

# The Port Huron Statement and Political Science

## A Discussion of Richard Flacks and Nelson Lichtenstein's *The Port Huron Statement: Sources and Legacies of the New Left's Founding Manifesto*

**The Port Huron Statement: Sources and Legacies of the New Left's Founding Manifesto.** Edited by Richard Flacks and Nelson Lichtenstein. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. 344p. \$49.95.

The Port Huron Statement was one of the most important manifestos of the New Left in the United States. A foundational statement of the theme of “participatory democracy,” the text had an important influence on post-1960s politics and, arguably, on post-1960s political science. The recent publication of a new edition of the Statement is an occasion for reflection on its importance. And so we have invited a distinguished cast of political scientists shaped by the events of the sixties to comment on the impact of the Statement on their own way of envisioning and practicing political science.

### Martha Ackelsberg and Mary L. Shanley

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As political scientists whose work has centered on feminist and democratic theory and practice, we have long seen ourselves as having been formed, profoundly, by the social movements of the 1960s. Now, in rereading and reflecting on the Port Huron Statement (PHS) and the chapters in this edited volume, we are struck, on the one hand, by how much our lives and careers were influenced by the political moment (and movements) to which it gave rise and, on the other, by the ways in which our work within political science took off from one of its most profound omissions: its almost total inattention to gender.

The PHS began with a call to “visualize” the application of ideals to the “real world.” It lamented the decline of utopian thinking, expressing distress that people say that there is “no alternative” to the present order of things. To the contrary, the authors of the PHS argued that “there is an alternative to the present.” They insisted that there *was*

a way of imagining a dramatically new social order; indeed, the Statement offered both a profound critique of many aspects of the presumed political consensus of the late 1950s/early 1960s (what Daniel Bell famously characterized as the “end of ideology”) and a call to imagine a more truly participatory, egalitarian, democratic (and productively contentious) society.

Barbara Haber captures the sense of exhilaration that accompanied the hope—and belief—that a new social order was possible in her chapter, “A Manifesto of Hope”: “we held a shared assumption that through collective thinking we could understand the world, and that with passionate dedication we could change it.” We, too, shared in the “high spirits born of shared moral purpose, a sense of historic mission, and the sweet company of kindred souls [that] were infectious” (p. 140). As Haber and others note, the PHS ignored gender as a category of oppression, and paid no attention to the social, economic, and political changes that would be necessary to procure greater equality for women. Our own teaching and writing on gender justice, then, stemmed both from our having shared the conviction of the PHS authors that social change in the direction of greater justice and equality was possible, and from our increasing awareness that gender justice would have to be an essential aspect of any vision of social justice worth fighting for. For us, feminism was (and remains) profoundly—and practically—utopian: insisting

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that the world both *should* and *could* be transformed to address the systemic oppression of women. The imagining of a radically different social order—and the belief in the efficacy of such reimagining—was central to feminist theory, and feminist activism, just as it was to the PHS. Early Second Wave feminists dared to imagine alternative social norms and structures, and insisted that these changes had to be part of any leftist/progressive political agenda.

As nearly every chapter in this volume attests, the fact that the PHS was revised, edited, and ratified collectively after intense small-group discussions became an important model for many New Left organizations, and was mirrored and transformed in the consciousness-raising groups that were one of the hallmarks of the Second Wave. Jane Mansbridge observes that thousands of collectives formed across the country in which members made their decisions by “‘participatory democracy,’ by which their members meant a combination of direct face-to-face assembly democracy and decision making” (p. 196). In addition to direct participation, the drafters of the PHS “work[ed] outward from concrete, immediate experience to derive general values, and us[ed] those values as criteria for comprehending structures and evaluating events” (“Manifesto of Hope,” p. 144). While the PHS had called for *engaged* political analysis, the women’s movement grew out of the experiences of consciousness raising, and argued that “the personal is political.” Members of consciousness-raising groups drew on their personal experiences in order to uncover shared experiences that—they/we came to recognize—arose from social norms and social structures. The articulation of these experiences made clear that a great many of the frustrations women experienced were not simply individual problems but consequences of systemic forces of domination and subordination. Consciousness raising was an extremely important analytic tool, a valuable methodology for the shaping of feminist analysis and theory.

The documents that emerged from feminist collectives—for example, “Redstockings Manifesto,” “The Woman-Identified Woman,” and “The Combahee River Collective Statement”—showed the impact of the “manifesto,” the short and publically accessible form of the PHS, on the women’s liberation movement. Indeed, the very framing of it as a *liberation* movement reflects the influence of the PHS and its attention to anticolonial liberation movements around the world. And the continued effort to connect theory to practice, classroom learning to “real life,” and to attend carefully to what activists said and did became a central feature of our teaching, and of feminist classrooms more broadly.

Both of us see our careers as manifesting the kind of oppositional action within one’s own sphere of activity that the PHS called for. As political theorists, much of our early writing (and certainly our teaching) participated in

what we experienced as truly thrilling (and also disturbing) feminist explorations of the canon, calling out the deeply gendered character of depictions of the polity in works from ancient Greece to John Rawls, and ultimately moving beyond critique to the building of gender-inclusive theory. Our teaching and writing also participated in the larger feminist intellectual process of chronicling women’s exclusion from public office and their disparate legal treatment, as well as reclaiming the histories of women’s activism and resistance, both in the United States and around the world. It is hard to imagine thinking or teaching now without the trilogy of “race, class, and gender” and their intersections; but, although the gender piece was missing from the PHS, the analysis in the Statement provided a critical context for that next step.

Finally, the insistence of the PHS that alternative social structures were possible, and must be created in the contexts in which we live and work, was reflected in activism within the American Political Science Association itself. The Women’s Caucus for Political Science was formed at the 1969 Annual Meeting of the APSA to address the marginalization of women within the profession. (During the two preceding decades, a total of 15 articles out of 1,000 [1.5%] in the APSR were authored by women. [Joyce Mitchell, “The Women’s Caucus for Political Science: A View of the ‘Founding,’” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 1990]). The successful motion at the 1976 Business Meeting of the APSA charging the association not to hold its Annual Meeting in any state that had not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (and hence not in Chicago, since Illinois had not ratified the ERA) was another important moment for us and other feminist political scientists. Our continued engagement with efforts to open up and democratize that organization are, surely, further manifestations of the belief that one needs to work for greater equality in one’s immediate context and close to home, as well as on the national stage.

Despite its lacunae, the PHS inspired us and many of our generation to believe that it is possible and necessary to imagine alternatives to existing social structures and practices; that writing and speaking about and giving artistic expression to these visions is a form of political activism; that social analysis and policy formation must include the voices and insights of the marginalized and oppressed; and that political engagement entails acting “where you’re at” (in our case, the university and professional associations). We still share these beliefs, but await the new insights and paths—both theoretical and practical—that the rising generation of student activists (like those in the Occupy movement) will add to the political dialogue of which the PHS has been a vital part.

## Mark Blitz

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This volume is a series of reflections on the Port Huron Statement by participants and sympathetic academics. I have been asked to “assess . . . the contribution of [this volume] to political science.” Here, I would say that it has little to offer political *science* directly (unless one means it as Aristotle might), nor is this its intention. Rather, it offers material for reflection on politics: Several of its historical discussions are illuminating, and some of its assessments of where participatory democracy rests today are interesting. Fundamentally, *The Port Huron Statement* enables us to learn more about, or confirm what we already knew or suspected about, the American Left. Everyone who knows what Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Port Huron Statement are also knows that they were meant to drive us portside. Port Huron’s close ties with Walther Reuther’s United Automobile Workers (UAW) and the involvement of several red diaper babies is unsurprising. The essays, even the ones by younger academics, range from left to more left.

For most except the immediately affected half generation, the letters SDS now draw blank stares and then at most slow recognition. The Port Huron Statement, TOCSIN, the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE)—it is all a vague antiwar, antinuclear, Cold War blur. For the authors of the Port Huron Statement, of course, SDS and the Statement were central moments. But it is less obvious than many of the writers suggest that the Statement or SDS generally were especially important for later events. One might argue that the Civil Rights movement, feminism, and opposition to the Vietnam War more profoundly affected and changed America. All note the significance for SDS itself of the Civil Rights movement that preceded Port Huron, and most admit the blindness of SDS to what would soon be the concerns of feminism. Several SDS leaders were, of course, involved in antiwar movements, but opposition to the war, and the results of that opposition, had causes and effects much beyond SDS itself.

In fact, the standard bearers for the Left have been successful in later years, but not primarily in the way or for the reasons that the volume’s authors acknowledge. Their interests range from participatory democracy to traditional Marxist economic analyses. However, what leads the country leftward today is not the variants and factors in these analyses, or the Occupy Wall Street movement (with which several of them are taken), but, rather, the legalizing and bureaucratizing of impositions on individual freedom in the name of equality, environment, and health care. Not

participatory action (even in its social media forms) but, rather, the rigid controls that stem from law school liberalism are progressivism’s current face.

Marxist analysis, however, was not Port Huron’s only strain. One element highlighted in these essays is the importance for the Statement of quasi-existential views about authenticity, somewhat along the lines of Herbert Marcuse’s blend of an updated Marxism and existentialism in *One Dimensional Man* (1964) or even *Eros and Civilization* (1955), but with a more bourgeois tone. A second highlighted and often overlooked element is the importance of John Dewey, and not only C. Wright Mills and Arnold Kaufman.

Whatever their merit, the essays display the defects and omissions that someone right of center has come to expect from those on the left. I will point out four of these. First, the material plenty and massive opportunities made available by individual liberty in free markets are taken for granted. When the comfort of the Port Huron authors’ generation is noted (by several authors), it is as if it had dropped from the sky. The economy is treated either as a product of global oligarchies or as a place for communal sharing. If there are problems, it is big corporations or Wall Street that have caused them, never government or consumer demand. The way that business and entrepreneurial activity is itself so often a field for responsibility and self-mastery is ignored.

Second, the thousand ways in which Americans participate politically beyond mere voting—on school boards, juries, townships governments, and voluntary organizations—is given short or nonexistent shrift. Religion, a basic way that brings people of different classes together, and a major factor in abolitionism and the Civil Rights movement, is ignored. Many authors still worry about how much actual participation their often meager examples of participatory democracy require, while still others make clear that “participatory democracy” is an Americanized term whose real meaning is socialism. In both cases, many of our actual modes of participation and the institutions that foster them are downplayed.

A third difficulty is that equality always seems to be preferred to freedom, whatever the rhetoric, and freedom itself is almost completely divorced from any sense of natural rights. If freedom is mentioned, one hears only the vagueness of authenticity (or references to Mario Savio) and, even there, from the original Port Huron view until today, the inconsistencies among individual freedom, communal control, and more equalized distribution are not addressed. One cannot have individual autonomy and fulfillment while also ceding more and more control to participatory and even consensus groups.

As I suggested, moreover, the authors do not come to grips with the discrepancy between participatory democracy (or self-government generally) and the excessive importance of our courts and bureaucracies. The general

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sense on the left, right, and center that too much that is significant is outside one's best efforts to govern it is connected to bureaucracies and courts that are increasingly arbitrary and hard to control. A large amount of this bureaucratic dominance has arisen because of the Left's goals and the methods used to advance them. It is myopic to fail to see this.

A fourth issue is the easy view that the growth of the American Right was primarily reactive, and where not reactive, manipulated. There is more than an echo of the old Cold War Marxism here. But a fair analysis of the growth of the contemporary Right makes visible its roots in the attempt to advance liberty—individual rights, less regulated markets, and American international success. In this vein, it is remarkable how the end of the Cold War is taken for granted, and Ronald Reagan's part in successfully ending it left unmentioned.

## William E. Connolly

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In 1961, as a beginning graduate student in political theory at the University of Michigan, I enrolled in a philosophy seminar taught by Arnold Kaufman entitled (I think) “Democracy and Participation.” Tom Hayden was also in that seminar. He was already a major figure in student politics at the university. What a class it was, and it played a major role in the Port Huron Statement published a year later. The older political science grad students in the class resisted Kaufman’s theme about the positive role of participation, wedded as they were to realism, the iron law of oligarchy, and Madisonianism. But I bought it hook, line, and sinker, trying to forge a broad image of the idea to encompass worker participation, demonstrations to support Civil Rights, and, soon, participation in a nationwide antiwar movement.

In the spring of 1964, Kaufman was a leader in creating the first anti-Vietnam War teach-in in the country. It was altered from a planned all-day event after Governor George Romney threatened to fire professors who used classrooms for a political event during teaching hours. That governor had a narrow definition of teaching. Instead of resisting that ultimatum head-on, the organizers creatively scheduled an evening of all-night seminars. Thanks to the free publicity provided by the governor, thousands of students showed up for the event. We became galvanized as informed antiwar activists. I spoke at a meeting of the local Democratic Party that spring to protest Lyndon Johnson’s escalation of the war—another event in which Kaufman was a central speaker. We won a surprising victory and sent a letter of protest to President Johnson. Several political science professors gave me a cool reception after that for undermining the “responsible party doctrine.” Nothing serious, though, and some later became antiwar activists themselves.

I was not aware of the planning and execution of the Port Huron Statement until after it was published. It then played a role in my antiwar activism, in an essay Kaufman and I wrote for *Dissent* in 1968,<sup>1</sup> in my time as president of the New Politics Coalition in western Massachusetts, and in many antiwar events in which I participated. My sense is that the proliferating energies of the New Left were sapped by the early 1970s as one faction turned to violence, the war sputtered to an end, and many white, blue-collar workers took a scary turn to the right. Kaufman’s essay in 1969, on “Participatory Democracy: Ten Years Later,” published in *The Bias of Pluralism*, concluded that too many in the New Left had treated participation as the single virtue rather than one virtue to be joined to party politics and large public actions.<sup>2</sup> Reading

it again now, I realize how indebted I was to it in later essays on “the paradox of politics.” One admires inspirational teachers long after specific points of influence have been forgotten.

At about the time Kaufman wrote that essay, I returned for a visit to Flint (my hometown) to find the United Automobile Workers (UAW) fractured by an intense faction of evangelical whites who now supported George Wallace, an authoritarian populist who prefigured Donald Trump. As the son of a factory worker, integrationist, and labor activist, this turn of events shook me to the core. They were participating all right, but under the stars of resentment against unions and racism.

If a central problem at the time of the Port Huron Statement was the apparent apathy of masses and the complacency of elites, today it is generic anger among a faction of the white working and middle classes, the obdurate sense of world entitlement that activates the captains of American capitalism out of synch with the most critical issues of the day, and a dilemma of electoral politics that combine together to stifle positive action.<sup>3</sup> If major adversaries of yesteryear were the “Dixiecrats” who compromised the Democratic Party, today it is an evangelical-neoliberal resonance machine that stifles positive action even more belligerently.<sup>4</sup> If the university was then seen to be a bureaucratic mess with democratic potential, today it is held hostage by neoliberal university presidents and trustees who do not respect the importance of liberal arts education to democratic citizenship. If the fruits of abundance from “industrialism” were found to be unjustly distributed then, today we also face the ecocrisis of an entire capitalist civilization of productivity. If gender, race, and class issues were less than fully understood then—the word “man” jumps out at you when you reread the document today—those issues are now both deeply ensconced in the system and complicated by a worldwide ecocrisis in the civilization of productivity and abundance. If the authors tended to assume that the future would be secular, today we realize that the secular moment in world politics was a blip in history. If both the authors of that document and their Marxist critics were sociocentric in their accounts of the world—identifying only social factors as causal forces in society—today we have come once again to the realization that a host of periodically volatile, nonhuman force fields such as climate, glacier flows, ocean currents, and disease formations are closely imbricated with economic, political, and religious practices.

The tacit assumption of “gradualism” with respect to planetary processes—adopted by geologists and paleontologists themselves until at least the 1980s—must now give way in the human sciences to deeper understandings of how planetary processes work. They foment periodic volatilities of their own that then become entangled with capitalism as a geologic force, as the two together wreak the most havoc on regions and peoples who have had the least to do with fomenting climate change.

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Such needed changes in issues and perspectives on the Left are very important, indeed critical. But the spirit of the Port Huron Statement nonetheless remains highly pertinent to the definitions, elaborations, and modes of activism appropriate to today. The students who composed that noble document demanded a turn to activism during an age of elite complacency. New forces seek to recapture that spirit as they identify multisited modes of activism to respond to issues that the neoliberal-evangelical machine both foments and denies. The Left is heating up again, as it identifies cross-regional modes of activism to complement local and national actions. The editors of *The Port Huron Statement* are to be congratulated for drawing together this fine and timely volume.

## Peter Gourevitch

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In reading this book and re-reading the Port Huron Statement, I am struck by the continuation of a tension between the “micro” of participatory democracy and the “macro” of the big policy battles of then and today. It is a tension that has long divided the left and, indeed, it is a tension that has long been within each of us.

The micro concerns for democratic life at all levels, from the workplace and community life to the national and even international level, expressed in The Port Huron Statement and SDS were important influences in political life of the 1960s and remain so today. They articulated criticism of “bosses,” be they of the party, the union, the workplace, or the state. This “bottom up” perspective can be found in discussion of workers control, union rights, safety conditions in the workplace, decentralization of government, and citizen activism in civil society. The macro context had to do with the un-finished New Deal, fulfilling the dreams of a fully developed welfare state: health care, full employment, educational opportunity, and ending apartheid. The concern with macro issues raised questions in the United States about the weakness of the progressive movement at the national level to achieve the goals its European counterparts had achieved by the 1950s.

These debates were very real to me at the time the Port Huron statement emerged. At Oberlin College (1959–1963), I met SDS leader Rennie Davis among other political activists, and felt a lively political culture there. In the summer of 1963, with an internship in Washington, I attended the civil rights march at the Lincoln Memorial and was deeply moved by King’s speech. My cousin Helen Garvy was active in SDS and I heard about it from her and other activists. Being a graduate student at Harvard meant being surrounded by protest, discussion, ideas and action, and lots of interesting people:

Barney Frank, a fellow graduate student, impressed all of us, whatever his views, and Jane Mansbridge, contributor to this volume, graded papers (with me) for Stanley Hoffmann’s course on France. Protest against the war in Vietnam elicited action and debate: objecting to the visit of Robert McNamara, demonstrating in downtown Boston U.S. government offices, and the occupation of Harvard’s University Hall. There were long debates, over what to do about the war, about race, about class, as the various groups that comprised the left argued vividly. When the famous

protests of 1968 occurred in France, I went with some colleagues to do research on what was going on there.

In retrospect, I would say it was the issue and the politics of the time that engaged me, the kinds of things SDS was doing, some of the people I knew and tracked, more than the words of the Port Huron statement itself. I don’t recall people discussing it, and its argumentation. I do recall discussions about SDS activities and political protest. My personal political thoughts were about what to do: what organizational activity, what demonstrations, which not. My intellectual thoughts were about comparative market economies and the domestic political economy of international trade disputes, what today would be called the “varieties of capitalism.”<sup>1</sup>

Some chapters in the volume by Richard Flacks and Nelson Lichtenstein explore the micro participatory side, such as Jane Mansbridge on collectives, James Miller on grass roots efforts of “Occupy Wall Street,” and Michael Vester comparing the U.S. efforts to experiences in Germany. One other chapter makes a comparison—Lisa McGirr on an intellectual position of the international New Left. But macro policy comparisons are not explored very much here. The comparison of the United States to Europe and the shifting fortunes of the left in different countries, involve political parties, trade unions, business associations, social pacts, strikes, and policy bargains among major groups: the factors that produce the big policy outcomes such as the New Deal and the factors that limit it (e.g.: Taft Hartley labor legislation, the deregulation movement, globalization, or the financialization of the economy). The failure of Medical reform in the 1990s, and now Obama Care in the current era are both interesting frames for considering the strengths and weaknesses of the progressive moment.<sup>2</sup> Understanding the American left can be helped by situating it in an international context. The political answers to national differences lay, we thought, in the character of the “historical compromise” that emerged in Europe, whereby some elements of European business were willing to accept bargains that traded social programs, workers job security, high unemployment benefits, retirement, and medical insurance in exchange for limiting the right to strike and ceding to management prerogatives on running the firm. The American bargains were more limited.

In re-reading the Port Huron statement in the present political climate, I am struck by its American centeredness. This made sense for SDS, of course, as they were seeking to mobilize in the United States. It is interesting how many people in the United States seem unable to locate Bernie Sanders’ references to Socialism or Denmark, and that the content of Michael Moore’s recent movie “Where to Invade Next” is surprising to many. The Port Huron statement confronts racism toward African Americans quite forcefully—indeed that was such a core issue for progressives then and today. It says nothing about

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women, Latinos, or Asians, or about gays, gender, or identity politics generally. A fascinating passage evokes the “macro” variables in calling for a party realignment, to move the conservatives out of the Democratic party, so that the racist conservatives would not control the Congressional Committees. I recall yearning for that. When I first was able to vote in 1964, I felt the pain of voting for a Democratic Congressperson knowing that in so doing I enabled a racist white Southerner to control an important committee. That realignment has occurred, with catastrophic results that we did not foresee: It has contributed to the GOP lock on the House and the shift of U.S. politics to the right. Many progressive bargains in the past involved an unholy compromise with the forces of darkness, the Southern racists, as Ira Katznelson explains in *Fear Itself*.<sup>3</sup>

Forty years ago while traveling to Europe, many people complained correctly about our racism and the treatment of African Americans in the United States. This has faded today and some progress has been made. Migration into Europe has provoked a backlash and made European politics resemble the United States. Globalization, trade, ethnic tension, and dislike of outsiders have all led to an intense fragmentation of the left and center that opens the way to disturbing politics. These changes in current life trace back to the experiences of the left in the years that led to Port Huron statement. The people who produced it felt a tension between the ideal and the practical. Do we fight for what seems plausible in a constrained political context or do we fight for an ideal whatever the practical consequences? And what organization foundation seems most effective or doable? SDS mobilized well, drawing on the reaction to the draft and the Vietnam War. Electoral politics provoked skepticism back then as a vehicle for change. In 2016, there is a high level of interest in electoral politics, but also in lessons drawn from earlier years on the importance of building social movements and organizational foundations, as vehicles of doing good and of putting pressure on the political system.

### **Notes**

- 1 Hall and Soskice, eds, 2000.
- 2 Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson. 2016.
- 3 Katznelson 1993.

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## Philip Green

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For political theorists, what came out of the Statement was a version of democratic theory that had hardly existed previously, “participatory democracy.” To be sure, under an earlier rubric, “Direct Action,” it had a long history in theory and practice: especially in Britain, and in the United States through the sit-ins of the 1930s. In fact, as is emphasized in this collection, in the United States the Statement was the way station in a radicalizing process that began in the 1930s, was revived in the late 1950s, and was represented primarily by the Civil Rights movement but also the antinuke peace movement—shortly to be transmogrified into the more widespread antiwar movement, for which, fittingly, the first manifestation was a teach-in at the University of Michigan.

In the realm of academic social science, the work of C. Wright Mills was critical, but even more so was the publication in the United States of Marx’s long-neglected early writings, first in Louis Feuer’s 1959 anthology, *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, then more decisively in Erich Fromm’s *Marx’s Concept of Man* (1961). There, in his exposition of the concept of “Alienated Labor,” Fromm made available to American audiences, especially young faculty and student audiences, a version of Marx without Marxism, and radicalism without state socialism. My own experience of philosophical awakening was, I imagine, typical.

In political science, the invocation of “participatory democracy” underwrote a turn in the discipline epitomized by the formation of the Caucus for a New Political Science in 1967. The New (Political Science) Left, greatly influenced by Mills, brought into being an agenda of disillusionment with the conventional liberal version of representative government, a mode of political decision making from which mass or direct action was almost entirely excluded: a disillusionment first made manifest at Port Huron. What the Statement added to negative critique was a forward-looking program of democratization and egalitarianism that had virtually gone out of existence during the Cold War. By the 1970s, the democratic movement generally, in theory and in to some extent in practice, reached a kind of momentary climax (just before the Deluge): enough so to send Samuel P. Huntington into paroxysms of dismay at the “excess of democracy.”

That was an historical moment. However, in the wake of the Billionaire’s Relief Act, more euphemistically known as the decision in *Citizens United*, the debate about “pluralism” versus class theory among democratic

theorists has lost its salience. Entire state legislatures have been bought and paid for by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC); while, to take just one among countless examples, in the current session of Congress the Koch brothers have personally torpedoed an apparently firm liberal/libertarian alliance over sentencing and incarceration. Even the old-fashioned (once American Political Science Association–endorsed) liberal idea of legislative agendas being set by “responsible” political parties led by elected representatives of “the people” now seems quaint. And as for the idea that the roots of democracy are ultimately established “in the streets” by mass action, in a time when the leading candidate for one party’s presidential nomination straightforwardly uses neo-Nazi rhetoric about Muslims to widespread acclaim, it seems almost quixotic to be remembering and in some sense celebrating the most radical manifesto of the postwar era, and apotheosizing its aftermath.

Now, with hindsight, what strikes me more than anything is the extent to which so many of us believed at a fairly deep level in the myth of Progress: an updated version of Marx’s prediction that socialism would come when capitalism reached its productive peak. We did not foresee the impact of global competition, decomposition of the labor force, the failure of productive institutions, the onset of uncontrolled financialization, and above all capital’s declaration of ferocious class war. As for the looming juggernaut of automation, it was, we speculated, not opposed to individual self-realization but might even encourage it. This hopefulness about automation’s liberating potential clearly undergirded the subsequent (1964) “Triple Revolution” manifesto (signed by Tom Hayden and myself, among many others), but is also implicit in the Statement. It is thus not going too far, I think, to say that while conservatives bet on the failure of socialism, the Left in effect bet on the success of capitalism. Their prediction seemingly bore fruit in 1989; ours preceded a still-ongoing period of disarray and collapse that has never recovered from the first oil embargo—the end of a seemingly unending era of imperial exploitation predicted by very few Western observers. The result looks like a battlefield denuded of the hopes that Bob Dylan summed up in “The Times They Are A-Changin’”: “Come senators, congressmen/ Please heed the call/ Don’t stand in the hallway/ Don’t block up the hall.”

Concomitantly, although Tom Hayden reminds us that the immediate inspiration for the Statement’s authors was the Civil Rights movement’s struggle to achieve the right to vote—the basic tool of both participation *and* representation—what I remember quite strongly was our rhetorical and emotional slighting of the idea of representative government: an understandable but premature turning away from the basis of “actually existing democracy.” Representation, as we have come to realize, cannot be *replaced* by participation, but rather can

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only be *more truly achieved* by it. At a moment when democratic representation is in danger of disappearing altogether, through the combined power of unleashed wealth, large-scale gerrymandering, and an assault on the fundamental right to vote that is unique in the history of supposedly democratic societies, this realization is belated.

Where do these reflections leave participatory democracy today? The stirrings of a revival can be seen in Occupy Wall Street—though that is an abstraction in most people’s lives; in “Black Lives Matter”—though that is not in itself easily productive of direct action; and in renewed student activism—that today only fitfully addresses the realities of social structure. At the moment, my own thinking about where an immediate attempt to address the goals of the Statement might be most salient circles around two issues that touch the fundamentals of life in the American polity. The first is the onrushing degradation of the environment, which in every way has a hugely differential impact on social classes and minority groups. In this respect, the conflict over equal access to clean water, clean air, and unspoiled land will be the major battle of the future, and the battle lines are already being drawn, as the tragedy of Flint, Michigan, attests. *This Changes Everything*, Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis’ documentary about local resistance to global corporate and governmental forces, and regional mass actions against environmental despoliation, updates the spirit and strategies of the Statement for this conflict. In the United States, as state and local governments dominated by big money despoil the environments they should be protecting, there will be many Flints, many Keystone Pipelines, calling for an uncompromising response.

Finally, the ongoing assault on democratic rights is no more legitimate, despite the willful efforts of a partisan Supreme Court majority, than if it were being conducted by the Birmingham City Council and the Ku Klux Klan in 1962; and it can only be stopped if the spirit of the Civil Rights movement is revived, extending the impetus of Black Lives Matter into direct action, beyond what at the moment looks like a forlorn attempt to overcome the surrender of (in theory) one person one vote, to one dollar one vote. The Democratic Party needs to be encouraged to resist: to engage in uncompromising legislative strikes and a refusal to conduct business as usual in the face of the antidemocratic incursion. But more than that, the most appropriate practice of participatory democracy should be a march on polling stations everywhere that the opportunity to vote is being denied or constricted, forcing a confrontation that will demonstrate how, now as then, and behind the facade of a partisan Supreme Court majority, white power ultimately rests on sheer force. If not in the streets, the place for democracy is now at the ballot boxes.

## Frances Fox Piven

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When I happily agreed to contribute to this symposium, I expected it all to be very familiar. After all, everyone seemed to agree that the Port Huron manifesto was the work of callow young people who, as young people are prone to do, placed their faith in a not very sophisticated call for participatory democracy. That at least was what I remembered.

So I am glad that Jeff Isaac provoked me to reread this remarkable document, and I am chastened too because my memory was so flawed. These young people might have been inexperienced, but they were also nothing short of brilliant, astonishingly level-headed and well informed. This was, to be sure, a call for the eventual transformation of the American political economy, but the process of change they envisioned was incremental and reformist and certainly not revolutionary. Moreover, they saw the path to reform as strewn with huge obstacles; there were not going to be easy or quick victories. Rather, they were urging young people to set off on a path that at best would be marked by partial successes. Port Huron announces a direction rather than a set of solutions. It is not callow at all. It is wise.

Consistent with this orientation toward the hard labor of incremental reform, Port Huron expresses none of the scorn with which later 1960s radicals regarded Big Labor, the Democratic Party, and the New Deal. There is simply none of that in the Port Huron Statement. Instead of castigating the Democrats, they call for more programmatic political parties, something that the American Political Science Association had endorsed not long before! It would be a good thing, they also said, if the Democrats rid themselves of the conservative and racist southern wing, and also good if there was less influence by business lobbyists. Nothing to quarrel with on either point.

It is an even bigger mistake to associate Port Huron with the student movement of the late 1960s, when sectarian fissures and fractures and a kind of movement madness shattered and overwhelmed the movement. The Port Huron Statement itself is not mad or sectarian at all. It is not even utopian, a cast of mind that I think may well encourage sectarianism.

So while, yes, the Statement calls for a more participatory democracy, it has no illusions about an easy way to remedy our democratic deficits. On the one hand, the writers looked around at their elders and saw the problem as an overwhelming apathy and alienation. On the other hand, they thought apathy and alienation were themselves

the result of the objective arrangements that separate people from the political and economic pinnacles of power where decisions are made, while smothering them in propaganda and consumerism. Participatory democracy was a possible solution, but the statement does not read as if the writers were confident of its possibility.

Moreover, the concerns of the young intellectuals, (because this is what they were, movement intellectuals), ranged far beyond a flawed political process. They named the major problems that continue to cripple American society, including racism and poverty, the concentration of wealth and economic power (presciently, they wrote of the 1% even then), and the grip of the military apparatus. Indeed, war and the Cold War, and the growing power of the American war machine, loom as the big concern of the young writers, and this some years before the war in Southeast Asia became a major public concern, and the focus of the historic student antiwar movement.

Of course, they did not figure this out in a vacuum. The Port Huron preoccupations reflected the issues of the already emerging 1960s movements, and the manifesto then lent energy to the movements. Young activists went south to join Civil Rights protests, and in the northern cities, they worked in local communities to organize protests by the growing concentrations of the poor, many of them internal migrants from the South or Puerto Rico. Not only did the southern Civil Rights movement win the voting rights that had been denied blacks after the Civil War (Republican efforts at vote suppression notwithstanding), but the rancorous divisions caused by the movement actually forced the regional realignment of the parties that the writers envisioned for a more programmatic party system. The Civil Rights movement also helped to give birth to a sister movement of the minority poor in the northern cities that succeeded in forcing an expansion of U.S. social welfare programs. And as the war in Southeast Asia escalated, the Port Huron thinkers became the intellectual leaders of the antiwar movement, whose repercussions eventually forced the American war machine to withdraw. So Port Huron was important, and it was the movements to which the statement lent purpose, coherence, and élan that made it important.

What about the craziness that came a little later—the internal splits and the dramatic pronouncements and the fatuous violence? Well, the truth is that we do not have a good understanding of the life course of movements. But what is immediately obvious is that the ideas of Port Huron could not be to blame. Movements, especially big movements, are subject to many influences, not least the influences of those who respond to them or fail to respond to them. In any case, the sometimes twisted life course of movements in decline is not my subject. Port Huron is, and 50 years after the issuing of the statement, I can only hope that an emerging new generation of young activists will profit from its wisdom and take heart from the victories to which it contributed.

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**Wilbur C. Rich**

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In the Port Huron Statement, the New Left offered its strong support of the black Civil Rights movement. However, when the Statement is reread, one is struck by its attempt to frame a developing grassroots struggle in which New Left activists were mostly observers rather than participants. Again rereading the Statement, one can easily find obvious conceptual holes, some paternalism, understandable shortsightedness, and forgivable naïveté. Much has happened since 1962. President Lyndon Johnson proved to be a welcomed surprise partner for Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights movement. After passing two major Civil Rights bills and after a progression of court decisions, America abandoned its *race-based society* and initiated a *race-equalizing policy* (Rich 2013). More important for southern blacks was the decision by their states to prosecute white participants in antiblack vigilante violence. The 1963 Mississippi reception of Bryon De La Beckwith is quite different from South Carolina's reaction to Dylan Roof in 2015. White people who commit such crimes are no longer heroes.

In the last 53 years, most people would agree that African Americans have come a long way legally and politically. Admitting this fact is not the same as saying that the struggle is over or that white America's racial pretentiousness and privileges have been eviscerated. Individual racism is still entrenched in the minds of some Americans. Moreover, the nation has had a series of recent racial incidents that reveal that individual racism is a light sleeper that can be easily awakened by fear, economic stress, and demagoguery.

If one surveys the generational history of African Americans, this sequence is telling. My *Post Racial Society Is Here* examined six different sequential generations of blacks who faced unique political and economic challenges. To make these transitions possible, the economic leaders need an operative black political class. As American politics and economics changed, so did the types of black politicians. Even in small cities in the Deep South, there are elected black politicians. In 1972, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a black think tank, began publishing an annual directory of black elected officials. Many saw the increase in numbers as a sign of racial progress.

The 2008 election of Barack Obama to the presidency was a surprise for the Sixties Generation. It was not the arrival of the postracial society so much as it was a part of the flow of socioeconomic events that made the race-based

society outmoded. A generation of African Americans, called the "presentation generation," commenced its long journey to find its voice (Rich 2013; 2015). The "Black Lives Matter Movement," for example, may not be the vanguard of this generation, but this group's critique of society has gotten attention. It is to be hoped that some of what these protesters and students have to say will shape the thinking of the new postracial black activists and politicians.

We now know that the New Left and its Huron Statement's hope for the future was blindsided by the twenty-first century. Who knew that the capitalist class would be so nimble? Who knew that some of them would use corporate inversion, an international financial strategy, to escape paying higher taxes? Who knew that a Supreme Court decision (*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 2010) would allow corporations to give unlimited and undisclosed funds to candidates for elective office? Who knew that a progressive state like California would pass Proposition 184, a three-strikes law that would incarcerate thousands of young minorities in correction facilities? Who knew that private prisons (e.g., Correction Corporation of America) would become a successful profit-making enterprise? Obviously, the Statement writers could not have forecast these events and their consequences.

Accordingly, it is time for black activists to promulgate a "Statement" of their own. First, it must address residential segregation. All-black neighborhoods and all-white neighborhoods are residential choices that are socially disabling to blacks and produce white insularity. The New Left made this observation 50 years ago (p. 263):

While cultures generally interpenetrate, white America is ignorant still of nonwhite America—and perhaps glad of it. The white lives almost completely with his immediate, close-up world where things are tolerable, there are no Negroes except on the bus corner. . . . Not knowing the "nonwhite," however, the white knows something less than himself. Not comfortable around "different people," he reclines in whiteness instead of preparing for diversity.

Second, what the poor need is more information about how the capitalist class adapts to changes in the economy. They do not need more studies on the effects of poverty. They need more information on how jobs have changed. They need to know how the capitalist class has changed. It is not the same capitalist class of the 1960s. Its members have more business gimmicks and legal ways to protect their advantage. Moreover, the choices that they make affect the poor intensely. Activists need to tell the poor how the new globalized economy affects their lives and help them find ways to cope.

Third, it is time for black activists to stop borrowing from the 1960's idealism expressed in the Statement and commentaries of the New Left. The soft socialism they espoused has problems. This is not to say that these

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political activists and the black political class should avoid coalitions with white progressives when necessary and prudent but, rather, that they should not become dependent on the imagination of white liberals. Nor should talented black activists invest their careers and energy only in elective office. This is not easy, as the presidency, Congress, courts, statehouses, governors' mansions, mayors' offices, and city councils are by definition seductive places.

Most post–Civil Rights black political scientists had no problems with the Port Huron Statement's expressed wish for a race-blind society and for a more participatory democracy. Like the New Left, we underestimated the adaptability of the capitalist class on all things economical. Moreover, black radical political scientists may have felt trapped between a Scylla and Charybdis–type choice. We could either become detectives for the capitalist class and get rewarded for investigating and reporting on the political activities of the black poor, or we could become political activists, delay our scholarly ambitions, and let the historical record of black people be written by white outsiders. This proved to be a false dilemma. Although some black political scientists may feel “citation deprived” because their research is not referenced by their white colleagues, they continued to write and act in the idealistic style of the Huron Statement. Yet we have to admit that the nation has evolved into a mixed-race and class-based society. The current society remains a skeleton of the race-based society, not the utopia that we hoped for in the 1960s. In the twenty-first century, poverty, social isolation, and class position are more inhibiting than race. The America that we live in is a doubting post-racial society. There is more work to be done to promote racial equality and equality more generally.

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**Sidney Tarrow**

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When, in June 1962, a group of progressive students met in Michigan to draft what became “The Port Huron Statement,” graduate students at Berkeley, where I was studying political science at the time, were only dimly aware of what was happening in the Middle West. Berkeley in the 1960s was more attuned to the Cold War, to the militarization of the American state, and to the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee across the Bay. Berkeley students’ protests against HUAC, which had been met by fire hoses in San Francisco, would lead to the free speech movement (FSM) that exploded two years later. It was HUAC and the FSM that radicalized many of us when the Port Huron Statement was drafted—and not Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

I began these comments with the anti-HUAC protests in the early 1960s not only because I was at Berkeley in those years but also to recall that the struggle for peace and against militarization were major sources of the New Left to which I think *The Port Huron Statement* gives insufficient attention. In the general radicalization of the Berkeley New Left that grew out of the FSM, the protests against HUAC were largely forgotten, but the struggle against the Vietnam War was the key to the cycle of contention that began in the early part of the decade.

Tom Hayden seems to agree. Writing in Richard Flacks and Nelson Lichtenstein’s volume, he argues (p. 25):

I believe the Port Huron vision of a progressive alliance would have succeeded in bringing a new governing majority to power in 1964, with a likelihood of avoiding the Vietnam War, were it not for the murder of [John F.] Kennedy and [Lyndon] Johnson’s subsequent escalation of it. This argument may be criticized as purely hypothetical, but it tries to capture the immensity of our dream and how close it seemed to our grasp. It is also a measure of the depths of despair we fell to in the years to come, a despair that lingers today among those who experienced both the beautiful struggle and the bitter fruit.

Hayden’s assessment of the “despair” of the New Left in the late 1960s can be read as sour grapes coming from someone whose reformism led him from the center of the Left to its periphery, or as his reading of the most complicated decade in recent American history, or as evidence of the interaction of war and social movements in general. I focus here on the relations between war and social movements.<sup>1</sup>

Wars have always had a complex relationship to social movements. The French Revolution was, in part, the result of the inability of the Old Regime to pay for its

wars and led directly to a series of new wars in which republican ideology was turned to the mission of defense of the *patrie* and aggression against France’s neighbors. The American Civil War was, in part, the result of the abolitionist and Free Soil movements and gave rise to a Radical Republicanism that would reshape the American state through the Reconstruction amendments. Italy’s entry into World War I was supported by a nationalist—and opposed by a socialist—movement, while the government’s failure to achieve its war aims led to Benito Mussolini’s fascist revolution. Although the Port Huron Statement and the formation of SDS had many sources, war and militarization played an important part both in the origins of the movement and in its collapse.

First, with respect to the movement’s origins: It is generally accepted that the New Left arose out of mobilization on behalf of Civil Rights. As Flacks and Lichtenstein write, “For virtually every early member of SDS, the rural, southern African American movement as exemplified in SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] was both political model and moral exemplar” (p. 6). Not only did future SDS leaders like Hayden win their spurs in the dangerous atmosphere of the Deep South; the new movement’s attachment to participatory democracy also drew directly on the Civil Rights movement’s “radically democratic form of decision making” (p. 5).

Civil Rights was a model for both the policy proposals and the participatory politics of the early SDS.<sup>2</sup> But it is often forgotten that Hayden and his colleagues were also deeply concerned with what they called “the general militarization of American society” and the installation of a defense-based economy (pp. 249–50). They worried about the role of the individual in the warfare state (pp. 254–55), and they were deeply concerned about the dangers to the human race of America’s deterrence strategy (pp. 255–56). Long before the Johnson administration’s escalation of the war in Vietnam, the Port Huron Statement called for “universal controlled disarmament” (p. 264).

This takes us to the impact of the New Left on the Vietnam War and of that war on the movement. There is no doubt that among the factors that led to ending the war in Southeast Asia was the mounting pressure of the movement and its impact on congressional resolutions and on the troops themselves (Burstein and Freudenberg 1978; Corright 1975). But the war also had a divisive impact on the movement. Alongside the uprisings in the black communities that drove a wedge between black and white citizens, the war drove a wedge between liberals and social democrats within the movement.

Hayden had no illusions about the difficulties SDS faced in bridging the cleavage over the war. For example, in trying to understand the failure of the New Left to build a coalition with organized labor, he points to “the secret pro-Cold War element within liberalism, directly

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and indirectly tied to the CIA, which was fiercely opposed to our break from Cold War thinking” (p. 28). But the gap between liberalism and social democracy was more general: On the one hand, the racial disturbances in the black communities helped to cool white liberal support for Civil Rights and for the New Left more generally; on the other hand, the nation was at war, and that led many Americans to temper their criticisms of the American state. It was not until the end of the 1960s that solid majorities of Democratic Party voters came around to opposing the war (Berinsky 2009, 19).

In the early 1960s, it could still seem to Hayden and his friends that blacks and whites, liberals, social democrats, and peace activists might come together in a “beautiful struggle” animated by participatory democracy. The Port Huron Statement was an eloquent expression of that dream. But war and domestic contention drove a deep wedge in that coalition, a coalition that only reappeared briefly in the movement against the Iraq War in 2003 (Heaney and Rojas 2013) and remains elusive today.

### **Notes**

- 1 For truth in advertising, I draw in this review on the historical chapters in my recent book, *War, States and Contention*, so I may be more struck by the antiwar message of The Port Huron Statement than some of the other authors in this symposium.
- 2 There is no doubt that the civil rights movement’s emphasis on participatory politics influenced the early New Left. I would only add that “participation” was more generally in the air in the early 1960s, in part in reaction to the stultifying hierarchical organization of the Old Left, and in part as the result of independent developments in political philosophy.

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**Nicholas Xenos**

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By the time I found myself in the middle of the political upheavals and doctrinal arguments associated with the New Left, the Port Huron Statement was less a tangible presence than the ghost of a recently departed relative. This was the late 1960s and early 1970s, and much had changed since the founders of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) met on the shore of Lake Huron in 1962 and issued their manifesto. In his contribution to the essays in this edited collection that accompany the Statement, which he drafted, Tom Hayden points to the assassinations of Medgar Evers and President John Kennedy in 1963, Malcolm X in 1965, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy in 1968 as factors that changed the political landscape envisioned in it, along with escalation of the war in Vietnam and its consequences for the funding of programs associated with the War on Poverty. He is right to do so, but the list alone cannot convey the texture of the times and why, by 1970, the Statement had become a specter. This can be seen by noting the changing context over the decade of the 1960s with respect to the impact of black Civil Rights activism on white radicals, the politics of the university, and the relationship between liberals and radical democrats.

The editors of this volume, Nelson Lichtenstein and Richard Flacks, who was at Port Huron, rightly emphasize the significance of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) on the early SDS members. SNCC grew out of a lunch counter sit-in by four African American students in Greensboro, South Carolina. Hayden and Paul Potter, another SDS founder, went to Mississippi to help organize along with SNCC activists and were beaten and jailed by local whites, giving them a first-hand glimpse of the dangers confronting black organizers (a danger that earned Mississippi greater national attention after the murder of Evers and, in June 1964, of two white and one black organizers of the Congress for Racial Equality [CORE], during the so-called freedom summer). But it also schooled them in the practices of participatory political participation and the notion that such participation was itself a form of political education. Translated into the concept of participatory democracy, the influence of SNCC on the Port Huron Statement became its lasting legacy. But the violence unleashed against black activists pushed them necessarily in more radical directions. By 1970, it was the Black Panther Party that provided a very different activist model for many urban white radicals to emulate.

Student activism on a broad scale was notional at the time the Statement was drafted, but that began to change with the free speech movement (FSM) at Berkeley in the middle of the decade, which was largely directed internally against the emergence of the “megaversity” and the business ethos it implied. By contrast, the 1968 strike at Columbia University, in part led by an increasingly more militant SDS and in part by a group of African American activists, that began several days before King’s assassination on April 4 and escalated afterward, was outer directed. The two principal issues were the university’s affiliation with the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), an independent think tank that was conducting research for the U.S. Defense Department, on the one hand, and Columbia’s plan to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park, adjacent to the campus and the predominantly African American neighborhood of Harlem, on the other. The strike and building occupations came to a violent end on April 30 when police were called in, resulting in more than 700 arrests and scores injured. The intervening period between the FSM and the Columbia events are an indication of how the Vietnam War and racial politics were increasingly intersecting in explosive ways by the end of the decade. And then the Cambodia incursion in late April 1970 led to demonstrations on campuses across the country, which in turn resulted in the national guard shootings at Kent State in Ohio on May 4, killing four white youths, and, 11 days later, in two African American deaths from police bullets at Jackson State in Mississippi.

Meanwhile, whatever hope was articulated in the Port Huron Statement for an alliance between radicals and liberals dissipated within a few years. Hayden underplays this in his essay, but he was an eyewitness to that dissipation at the Democratic Party National Convention in Chicago in August 1968, which nominated Hubert Humphrey while Chicago police beat and teargassed demonstrators in the streets. Hayden was indicted along with seven others for traveling across state lines to incite a riot. The so-called Chicago Eight became the Chicago Seven when codefendant Bobby Seale, a Black Panther leader, was first bound and gagged in the courtroom during the ensuing trial and then separated from the others and sentenced to four years in jail for contempt of court. The remaining seven included a range of left political persuasions, including, most theatrically, Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, so-called Yippies, who once appeared in court wearing judicial robes and when ordered to remove them, revealed the Chicago Police Department uniforms they had on underneath—a far cry from the earnest young men and women of the SDS founding era.

These events, along with the increasingly frequent and large-scale demonstrations and other protests against the war in Vietnam, help explain why, as Michael Kazin notes in his contribution, there was no mention of the

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Port Huron Statement in the essays collected by former SDS president Carl Oglesby and published in *The New Left Reader* in 1969. Among the authors represented in that volume are Fidel Castro, Daniel Cohn-Bendit (who rose to fame during the Paris events of 1968), Rudi Dutschke (leader of the German SDS), Frantz Fanon, Louis Althusser, Herbert Marcuse, and the Black Panther Huey Newton. Only C. Wright Mills remains as someone whose writings helped inspire the Statement. The effort to articulate a distinctly American radical tradition was floundering as the nation's institutions were collapsing.

It is, therefore, a mistake to treat the New Left as a single entity. What was perhaps common to the various political groups with which I associated, at least, was the idea of participatory democracy, if not always the practice. In that sense, the legacy of the SNCC organizers was more important than any text, but it was the Port Huron Statement that named it, and it was that sometimes vague notion that wafted through the New Left. However, the sort of analyses of political, economic, and cultural institutions presented in the Statement struck me as naive, lacking in complexity, and highly moralizing as compared to those found in Oglesby's collection. I turned in particular toward the European Marxism represented by the young Georg Lukàcs, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Korsch, Antonio Gramsci, and the early

Frankfurt School to make sense of the political clashes in which I took part. But along with these texts, I studied the struggle between the forces of order and change in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe to give me perspective on my own experience. Political science, as such, offered me little in that regard, but political theory promised more. (I recall talking to a fellow student activist and saying that I found *Leviathan* difficult and was surprised that he did not. But then I realized that he thought we were talking about an underground paper out of Chicago by that name, while I was talking about Hobbes.) The proper study of politics as I understood it then, and understand it now, is theoretical and historical.

The ghost of the Port Huron Statement continues to haunt, however. Less than the text itself, the specter is the tradition of American radicalism that had seemed to die in the New Left's fragmentation. The quarterly *democracy: A Journal of Political Renewal and Radical Change*, whose editor was Sheldon S. Wolin, was an effort in which I participated in the early 1980s to rethink and resuscitate that tradition, warts and all. The guiding spirit of that effort was the belief that participatory democracy is an essential defining characteristic of American radicalism. The journal lasted only a few years, but the Port Huron Statement rises from the grave from time to time to remind us of that legacy and that aspiration.