimates of parents' expected financial contribution; proposed a board composed of faculty, students, and administrators so that students' could contest their financial aid package; called for tuition waivers for all in-state black students admitted through special programs; demanded that administrators renew solicitations from businesses for donations to the Martin Luther King fund; and suggested that the Student Government Council (SGC) assess a $3 fee on each student to help fund minority enrollment.[75]

In justifying these demands, activists tried to teach the campus community new ways to understand racial disparities at the university. BAM introduced a term that hadn't been used at Michigan to frame the institution's problems: "institutional racism." UM's racial disparities didn't simply stem from individual prejudice, BAM concluded; institutional racism could be found in the university's "standards, goals, systems of measuring and operating procedures." Nobody at UM needed to act with malicious intent toward blacks to ensure the university's racial disparities—they only needed to carry out the university's established values and policies. In other words, racial disparities were part of "the bones and sinews of the place," BAM wrote. Perhaps no other words get to BAM's ideas about the university better than these. Institutional racism was so invasive and rooted in the university's practices and values that it made racial disparities seem logical, natural, even race neutral. Viewing UM in this framework rejected white officials' claim that UM was a benevolent institution operating in a racist society. Instead, black student activists wanted the UM community to see the university as an active part of a "structure" that "rob[bed] Black people of financial security, political sovereignty and human dignity."[76]

BAM outlined how institutional racism worked at UM. There was nothing natural about how university officials measured student quality or distributed financial resources. Instead, these decisions represented the university's underlying values and goals. According to BAM, the university's current function was "primarily to provide manpower for large corporations, government, and educational institutions." That explained why the University of Michigan measured student quality based on high school grades and SAT scores. These measurements, according to BAM, measured "a narrow range of skills connected

with middle-class job performance." The university's financial commitments also reflected these priorities. "Only a white racist sense of spending priorities" that privileged subsidies for businesses and the military over racial justice, BAM activists claimed, explained UM officials' resistance to funding black students' demands. The fact that these values were so deeply embedded in the university's policies, incentives, and intellectual frameworks helped clarify why administrators' excuses seemed "ritualistic." This is what BAM members meant when they talked about the "bones and sinews of the place."[77]

The alternative was a new set of university values that served the interest of racial justice rather than the interests of business and the military. If those values were implemented, BAM contended, the university would help black communities become more autonomous from white people. UM's policies would help create black communities that no longer had to rely on white doctors, lawyers, business executives, teachers, and government officials. Empowering black communities, then, would become a central institutional priority. "It's not a question of whether the university will train people to do the tasks in the real world," BAM activists contended, "but what tasks, and whose needs determine the decision."[78]

These demands represented disruptive change, not reform. This vision would require a new institutional mission. It would require new priorities and values. The quality of the university would have to be measured differently, as the university's success in empowering black communities would be part of that calculation. Admissions and hiring decisions would change, as UM officials would need to build a university community that could help UM achieve its new mission. All the institutional rationales for racial disparities would no longer seem so natural.

More than any of BAM's demands, this disruptive vision challenged university administrators' priorities and values. Since 1963, UM leaders framed the purpose of affirmative action and other racial inclusion initiatives so that they fit within existing institutional priorities. BAM made it clear that they didn't simply want new policies; they wanted to change the university's mission. Conversely, administrators wanted limited reform.

Administrators' response to BAM revealed their persistent optimism in the discourse of racial innocence to stymie activism. Racial innocence had worked to resist some of Walter Greene's most ambitious recommendations. In 1970, though, administrators made serious errors in deploying racial innocence, which helped undermine their efforts to resist BAM's demands.

When the regents finally arrived on campus for their monthly meeting on February 19, BAM leaders learned that executive administrators would not

push the regents to accept BAM's demands. Most of the meeting centered around the cost of BAM's proposed initiatives and the financial burden they would place on the university. Racial innocence and efforts to implement inclusion cheaply worked hand in hand. Stephen Spurr, vice president and dean of graduate studies, presented the university's financial position. Just to maintain OAP at its current level, UM would have to spend $1.5 million during the next year. Expanding the program to meet BAM's demands would prove unfeasible, according to Spurr. In other words, Spurr suggested that administrators' resistance to BAM's goals didn't represent a lack of sympathy for black activists; rather, the budget tied administrators' hands.[79]

The regents asked Fleming to submit a five-year plan to increase minority enrollment at their next meeting but refused to vote on BAM's demands. Unhappy, BAM members walked straight to the undergraduate library and began throwing books off the shelves. The next day, after a second regents meeting, BAM members went back to the library and repeated the action. On February 21, members continued their assault on the library, taking their actions a step further by setting off a stink bomb. Fleming responded by asking the Ann Arbor police to guard the building.[80] Over the next week, BAM members continued their tactics. Activists went to the university snack bar and stole food to protest the lack of "soul food." They also disrupted classes to read their demands.[81]

Racial innocence played a central role in crafting the five-year plan. After an executive officers meeting, William Haber—the former LSA dean who had stayed with the university to develop affirmative action hiring policies—wrote the initial draft. As was typical of racial innocence rhetoric, he claimed that racial inclusion was a core institutional priority before he explained that the university didn't have the resources to support black students' demands. Haber wrote that "we consider our obligation to provide a larger opportunity for minority students to study at the university as most important and assign toward this objective the highest priority." But then Haber made a serious misstep in employing racial innocence that wouldn't be corrected in revised drafts that became public. Rather than writing about costs abstractly, he decided to list all the things that took precedence over increasing funding for black students. All the university's "flexible funds," Haber contended, "were now heavily committed to such things as laboratory renovations, land purchases, badly needed equipment, library books, nominal capital improvements, and expansion of recreational facilities." Executive administrators didn't see the contradiction between claiming racial inclusion was the university's "highest priority" and explaining that there wasn't enough money for black students' demands because UM was building more recreational facilities.[82]

The draft also revealed the assumptions that Haber used to craft racial innocence. Administrators claimed that racial inequality outside the institution meant that the university would never be able to recruit enough "qualified" black students to meet BAM's demands. But it was clear that Haber took for granted that 10 percent black enrollment was unworkable and then looked for evidence to support his conclusion. For example, he had no idea what the pool of potential black applicants looked like, but he assumed it was small. Assuming that the percentage of black students who graduated from high school would likely support his argument, he wrote, "The State Board of Education reports that only _____ of those [black students] of college age have actually graduated from high school." He would find the data and fill that in later. The sections on the cost of black students' demands were filled with similar holes. Haber had no idea how much it would cost to fulfill the demands; he just knew it was too much.[83]

Haber did have one piece of data that administrators would continue to rely on in the early discussions of the BAM demands. OAP students' attrition rate was twice as high as that of non-OAP students. Pointing to black student attrition rates represented an important negotiating tool. Haber assumed that the attrition rates would explode if the university tried to pursue BAM's enrollment goal. The words he wrote next, though, would galvanize a small campus movement and help turn it into the most widely supported campus protest in the University of Michigan's history. The words he chose were so important they deserve a long quote:

> We know from our present experience that the attrition rate on [*sic*] Opportunity Awards students approximates twice the average of all students, but still tolerable in terms of what is being accomplished. We do not know how much deviation there can be from this standard and still accomplish anything. At some point it is clear that the student is far better off to enter a community college where the competition is less severe and where the course options are less academically oriented.

Haber didn't stop there. He claimed that to fulfill BAM's goals, the university would have to lower its admissions standards to the acquisition of a high school diploma. Because, in Haber's eyes, these students would almost certainly drop out when they were left to compete with the rest of the students admitted under selective admissions policies, the university would have to lower its admissions standards for all students just to make sure affirmative action admittees would graduate. "This would drastically change the character of the University," Haber concluded, "and adversely affect the position of academic preeminence which it has achieved over the years." In other words, the black

high school students BAM was fighting for threatened the reputation of the university.[84]

None of this language raised concerns when the regents looked at the document. After all, believing that racial inclusion was an institutional priority and believing that most black high school students were threats to UM's quality were perfectly compatible ideas in 1970. What *did* raise the regents' concern was Haber's attention to race. Haber's original draft committed UM to double the number of black students within four years. The regents were more comfortable with the word "disadvantaged" than "Black" because, at least on the surface, "disadvantaged" was race neutral. Even though OAP's focus on "disadvantaged" led to a program that was 90 percent black, the word offered political and legal cover. So the final proposal stated that UM would "establish as a goal the availability of a University of Michigan education for double the present number of disadvantaged students by 1973–74." In an effort to satisfy black students, the document reminded BAM members that "Black students presently constitute a large majority of all disadvantaged students."[85]

All these discussions occurred during UM's spring break. On March 5, the Thursday of spring break, Fleming wrote to members of the Black Action Movement. He wanted students to know why the executive officers decided that the students' demands were unviable. Almost word for word, he repeated Haber's passage about the university's financial commitments in library books and capital improvements. Exactly word for word, Fleming copied Haber's passage about black student attrition rates. He chose to tell BAM members that many of the black high school students that activists were fighting for were better off at community colleges. He attached Haber's edited proposal in its entirety, including the offer to double the number of "disadvantaged" students by the 1973–74 academic year.[86]

The documents simply reinforced BAM's message that racial inclusion was low on the University of Michigan's list of priorities and gave the group important allies. When students returned from spring break, Fleming witnessed growing support for BAM.

Administrators' attempts to claim racial innocence failed to temper activism, and a more confrontational protest movement developed in the wake of Fleming's letter. The success of these protests reveals the power of disruption. The fear of violence caused administrators to change course and offer unprecedented concessions.

On March 18, BAM leaders again presented their demands at an open meeting of the board of regents. When the regents refused to accept BAM's 10 percent black enrollment demand, the group's leaders announced a one-day

campus-wide boycott of classes. The potential for a prolonged campus strike finally led to the first major concession from the administration.[87]

The threat of protest proved to be a powerful tool. Some campus leaders reluctantly accepted policy changes in order to avoid further demonstrations. One of the regents fits this model. Gertrude Huebner called the concessions the regents made throughout the strike "overly generous," but she explained that "the alternative was worse." In her eyes, making concessions meant not "killing a lot of people." Her own perceptions of black students as intimidating and threatening likely added to her concerns about violence on campus. "Black people can really look big," Huebner recalled years later, when she was trying to convey the fear she had felt during a BAM demonstration.[88]

Protest could also create an environment in which powerful people began to rethink their assumptions. This is what started to happen to Fleming. Nobody within Fleming's administration had seriously considered whether the 10 percent goal was attainable. In other words, administrators' unwillingness to investigate the validity of black activists' demands helped sustain campus leaders' resistance to BAM. The fact that OAP students' attrition rate was twice as high as that of non-OAP students was all the evidence they needed to conclude that it was impossible. When black students called for a one-day strike, though, Fleming was suddenly willing to investigate whether the 10 percent goal was attainable. He started asking new questions about the pool of eligible black students who could graduate from the university. The numbers that came back suggested that the pool was probably bigger than everyone thought. Fleming would continue to be skeptical of the viability of the 10 percent goal, but for the rest of the strike he never again suggested that it was impossible to find enough "qualified" black applicants to meet BAM's enrollment demand.[89]

The next day, the regents voted on a new proposal that approved an admissions goal "aimed at 10 per cent enrollment of Black students and substantially increased numbers of other minority and disadvantaged groups" by the 1973–74 academic year. A goal, rather than a guarantee, might sound like a minor concession, but it was the first-time administrators had acknowledged that there might be enough "qualified" black students to increase black enrollment to 10 percent of the student body. It also created new openings that black students would soon exploit.[90]

The regents' concession looked less appealing to BAM when activists saw that the amount of money the regents were willing to spend remained the same. The regents proposed to pursue the 10 percent black enrollment goal with the funds administrators determined were necessary to raise enrollment to 7 percent. How would the university triple black enrollment with only enough money to double enrollment, BAM activists asked?[91]

About eight hundred BAM members and supporters waited outside the building as the regents discussed and voted on the proposal. Some of the supporters who stood there likely followed BAM's call the day before for students not to attend classes and for faculty and staff to refuse to work. When the regents' meeting ended, BAM leaders held a rally outside the building, then led a march through campus, walking through academic buildings and disrupting classes in order to convince students to join the strike.[92]

The protests revealed the failure of Fleming's strategy to stymie unrest. When it was clear that Fleming's management techniques wouldn't stop demonstrations, he turned to the police. Fleming had mobilized local and state police the day before, anticipating a potential confrontation with protesters. But Fleming, trying to avoid any contact between law enforcement and students, had asked the bulk of the police to stay on a "stand-by basis." They stayed that way until students reorganized at Regents Plaza. There, activists saw Fleming walking to the Administration Building with Arthur Ross, vice president for state relations and planning, and regent Robert Brown. The students surrounded the three university leaders, shouting insults but allowing them to walk to their destination. When they arrived at the Administration Building, a guard unlocked the door and let Fleming and Brown enter. When Ross walked across the threshold, students rushed the entrance. The guard struggled to push the door closed, but the students were too strong. One student took the keys to the building out of the guard's hand and about twenty demonstrators stood in the lobby. Within five minutes, forty-five police officers in riot gear arrived and took over the building. When the last officer entered, a brick soared through the air, crashing through the glass panel in the door.[93]

None of the police saw who threw the brick, but they soon claimed they saw a student throw a rock. Suddenly, Veronica Banks, a nursing student, was in the back of a police car. Five hundred protesters yelling "Let her go" surrounded the car. The riot sticks of twenty police officers emerged as the officers charged the crowd. Then debris started flying through the air as protesters threw bricks, rocks, and bottles. The twenty police officers retreated and regrouped with forty additional Ann Arbor police officers. Behind them stood another twenty-five state police officers. The melee was over. It had lasted less than thirty minutes. Four students were arrested. Two were charged with felony assault and another with misdemeanor assault and resisting arrest. Banks was charged with malicious destruction of property.[94]

BAM leaders didn't condone any of these actions. They struggled throughout the strike to control their supporters' actions and consistently advocated nonviolence. White-led protest groups often ignored black leadership. The Honors Convocation was the largest event scheduled for March 20. BAM leaders

organized a protest outside the convocation with signs reading "The Regents Copped Out" and "Stop Racism." But SDS had different plans. SDS members marched into Hill Auditorium, disrupting the convocation and shouting "Open it up or shut it down." That afternoon, one hundred protesters blocked traffic at South University and South State Streets, a major intersection on campus. Some of the protesters smashed car windows and threatened drivers. In the midst of these protests, the university received four bomb threats.[95]

BAM leaders continued to try to control activists who advocated for physical violence and property damage. Some of the most radical activists were white students who had long criticized black activists as being too timid. Some went so far as to call BAM leaders "Uncle Toms." At one point, white activists offered BAM guns. BAM leaders refused. BAM struggled to control the actions of some black activists, too, who wanted more direct action. Black students were not a monolithic group. There were tense disagreements between BAM's leadership and some black student protesters. Reports flooded in to administrators about black students who entered the chemistry building and used fire hoses to spray water on the floors. Other reports documented students who entered the law library, smashing chairs, and then went through classroom buildings, banging garbage can tops.[96]

While BAM leaders worked hard to prevent these acts, they benefited from activists who disobeyed BAM directives and destroyed property. Again, the Detroit Rebellion hovered over black activism at UM. As Fleming later explained, "You cannot sit here 35 miles or whatever it is from Detroit . . . the huge city in which there had been in 1967 that very explosive incident, and not expect those people to get involved. And once you get outside groups involved, then you've got a lot of trouble on your hands. So we had to get the thing over with, and I think people realized that."[97] The impact of the Detroit Rebellion speaks to the power of violence, despite the fact that black protest at UM remained largely nonviolent. Yet even in their nonviolence, black student activists benefited from the images of fires and police cars with their wheels in the air. These images made the threat of violence real, made black student protests look more dangerous, and made the need for solutions look more urgent. Campus leaders feared that UM activists would turn to these tactics. Administrators also feared that activists from Detroit involved in the 1967 rebellion might come to campus. This was the reason why black student activism on a campus like Michigan can never be seen in isolation from other disruptions around the country in the late 1960s.[98]

BAM exploited these fears on March 25, when the Senate Assembly held a special meeting. The faculty wanted the strike to end, if only to start teaching

their classes again. One estimate suggested that as high as 50 percent of LSA courses had been canceled. Other classes devoted all their time to discussing the strike. With final exams approaching in April, classes need to resume in order to finish the term.[99]

At the meeting, Daryl Gorman, a black student activist, and Gloria Marshall, a black untenured professor of anthropology, presented BAM leaders as the moderate group that faculty should support and work with. Gorman and Marshall also emphasized that they couldn't control the people who ignored BAM's directives and destroyed property. Marshall reminded the audience that "the longer the demonstrations continue the more likelihood that acts of violence will escalate." They sent a clear message: if faculty members wanted the violence to stop, they needed to support BAM's demands.[100]

Gorman and Marshall also used the meeting to reframe BAM's language to attract faculty support. Gone was BAM's focus on institutional racism, which focused on the unjust values of the university and the need to create a new institution that saw justice and access as its foremost mission. Instead, the two spent their time showing how their demands could coexist with university values. In particular, they focused on how the BAM goals wouldn't undermine the university's quality. They responded to questions about the pool of "qualified" black students and tried to alleviate concerns that pursuing the BAM goals would lower academic standards and, in turn, the status of the university.[101]

Their focus on preserving institutional quality again shows that the policies BAM demanded were less threatening than the disruptive intellectual framework some activists used. BAM's disruptive vision required changing the entire mission and priorities of the university. Because the movement depended on the faculty's endorsement, BAM activists faced a difficult decision. Connecting BAM's demands to deeply embedded institutional values represented the easiest path to gain faculty support, but it also meant sacrificing the revolutionary potential of the movement. The incentives rooted in framing their demands in the values shared by the majority—in this case, the overwhelmingly white faculty—were too great for BAM activists. BAM desperately needed faculty support to win concessions from Fleming.

The meeting proved to be the turning point of the strike. Getting faculty support was especially important because Fleming claimed that the funds necessary to support BAM were tied up in the schools and colleges across the university. The Senate Assembly approved a motion that urged faculty within each school and department to support the 10 percent black enrollment goal and work with the administration to achieve it. Within two days, almost every

school and college on campus voted to support the BAM demands and agreed to reallocate the funds necessary to raise black enrollment to 10 percent of the study body. The political science department went even further, starting a private donation drive to support the funding necessary to reach the 10 percent goal.[102]

Thus far, the contest between BAM and the administration had focused almost exclusively on the admissions goal and the funding necessary to accomplish it. Once that was settled, negotiations moved to BAM's other demands. After seven hours of discussion on Saturday, March 28, and a full day of negotiations on Sunday, the two sides were close to a settlement. But one of the more pressing issues, how BAM supporters who committed campus code violations would be punished, was still on the table.[103]

Both BAM leaders and Fleming wanted to end the strike. BAM leaders feared that their support was waning. Fleming feared that if he didn't end the strike soon, violence would erupt. The final negotiations were long and grueling, finally ending around 4 a.m.[104] BAM lost some of its most coveted demands. There would be no tuition waivers for black students. Despite the fact that the SGC had passed a resolution to collect a $3 fee from students to support black enrollment, the university administration refused to collect the money. A black student center was also off the table. As the regents made clear in the final agreement, they were "opposed to the establishment of University financed special student centers on the basis of race." BAM also lost the battle over reprisals against demonstrators, although they did get a small concession from Fleming. Students could request an "outside impartial hearing officer," which Fleming would appoint, to oversee disciplinary hearings.[105]

Still, BAM scored significant concessions from Fleming and the regents. The final agreement committed the university to the goal of raising black student enrollment to 10 percent of the student body and guaranteed the funds necessary to reach that goal. The students also won seven new undergraduate and three graduate recruiters, as well as two financial aid counselors. Regarding black faculty, Fleming offered to convert an existing position to "the purpose of helping departments to become aware of prospective Black faculty candidates." Fleming also agreed to issue a statement to every department, urging them to "vigorously" recruit black faculty members. Furthermore, he would ask departments to turn in reports three times a year that outlined the efforts they had made to recruit black faculty members. Fleming committed $63,000 for a supportive services program and a base budget of $250,000 for a center to support the black studies program. Finally, black students kept their promise to Chicano students. Fleming agreed

to hire a Chicano recruiter and pursue the goal of enrolling at least fifty Chicano students by the fall semester.[106]

The Black Action Movement strike represented the breakdown of Fleming's co-optation techniques. In 1968, after black students occupied the Administration Building, he set out to end future disruptions. He emphasized the university's commitment to inclusion in speeches, created a new inclusion bureaucracy filled with black officials, and employed the narrative of racial innocence, but these techniques didn't hide the slow rise in black enrollment and faculty representation. It also didn't hide the poor racial climate. Black activists wanted to see results.

During the BAM strike, administrators briefly lost control over inclusion, agreeing to goals and reforms that they believed were unviable and inconsistent with the university's priorities. In the years after the strike, Fleming focused on preventing another BAM and regaining control over the meaning and character of inclusion. Fleming spent the early 1970s considering new co-optation tactics that would make it more difficult for black students to change the institution. When students returned in fall 1970, they started to see signs of a new regime.