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Battle for the Boulevard

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Patricia Luann Antoine for the Master of Science in Sociology presented June 8, 1992.

Title: Battle for the Boulevard

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:


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This study explored the nature of community power and decision-making surrounding the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue in honor of the slain civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. Employing an integrated theoretical framework based on G. William Domhoff's (1967) perspective of the compatibility of C. Wright Mills' Power Elite Model (1956) and Robert A. Dahl's Pluralist Model (1961) plus Claude S. Fischer's (1982) perspective on the nature of the

urban social environment, this study attempted to provide insight into and understanding of the dynamics involved in the controversy that developed over the efforts to rename a street for Dr. King, the decision-making process, and the apparent motivations of the participants.

Content analysis of written communication, including newspaper articles, official documents, minutes of both public and private meetings, and material distributed by involved groups, constitute the major source of data for the study. This material was supplemented by two interviews with individuals who played key roles in the controversy. The data were then analyzed to give a chronological ordering of the events involved and to illustrate their importance. Data were also selected and analyzed in response to the research questions which focused on identification and motivation of the key individuals involved, the influences affecting the choices and final decision to rename Union Avenue rather than another thoroughfare, as well as the nature of the influence and the roles of the individuals and groups involved in the issue and how they impacted the process and the final outcome.

The integrated theoretical perspective described above was valuable in providing an over-arching framework by which to organize and interpret the observable data and its relevance to the research questions. But the model has shown to be less capable of addressing the possible "behind

the scenes" influences or the strategic use of non-action by involved players which may have affected the decision-making process.

The study also indicated the possible impact of the influentials from outside the community. These "extra-community" influences acting on or through local individuals and groups suggest that what was seen as a local issue may, in reality, have been affected by outside influences. In future studies of local controversies and the involved decision-making processes, it may be desirable to utilize an expanded conceptualization of influences involved in the process.

BATTLE FOR THE BOULEVARD

by

PATRICIA LUANN ANTOINE

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requirements for the degree of

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1986 a recommendation was made that a prominent street in Portland, Oregon be renamed to honor the memory of the slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. A citizen's committee first proposed the renaming of Portland's Front Avenue which runs through the main business district and along the west bank of the Willamette River. After an intense negative reaction from the public and the local business community, the committee changed its recommendation and proposed renaming Union Avenue which is on the east side of city and runs through inner North Portland and much of the black community. This proposed street renaming and its eventual approval by the City Council brought months of heated community debate which polarized much of the city into opposing camps---those in favor of renaming Union Avenue in honor of Dr. King and those who wished to retain the Union Avenue name. In an attempt to settle this dispute, interest groups waged battle through the media and attempted to take the issue directly to the voters for a decision. The proponents and opponents

eventually ended up in both the local and state court systems.

Such an unusually high level of citizen involvement in a routine city governmental process such as street renaming stands in stark contrast to the general lack of citizen interest and participation in most public decision-making. Generally low citizen interest in governmental processes may be due in part to the public perception of government as being static and non-responsive to community needs. But the day-to-day operation of local government is anything but static. It requires tremendous numbers of decisions, many of which are routine and mundane, but none the less necessary if services are to be delivered and public needs and concerns are to be met. "These day-to -day operations go virtually unnoticed by the public as long as everything functions as expected" (Blumenauer Interview 1991). Lack of public interest or concern in issues in manifested in low public attendance at council or board meetings and public hearings, the difficulty of getting people to serve on budget or advisory committees, and a general apathy of the public even when local government actively seeks public input on specific issues. Even issues put before the voters receive only minimal attention from the public. Low voter turnout for elections involving local issues and unopposed candidates for local board and council positions are common

occurrences. It appears that the routine operations and decisions of local government generate little interest in the public's eyes.

In light of this low level of public involvement in local government activities, one might anticipate little public concern over the renaming of a public street or for that matter, over a city's street renaming policy. Such a mundane procedural issue might be expected to generate little, if any, public attention. And in fact in most cases this is quite true. Street renamings are not an uncommon action requested of city governments. Most requests involve the annexation of developed land previously outside the city where the street names have been independently approved by the county (not in coordination with the city). The incorporation of these areas by the city often includes the renaming of the existing streets. But requests to rename streets within the city also occasionally occur. Typically, neither of these types of requests generate much concern by the public and therefore, little public attention.

That being the case, what was it that turned an ordinary, routine, and generally unnoticed decision by the City of Portland to rename a street into a major community controversy? Who were the key interest groups who mobilized the public to such a high level of involvement and concern? These questions have been used to explore the community

dynamics which impacted the decision-making process surrounding this controversy.

The understanding of the nature of this community controversy and the factors involved in the decision-making process may also be of interest because of the number of cities which have encountered similar controversies surrounding their efforts to rename streets in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Since the mid 1980's, major cities across the nation have experienced intense public debate over these street renaming efforts which have resulted in completely blocked efforts (Greenville, Mississippi), continued controversy and opposition to city decisions to rename streets for King (New Orleans, Louisiana and Seattle, Washington), and the eventual reversal of past decisions to rename streets in King's honor (San Diego, California and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania) (Mayer 1989a; Rose 1991). According to an article distributed by a national news service and printed in The Oregonian (Rose 1991), a cursory comparison of the efforts by these cities to rename a street in honor of king yields an apparent pattern involving the necessity of multiple attempts to rename a street, a heated debate over which street should be renamed and whether it should be a new or old street, racial hostility, and the division of much of the community into opposing positions on the issue. This pattern, similar to that which developed in

Portland, of issues involved in these cities' street renaming efforts highlights the importance of examining the variables involved in the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue as a baseline model for later comparative studies.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Who has control over the renaming of a city street and who has the potential to influence the involved decision-making process-the city bureaucracy, the business sector, or specific interest groups? Such an apparently simple question was at the core of a community controversy over the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The city decision to rename a street in honor of King sparked a three year long controversy which included the emergence of community factions with varied positions on the issue, legal questions surrounding the city's street renaming procedure, the use of the state's initiative petition process, and speculation as to the personal motivations of key players in the controversy.

This study attempted to unravel some of the complexities involved in the decision-making process which surrounded the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue. Employing a synthesis of Mill's Power Elite Model (1956) and Dahl's Pluralistic Model (1961) based on Domhoff's (1967) perspective of the compatibility of the two approaches and

using Fischer's perspective on the nature of the urban environment, this study used content analysis of newspaper articles and written documents supplemented by interviews to provide insight and understanding into the nature of this community controversy, the decision-making process and the apparent motivations of those involved. An overview and discussion of this theoretical framework and methodological approach is provided in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

Apparently Americans generally subscribe to the ideal that decisions affecting public policy are made with the participatory input of the general public or its representatives. This conceptualization of public policy decision-making can be traced to the image of this nation's early development and its incorporation of the fundamental elements of "democracy." Such traditions as town hall meetings, public debates, and the notion of one person, one vote, have reinforced beliefs that each individual has a voice in community decision-making. But throughout much of the country's history there have been those who have challenged this idealized image and countered with alternative models of how decisions are in fact made. In the late 1800's and early 1900's historians began to examine possible social and economic class interests involved in the development and final adoption of the Constitution of the United States (Fiske, 1888 and Beard, 1913 as cited by Current 1983, pp. 164-5). This perspective of specific class interests that were protected and reinforced by the

Constitution provided an early glimpse of the growing acknowledgement that there is differential access to the decision-making process.

THREE DECISION-MAKING MODELS

These early works laid the foundation for social scientists who have generated a large body of literature focused on differential access to power, influence, and public decision-making. Of the many theorists who have worked in this area, the models developed by C. Wright Mills, Robert A. Dahl, and G. William Domhoff reflect a major debate in the fields of political science and sociology over whether an identifiable elite class exerts an inordinate amount of influence over public decision-making (the "reputational" approach) or whether a plurality of different groups, each having varying degrees of success under various circumstances (the "decisional" approach), influence the process. Each perspective and its research approach leads to a very different view of who controls the process and how decisions are made.

The "Power Elite" model set forth by C. Wright Mills (1956) focuses on a clearly identifiable group which occupies the top positions in the military, political, and economic institutions. According to Mills, the key decisions made by the corporate rich, the military

leadership, and the political directorate determine the basic structure and direction of American society. Their decisions and activities reflect self interests in maintaining their dominance with little regard for the general welfare of the ordinary citizen (although group interest may coincide with the general welfare of society). This group does not act in a conscious, conspiratorial manner and while members may often disagree with each other over a specific issue, a unique shared interest may emerge based on similarities of backgrounds and social experiences, and the inter-dependency and interlocking nature of economics, politics, and the military. To Mills, evidence of the inter-dependent relationship of these institutions includes the frequent exchange of those in top positions from one institution to another, the ability to facilitate or hinder each others' activities, and the consideration of one another's interests and policies. This circle of interlocking directorates and top administrative officials actively work together to establish national policy with the actions of each having ramifications for one another as well as for the rest of society.

The Power Elite perspective also provides a model of control and influence at a local community level. Mills saw local communities as structures of power as well as hierarchies of status (1956, p. 36). He described a four

tiered structure with a clique at the top which is composed of those in large corporate, financial, and real estate positions who judge and decide important community issues as well as many larger issues at the state and national level which directly affect the local community. Below the upper class are what Mills refers to as the "operations men" (small businesspeople and local public officials), a third level composed of heads of civic agencies, petty local officials, and news people, and a fourth level consisting of the rank and file local business people, teachers, and ministers. It is the clique at the top of this hierarchy that controls the decision-making process at the local level. Even though the local elite has influence at the community level, Mills argued that "no local society is in truth a sovereign locality" (1956, p. 39) and therefore, it is the national level elite who have ultimate influence and control of the decision-making process.

In general, Mills saw the "top as unprecedently powerful and increasingly unified and willful" while at "the middle levels the process is an increasingly semi-organized stalemate of interests" (1956, p. 297) which facilitates the potential for control and influence by those at the top (elite). Under this conceptualization of the middle level structure, the elite would be seen to have the potential to intercede in local decision-making when the issues warrant

their attention. Mills' model also includes the notion that even though authority formally resides "in the people," the power of initiation is in fact held by a relatively small circle of people. As a result, a standard strategy of manipulation is to make it appear that the people, or at least a large number of them, "really made the decision" (Mills 1956, p. 317). This attempt to protect the illusion of participatory decision-making may in some part explain why even when manifest authority is made available to the elite, many of these people with direct access to power may prefer secret, indirect, or latent ways of influencing policy decisions.

In contrast to the Power Elite Model, Robert A. Dahl developed what has been referred to as the "Pluralistic Model" of community control and decision-making. As a result of his study of New Haven, Connecticut, Dahl developed a conceptualization of the nature of decision-making at the local level which stands in stark contrast to the picture painted by Mills. Most notable among the differences between these two models is Dahl's identification of the middle class as the primary decision-maker with the upper class (elite) playing a role only in what he refers to as specific "issue-areas" (such as business and finance).

In his model of community decision-making, Dahl first identified what he referred to as "social and economic notables" who possess upper class characteristics (wealth, income, status, education, social background, etc). These "Notables" have both assets and liabilities in terms of their potential influence on decisions. Their assets include (1) political resources such as money and social standing, (2) authority status in the community's eyes on business or finance issues, (3) a financial stake in the community which provides them with an incentive to participate in community decisions, (4) active communication and interaction among their class, and (5) little or no organized resistance at a local level. On the other side of the ledger, their frequent disagreements between themselves and marginal participation in politics, their limitation to business issue areas, and their small number may act as liabilities for potential influence in decision-making. In light of this balance sheet of characteristics, Dahl concludes that the potential for influence by the "Notables" is a complex function of factors such as their application, persistence, and skill, the amount of opposition they generate, the degree to which their objectives are consistent with the political aims of the elected leaders, and the degree to which their aims are

consistent with widespread beliefs in the community (Dahl 1961 p. 74-6).

As a result of this complex matrix of characteristics that must come together for the Notables to exert influence in politics, Dahl found that different members of the community influenced different issue-areas. The Notables most frequently had influence in business issues, but the middle class had the most impact on other issue areas (with different members having influence in different issue-areas) and blue collar workers were found to have little, if any, influence. Part of the reduction of Notables' influence (in comparison to past actions) can be attributed to the above noted liabilities, but Dahl also discussed the impact of the migration of the Notables to the suburbs and their increased participation in private schools and exclusive clubs which remove them from the involved community.

In addition to these differential influence patterns, Dahl's model proposes several hypotheses which were supported by his study and that have implications for applying his model to other communities. He found that overall only a small proportion of local citizens have much direct influence on specific community decisions, the local leaders influencing decisions have large groups of auxiliaries and subgroups to help them with their tasks, and the actual origin and nature of the influence is often

cloaked by democratic rituals which might involve such strategies as public hearings or the taking of public testimony (which may have little, if any, influence on the decision). He also noted that leaders shape their policies in an attempt to insure a future flow of rewards to their supporters and that there occasionally are conflicts between the leaders overt policies (to gain voters support) and their overt policies (to win support of their subleaders or other leaders) (Dahl 1961, p. 102). These findings may help provide insight into the nature of influence and decision-making in a community and may be especially useful as tool for understanding the possible methods of influence and the motivations of those involved in the process.

In comparing Mills' Power Elite Model and Dahl's Pluralistic Model, G. William Domhoff believed that pluralism on the local level is not incompatible with the idea of a national upper class that is a governing class (Domhoff 1967). In his conceptualization, Domhoff delineated a social upper class with disproportionate wealth, income, and numbers of members in controlling institutions. But unlike Mills' Elite, Domhoff's upper class may or may not be part of the "Power Elite" and in turn, the Power elite may or may not be part of the upper class. If the Power Elite are not part of the upper class, they are from the institutions controlled by them or are

"co-opted" into the ranks of this group. Domhoff saw the national upper class elite as having control over major corporations, universities, the military, and the presidency making them in some ways a "Governing Class." He also asserted that the elite did not control but only influenced the legislative branch of the federal government, most state governments, and the majority of local governments.

To Domhoff, the influence of the governing class on state and local government varies tremendously from state to state and may take many forms. At the state level, the elite may exert influence through generation of campaign funds, lobbying efforts, and as a result of their (the elite) close working relationship with state agencies (especially with the regulatory bodies) (Domhoff 1967, p. 135). On a local level, the elite has the ability to cut production or move the company, they control non-governmental resources which impact the decision-making process (newspaper ownership, civic associations, charitable organizations, etc.), and many of their white collar employees who share similar (elite) interests (Domhoff 1967 p. 137). At both the state and local levels the elite clearly have avenues of potential influence, but not necessarily control.

But lack of control at these levels is not incompatible with the idea of a national upper class governing elite.

According to Dahl, the upper class in New Haven withdrew from the community while at the same time putting their children in private schools and forming exclusive clubs. This separation from the local community in part explains their lack of direct participation in the public arena and happens to coincide with the time of the formation of "national elite" discussed by Mills. At this time their (the elites) attention was focused on the national level and only diverted to local affairs when the issues at stake affected their interests (business and economy).

SUMMARY OF MODELS

By the late 1960's the two dominant perspectives in the study of power and community decision-making (the elitist and the pluralists) had come to a stalemate in the discussion over which provided the best understanding of the involved factors. Both perspectives have contributed substantially to our understanding of community decision-making. The elitists have provided insights into the existence of power outside the formal decision-making structures of government and exposed the subtle existence of the power (the influence of latent power holders), while the pluralists focused attention on the need to study specific actions surrounding decision-making, the possibility that

power varies over time, and the role of bureaucracy in decision-making (Trounstine and Christensen 1982, p. 36).

A major component of this debate (over the advantages of each model) focuses on the nature of each perspective's related research approach. The elitists and their "reputational" approach focus their attention on asking people (or collecting lists of community leaders and activists from local newspapers, organizational membership lists, etc.) who they think has power, why they have it, and how they use it. This approach is criticized by the pluralists who raise questions about the gap between the public perception of who has power and the substantive exercise of power. At the same time the elitists challenge the pluralists and their decisional approach which is based on the notion that nothing can be assumed about the distribution of power and it (power) should therefore be studied by examining its use in specific decisions on specific issues. Elitist criticism of this approach focuses on concerns that it is time-bound (because it studies specific issues), it negates the role of nondecisions/nonevents abetted by mechanisms of socialization, anticipated response, and informal vetoes (by the elite), and it may overlook the role of shared business values by the decision-makers which may make direct business

intervention unnecessary (Trounstine and Christensen 1982, p. 24-9).

One way to resolve this dispute was to combine these two perspectives, which has proved to be a viable option used by many during the last few decades. Domhoff's notion of the possible compatibility of the concepts of Mill's Power Elite Model and Dahl's Pluralistic Model, as well as his observation that different approaches often yielded different results, lent support for the potential of using both perspectives. The use of both approaches can be mutually supportive with each probing slightly different dimensions of power and decision-making, where as the use of a single method may inevitably obscure relevant factors (Trounstine and Christensen 1982, p. 37).

Studies utilizing both perspectives and their related research methods have provided empirical data which supports the use of a synthesized approach and illustrates that each method does reveal slightly different aspects of power and decision-making (Freeman et al 1963) and that the use of both methods often produces a substantial overlap of data (which provides further evidence that each probes different dimensions of power) (Miller 1970). The combined use of these two perspectives also expands the number of possible players who have the potential to impact local decision-making and may therefore be potentially useful in

understanding the dynamics involved in complex local decision making processes which involve a plurality of interest groups.

THE URBAN CONTEXT

In addition to the participants in the public decision-making process, the nature of the context in which these decisions are made also has an affect on the process. An extensive body of literature focusing on urban phenomena has been generated by social scientists (such as Ernest W. Burgess, Robert E. Park, Gideon Sjoberg, and Louis Wirth) who examined the many facets of urbanization and urban environments. From the body of urban literature, the work of Claude S. Fischer is of particular relevance to this study. Fischer explores the nature of America's urban environment and how urban life affects the way people think and act socially (Fischer 1982). Fischer contrasts life in large cities and small towns in terms of patterns of friendship, life style, and community involvement. According to Fischer, Americans generally see urban life as an unhealthy environment in terms of both social and psychological well-being. It is seen as a place where people are lonely, estranged from traditional family units, and are moving from one shallow relationship to another. It is viewed as a place where the sheer complexity and

differentiated urban landscape weakens social ties and isolates its residents. In the urban environment, people are assumed to know each other only superficially or on an impersonal level, and personal networks are sparse and transitory.

Fischer sees the urban environment in very different terms from the description of the general public perception. Urbanism does have consequences for personal relationships, but not in the ways previously described. A city's heterogeneity facilitates varied and distinct social networks. According to Fischer, it is generally agreed upon that social networks are based on personal interactions with an individual's kin, close friends, acquaintances, and the set of people with whom the individual is directly involved (1982, p.3). "It is through these personal ties that society makes its mark on us and vice versa" (Fischer 1982, p. 4). These personal networks are not bound to a particular geographic community, but "personal communities are linked to residential communities" (Fischer 1982, p. 8).

The characteristics of places lived in partly determine the choices and constraints that are available, but it is also important to note that people are not passively molded by their community. People choose and construct their own networks and relationships. These choices are constrained by society's rules, social pressures, individual

personality, and the social context of our living environment. Within these constraints, the urban environment does produce conditions which generate different social networks. Urbanism does not seem to weaken the social community; rather it helps sustain a plurality of communities and intensify the distinctiveness of their subcultures (Fischer 1982, p. 264). Because people tend to build networks involving others that are similar to themselves and to live around people with similar characteristics, residential patterns make it likely that neighborhoods will tend to be similar (in terms of race, income, age, and so on). These differentiated residential patterns create a patch-work urban environment of small semi-homogeneous "communities." Although there is a great deal of individual variation within each of these communities, their homogeneity is one resource base upon which social networks are built.

Social networks may also be built around other characteristics. Within the urban setting people have contact with others in many different settings (work, school, church, interest groups, etc.). In each of these groups people share specific common characteristics. Therefore, given the way people build their social networks, urban residents tend to have varied and distinct social ties outside their residentially based networks. These varied

patterns of personal relationship create an overlapping mosaic of subcultural networks in which an individual may belong to several network systems. This conceptualization of urban social patterns illustrates the potential options for urbanites to build alternative support networks to replace or substitute for the traditional rural network patterns lost during the transition to urbanization.

Employing both Fischer's perspective of the nature of the urban environment and its effects on the social patterns of individuals and Domhoff's integration of the Power Elite Model and the Pluralistic Model of public decision-making, where multiple players have the potential to impact the process with varying degrees of success, provides the framework utilized in this study to examine the nature of the controversy over the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue. Simultaneously, this examination allows an assessment of the applicability and limitations of these approaches.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were developed based on the above literature review and are designed to focus on specific issues which may provide insight into the nature of power and influence in the decision-making process

surrounding the renaming of Union Avenue. Following are the five research questions along with their rationales.

Question 1

The first question focuses on the selection of the initial citizen advisory committee (MLK committee) which proposed changing the name of Union Avenue. The formation of a citizen advisory committee and the selection of its members play an important role in the potential success of any recommendations which it may bring to the specific governing body to which it is responsible. Such committees by their very nature and their purpose for existence center on issues which will ultimately be decided in the public arena. These issues are frequently controversial in nature which prompts the governing body to reach out to the general public for guidance in the decision-making process and allows them (in the governing body) to later reap the benefit of citizen support of the decision they helped formulate. Therefore, not only does the formation of a citizen's advisory committee in itself hold importance in understanding a community control issue, but the selection of individual members reveals much as to the understanding of the issue and the community by those forming the committee. Members may be selected based on individual personal characteristics, professional qualifications, their community reputation, and/or their potential for community

influence. Who was selected to be on a committee and why they were chosen may provide insight into the nature of power and decision-making within a community. How decision-makers or those who try to impact the decision-making process understand the nature of the issue to be put before the committee may also be reflected in the selected make-up of the committee membership.

Therefore the first research focus is: Who appointed the Martin Luther King Jr. Street Renaming Committee, who was on the committee, and why were these particular individuals chosen?

Question 2

The second concern relates to the choice of renaming Union Avenue and not another thoroughfare. Initially, the MLK Committee had proposed renaming Front Avenue, but changed its recommendation to Union Avenue after overwhelming opposition to the Front Avenue proposal surfaced (Mayer 1989a). When the Union Avenue renaming recommendation was made similar opposition surfaced, but this time the MLK committee held firm to its proposal. Those opposed to the renaming of Union Avenue voiced concern over the historical significance of the name and the economic impact to businesses located along Union Avenue and countered with their own proposals to rename other streets or sites (eg. the new convention center, a park, or a

bridge) (Mayer 1989b). These concerns had been the same as those raised over the earlier proposal to rename Front Avenue but this time, despite all the public debate over the Union Avenue name change, the MLK Committee held fast to its recommendation. Exploration of these decisions (and the involved decision-making process) may provide insight as to the nature of the power and influence that impacted the decision-making process.

This sequence of events leads to the second question area of research focus: Why was Union Avenue selected to be renamed and did it really matter which street was chosen, and if so, to whom did it matter?

Question 3

The next area of interest focuses on the city's street renaming policy. When the idea of renaming a street in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. began to gain momentum, the City of Portland lacked a formal policy for street renaming. Previous responses to name change requests had been inconsistent (The Skanner 1987a), so when Commissioner Earl Blumenauer, who was in charge of the city Department of Transportation (that handles street renaming recommendations), was contacted about the formation of the MLK Committee and its forthcoming proposal, he initiated the development and modification of both the MLK Committee recommendation and the city's street renaming policy

resulted in confusion over the relationship of the two events and accusations were made concerning the city's improper use of the newly adopted policy (Mayer 1990a). It is therefore important to explore this relationship to determine who may have had influence on the policy development process or affected the way in which it was implemented.

The lack of clarity as to the relationship between the MLK Committee and the ongoing process of developing and implementing a city street renaming policy results in the third research question: Did the Portland City Council follow the city's street renaming policy or did they circumvent its own process?

Question 4

The fourth area of interest in understanding the nature of this community issue relates to the key groups involved in the controversy. In recent years there has been an obvious lack of involvement by the public in most routine government decision-making activities. This may be due in part to the fact that involvement in any community issue requires a certain amount of both time and resources and because of this, individuals need some type of motivation to participate in the public decision-making process. This is especially true for those decision-making processes that are generally considered routine and uneventful. For these

issues, citizen involvement may be driven by significant personal and/or professional motives which justify the time and energy devoted to the "cause." In the course of the routine city process of renaming a street (Union Avenue), knowing who became involved and understanding possible motivations for their action in the controversy may provide insight into the nature of the community decision-making structure.

Therefore the fourth research concern is: Who played key roles in this decision-making process (directly or indirectly) and what did they have to gain by their desired outcome?

Question 5

The final concern focuses on the roles of the groups involved in the controversy. The public decision-making process is often complex and may include formal and/or informal lobbying by groups and individuals. Individual public decision-makers are sensitive to constituent concerns and respond accordingly, but what happens when the public is divided on how an issue would be resolved? Who gets listened to and why? Despite the general citizen apathy toward government described above, direct public accountability is highest at the local level where elected officials are perceptually, if not physically, within the reach of their constituency. It is at this local level

where the public has the greatest opportunity to have input into and influence over the governmental decision-making process. With these avenues of influence readily accessible at the local level, lobbying from various groups is often especially intense when issues are controversial. In these cases understanding how groups exert their influence and which have the most success may be helpful in sorting out complex community decision-making issues and determining who has the power and influence (or the potential for each) to impact community decisions.

In an attempt to clarify the issues involved in the community controversy surrounding the renaming of Union Avenue the following question will be explored: What types of influence were exerted by the key groups involved and how did they impact the process and outcome?

These five research question areas comprise the central issues to be evaluated.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the controversy surrounding the renaming of Union Avenue content analysis was chosen as the primary methodological tool. Using this research approach facilitated the systematic study and analysis of written communication reporting the events involved in this issue. As discussed by Kerlinger (1986), content analysis may be considered a primary method of observation where the researcher can ask questions of the communications that people have produced. This being the case, because the main forum for this controversy was the public media, the focus of analysis is on newspaper articles.

In using newspapers as the major source of data for analysis it is important to understand the nature of newspapers themselves. Newspapers serve several functions in society. They provide both public and private surveillance of people and events, as well as interpretation of these issues, and they contribute to the socialization of the public (Graber 1980). By facilitating public surveillance of selected people, organizations, and events and making them matters of public concern and/or political

action and thus, they play a role in setting the agenda for civic concern and action. And conversely, they can also reduce the possible influence of people and events or doom them to obscurity by not providing coverage. By determining what issues will be covered, as well as how much coverage will be given, newspapers also cue the public as to the assigned importance of the event. Issues given consistent major front page coverage appear to have more importance than those relegated to small or infrequent back page coverage. This variance in coverage may be due to available space in papers or to a conscious effort based on ideological or political reasons (Graber 1980). In addition to the public surveillance, newspapers provide individuals with a means to personally survey news events. People use the newspaper to keep in touch with issues they see as important to their personal lives.

A second function of the news media is that of interpretation. Even though idealistically newspapers objectively report the facts, they also "interpret events, put them into context, and speculate about their consequences" (Graber 1980, p. 7). Their chosen interpretation, as well as any suggested causes or relationships of events, may have political consequences and indirectly shape public opinion. The public, being far removed from most news events, often relies on newspapers as

its primary source of information, and therefore, the reader may only have the papers' report on which to form opinions. In these instances, the newspapers' interpretation of events has a tremendous impact on public perception of issues.

Newspapers also contribute to the political socialization and resocialization of the public. As described above, the news media often provide the only source of information about current events, indicate what is important and deserves public attention, and provide cues as to the nature of the relationship between events. Based upon this information, members of the public formulate their personal understandings, attitudes, and general comprehension of news events. In this role the news media contribute to the socialization of the general public.

Another factor concerning the nature of newspapers is the criteria by which papers select stories which will be printed. Five important criteria that are commonly used by newspapers include: 1) stories which have a high impact on the paper's readers, 2) stories which involve violence, conflict, scandal, or disaster, 3) those that involve familiar situations or people, 4) events that are close to home (local events have priority), and 5) news events that are timely and/or novel (Graber 1980, p. 63-8).

While acknowledging the generalized nature of newspapers in terms of their functions and the way in which

news events and stories are selected to be printed, it should also be noted that these factors have different implications according to the targeted readership of a paper. For instance, the determination that any one story will have a high impact on the reader may be true for one audience but not for another. Therefore, papers that target different readers may cover different stories or cover the same story from a different perspective. This being the case, using any one newspaper for analysis of a controversy involving a diverse community may not be totally satisfactory. Because of the potential problem of newspaper bias, this study will use three different newspapers' articles in an attempt to get a more comprehensive understanding of the controversy surrounding the renaming of Union Avenue. The three Portland newspapers purposefully chosen as sources of data were: The Oregonian-the city's major daily newspaper, The Skanner-(weekly) Portland's major newspaper serving the black community, and The Willamette Week-(weekly) a prominent alternative newspaper. These three papers were selected as sources of data in order to gain varying perspectives.

The articles selected for use in this study appeared in these three newspapers over the three and a half year period (1987-1990). Articles were selected based on the content indication of headlines (relating to the renaming of a

street in honor of King and the city's street renaming policy) and the content (same as above) identification code of the Multnomah County Library (Portland, Oregon) computer newspaper indexing system. Based on these criteria, over one hundred articles focusing on issues relating to the renaming of a street in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. were selected for analysis.

In addition to newspaper articles, other printed communication including official government documents, letters, and written communications, minutes of both public and private meetings, and material distributed by individual groups involved in the controversy were also analyzed in this study. This supplemental material was used to gain additional information which might not have been covered by any of the newspapers or might not have been covered in any great detail.

The original research design for this study also included proposed interviews with high profile individuals involved in the controversy surrounding the renaming of Union Avenue. But due to the reluctance of most of the proposed interviewees, only two interviews actually took place—one with City Commissioner Earl Blumenauer, who was responsible for the City Office of Transportation and who initiated the development of the street renaming policy, and one with Bernie Foster, who facilitated the formation of the

MLK committee and was a co-petitioner for the renaming of Union Avenue.

The third proposed interview was to have been with Rosalie Huss, organizer of the Union Avenue Committee. After several contacts requesting an interview were made, Rosalie Huss declined, stating that she couldn't understand why anyone would be interested in this issue (the renaming of Union Avenue) and that her position had already been clearly stated during the controversy. It should be noted that Huss' reluctance to be interviewed may also be related to the fact that she and her husband Walter Huss were interviewed twice before by graduate students whose work focused on their radical conservative activities and detailed their racist and anti-communist ideology. One of these students infiltrated the Huss political organization (the Freedom Center which distributed anti-communist and racist material) and exposed their ideology and activities to the press (McNall 1975, p. 6) while the other student, Scott G. McNall, gained their personal confidence while working for the Husses at the Freedom Center and then went on to publish his findings in a 1975 book (Career of a Radical Rightist) which explored the Husses' personal, professional, and political activities (McNall 1975, Smith 1990). These two experiences may have affected Rosalie

Huss' willingness to be once again interviewed by another graduate student.

These scheduled interviews were not essential to the outcome of this study and were intended only to add further depth of understanding to the material provided by written communication. The interviews that were completed are used in this supplemental manner.

DATA SELECTION

Two data selection approaches were used in this study. The first method relied on the specific information contained in the articles, documents, and interviews which described the chronological sequence of events during this controversy. Following the written material in order of date provided a time sequential overview of events as they were reported to have occurred, which was then used to reconstruct the timeline of events.

The second approach utilized in this study focused on the use of the five research questions as guides for the identification of relevant data. Each research question requires the selection of specific descriptive key words and phrases in order to search for the data necessary to address the question. For these questions the process involved searching for material which answered the question posed.

Following is a description of how each question was addressed.

Question 1 asks "Who appointed the MLK Committee, who was on the committee, and why were they selected?" By going through the written material and interviews, information was located which (a) identified Bernie foster as the initiator of the committee, (b) provided a membership list of committee members names and their organizational affiliation, and (c) outlined a committee member selection criteria list which appeared in the final MLK Committee Report. By using the question as a guide, relevant information was gathered to answer this question.

Question 2 asks why Union Avenue was chosen to be renamed and to whom did it matter. This question was addressed by reviewing both the City of Portland street renaming criteria and the criteria outlined by the MLK Committee which were used by the (MLK) committee to choose a street to be renamed in honor of King. In addition to this information, the MLK Committee minutes reflected much of the debate which led up to their final selection. Other data were also gleaned from newspaper articles and official documents as to public support/opposition to the proposed street renaming.

Question 3 focuses on whether or not the City of Portland followed its own street renaming policy. For this

question information as to the technical development (including the time frame) of the policy was described and the final street renaming process was outlined and compared to the actual actions taken by the city and the petitioners as reported in newspaper articles.

Question 4 focuses on the identification of key players involved in the renaming controversy which required the listing of all the individuals' names (and their reported affiliation) that appeared in newspaper articles. This list was then tallied and the top 10 percent (by frequency) were identified as playing key roles in this controversy.

These key individuals fell into three groups (by affiliation) which were then used to help address Question 5, which involves the types of influence used by these groups and the resulting impact on the process. For this question it was necessary to trace the actions taken by each group as reported by news articles, public documents, and interviewees in order to describe the types of influence each group employed and the outcome of their strategy.

The following chapter provides a chronological overview of the community controversy surrounding the renaming of Union avenue.

CHAPTER IV

THE BATTLE FOR THE BOULEVARD

Presented in this chapter are the data derived from the contents of newspaper articles, public documents, the MLK Committee Reports, and personal interviews. Following an overview of the data is an evaluation of the research questions.

OVERVIEW

The renaming of a Portland street in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. had its beginning back in 1986 when a community member approached Bernie Foster, a local black activist, with the idea. This person, not identified by Foster, had recently visited Denver, Colorado which has a prominent street near its airport named for Martin Luther King Jr., and she proposed that Portland had been remiss in not honoring his memory, especially in light of the recent recognition of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a federal holiday. After some discussion, Foster agreed to initiate a petition drive to determine if there was adequate community support for naming a street after King; he placed informational articles about the petitions in The Skanner, a

local black newspaper that he publishes (Foster Interview 1991). With over 4,000 signatures gathered, Foster, believing there was sufficient support for the idea, organized a citizen's committee which would "initiate a formal process for pursuing the street naming effort" (MLK Committee Report, 1987).

During August and September of 1987 the Martin Luther King Street Renaming Committee (MLK Committee) met six times to carry out their assigned task (making a recommendation of three possible streets to be considered for renaming in honor of King). Based on the recently adopted city street renaming criteria and the criteria generated by the MLK Committee, the committee first narrowed its list to six possible streets: Front Avenue, Union Avenue, Airport Way, Vancouver Avenue, Interstate Avenue, and Water Street (See Appendix A for map). From this list the committee members ranked their top three choices which resulted in a tie for first between Front Avenue and Union Avenue with no clear third choice. A late suggestion of Fifth Street (because it has highly visible, prominent business residents, and it is the street address of Portland City Hall) gained committee support as a third choice (MLK Minutes, September 10, 1987). This list of three options which all met the committee's criteria was forwarded to Bernie Foster with the recommendation of Front Avenue as the committee's first

choice (MLK Committee Report, 1987). On October 14, 1987 the MLK Committee formally made application with the City of Portland to change the name of Front Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

In accordance with the city's renaming policy the recommendation went to the historical review committee, and surveys were made of businesses and tenants along Front Avenue to sample area opinion of the proposed name change. The historical review committee reported that Front Avenue was one of the first streets platted in the City of Portland and that it had played an important role in the city's early development (Blumenauer Interview 1991). Front Avenue's apparent historical significance along with overwhelmingly negative survey returns from area businesses pressured the MLK Committee to withdraw its recommendation for renaming Front Avenue (The Skanner 1987).

After running into a road block on the Front Avenue proposal, the MLK Committee spend several months preparing for and drumming up support for the recommendation to rename Union Avenue in honor of King. In early November 1988, the MLK Committee formally submitted its application to rename Union Avenue (The Skanner 1988a), but because the committee inadvertently filed an incomplete application, it had to reapply again in January of 1989 (Mayer 1989a). The proposed name change received minimal response from

surrounding neighborhoods and businesses, but those that did respond were overwhelmingly against the change. Apparently giving little weight to the response of local residents, the Portland Planning Commission unanimously endorsed the proposal to rename Union Avenue (Mayer 1989c). After holding public hearings on the proposal and despite increasing public opposition to the idea, the City Council unanimously voted to rename Union Avenue Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in April of 1989 (Mayer 1989d).

Within a week after City Council action to change the name of Union Avenue, a group opposing the renaming (Citizens To Save Union Avenue) had filed a referendum to overturn council action with the county election office and had taken out petitions to gather the needed number of signatures (for the referendum) which would trigger an election where voters would decide if the council decision would stand (The Oregonian 1989a). Having run out of the time allotted by law to gather signatures and falling short of the required number of signatures for the referendum, the Union Avenue Committee immediately refiled for an initiative petition to reinstate the Union Avenue name. Oregon law allows for both the referendum and the initiative processes which are two separate methods of taking issues to the voters. A referendum deals with specific action of governing bodies (e.g. the council decision to rename Union

Avenue) and has a 30 day time limit for filing petitions (voter signatures), while the initiative petition may or may not relate to an existing law (and may be used as a way for citizens to force government decisions--e.g. community desires to maintain the Union Avenue name), and it has a much longer filing period for petition signatures (Mayer 1989e). Armed with the initiative petition's longer time period for gathering signatures, the reorganized Citizens for Union Avenue Committee (formerly Citizens to Save Union Avenue) now under the leadership of Rosalie Huss (a local conservative activist), gathered over 50,000 signatures (nearly twice the number needed) to put the Union Avenue name change to a vote of the people (Mayer 1990a).

With the election to decide the fate of the name change (Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard vs. Union Avenue) set for May 1990, many city residents were drawn into opposing camps: those in favor of the Martin Luther King Jr. name and those supporting the restoration of the Union Avenue name. The deeply held convictions of both groups generated an increasingly hot debate over the issue which provided the media with material for such dramatic headlines as "The New Division Street: The City Council's renaming of Union Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard has stirred wide resentment and may tear the city apart" (Oliver 1990a) (Division Street is a major existing thoroughfare in

Portland). As the controversy intensified, those who supported the Union Avenue name expressed concerns over the historical significance of the Union Avenue name, the economic impact to businesses along Union Avenue, and the city's failure to follow its own street renaming process. Others who supported the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard name accused some of their opponents of having racist motivations for opposing the name change.

With the battle lines drawn, both sides geared up for a long campaign. A local newspaper poll showing the public favoring the Union Avenue name by 61% (Oliver 1990b) was quickly followed by a court challenge to the legality of the initiative petition process. Supporters of the renaming, Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard, filed a challenge in circuit court claiming the council's decision to name a street after King was an administrative action and, therefore, not subject to the initiative petition process (Oliver 1990c). When the circuit court ruled that the council action had been administrative and threw out the initiative petition (Leeson and Carlin Ames 1990a), Walter and Rosalie Huss of the Union Avenue Committee appealed the decision to the Oregon Supreme Court. In record speed, the Supreme Court not only heard the case, but also handed down a ruling upholding the decision of the lower court (Oliver and Leeson 1990).

The issue apparently settled, supporters scheduled unity rallies to celebrate the renaming and to mend wounds created by the controversy, while those opposed to the renaming vowed to continue the battle (Austin 1990; Oliver 1990d). In a news conference Rosalie Huss of the Union Avenue Committee announced the group's intention to file new initiative petitions that would 1) limit the length of City Council service to three consecutive terms, 2) change the process for renaming city streets and other landmarks, 3) change the state constitution so that all legislative, administrative, and judicial decisions could be referred for public votes, and 4) amend the Portland City Charter to allow filing of referendums 90 days after a City Council vote (Oliver 1990d). The Union Avenue Committee failed to secure the needed signatures on the initiative petition seeking to have Portlanders vote every time the city changed the name of a street or other city feature (which was the only petition actually filed of those described above (Carlin Ames 1990).

With court appeals exhausted and voters apparently weary of the controversy, the battle for the boulevard appears to have subsided with the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard name intact.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA

As mentioned, local newspapers printed a stream of articles covering the controversy surrounding the effort to name a Portland street in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. In those articles, numerous individuals were named who were personally and/or professionally involved in, or affected by, the proposed name change. Of those who became involved because of their professional duties, there were some who were named in newspaper articles solely because of the nature of their job. These individuals were city, county, or state officials who handled administrative duties that affected various aspects of the controversy. For instance, Ernie Yuzon, Urban Projects Coordinator for the Office of Transportation for the City of Portland, was often interviewed by reporters because street renaming requests fell within his job responsibilities and he was the public official who could answer questions about city policy and procedures. Another example is Barbara Clark, City Auditor for the City of Portland, whose duties include the handling of initiative petitions for the city. This category of individuals accounted for many of the names mentioned in articles. Others mentioned in the articles were concerned about the controversy but they did not hold high visibility or leadership positions in the groups involved in the

controversy or they were sought out by the press in an effort to get community opinion on the issue.

In the one hundred and seven articles focusing on this issue which were printed in The Oregonian, The Skanner, and The Willamette Week between June of 1987 and July 1990, over one hundred individuals' names were included, each of whom had some connection to or involvement with the controversy. Of these individuals, forty were named in more than one article and eighteen were mentioned in more than five articles. But of those individuals who were most frequently mentioned, the nine people's names (top 10% by frequency) who appeared far more often than any others' and are therefore considered to have played key roles in the controversy (Research Question #4 (RQ #4)) are listed in Table I along with their affiliation (as described by the articles) and the number of articles in which their names appear.

Based on the affiliations attributed to these nine individuals (by the newspapers), they fall into three general categories (identified as key groups RQ #5): those proposing the renaming of a street in honor of King (Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard), those opposed to the renaming of Union Avenue (Rosalie and Walter Huss), and the elected officials who made the initial decision to grant the petition request to rename Union Avenue (Earl Blumenauer,

TABLE I
INDIVIDUALS NAMED IN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

NAME	AFFILIATION	NUMBER OF ARTICLES
Rosalie Huss	Citizens to Save Union Avenue	30
Bernie Foster	Publisher: <u>The Skanner</u>	22
Earl Blumenauer	Portland City Commissioner	21
Bob Koch	Portland City Commissioner	21
Walter Huss	Citizens to Save Union Avenue	19
Carolyn Leonard	Chair, MLK Committee	19
Bud Clark	Mayor of Portland	15
Dick Bogle	Portland City Commissioner	14
Mike Lindberg	Portland City Commissioner	14

Bob Koch, Bud Clark, Dick Bogle, and Mike Lindberg). For chronological clarity, since it was the proposal to rename a street that set the stage for this controversy, the first individuals to be discussed are Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard who were spokespersons for the MLK Committee and the chief petitioners for the renaming of Union Avenue.

Bernie Foster played an integral role in the street renaming controversy from the very beginning. As publisher of the Skanner, (the major newspaper that serves the Portland area black community), Foster enjoys a relatively high level of public visibility, especially within the black community. So when approached with the idea of renaming a Portland Street in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., Foster's standing in the community facilitated his ability to test the potential support for the idea (through his newspaper as well as his community network) and then to initiate and direct the formation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Street Renaming Committee (MLK Committee) (RQ #1, Who appointed the MLK Committee?).

According to the final MLK Committee Report, Foster's decision to utilize an advisory committee was based on the complexity of Portland's specific policies and guidelines for renaming public streets (MLK Committee Report, 1987). In light of his understanding of the experience in other communities which had sought street name changes to honor

King, Foster also thought it a generally wise political strategy to provide for broad community representation on the committee. The street renaming efforts in many cities across the nation had generated varying degrees of opposition and an unusual level of public attention and were eventually decided in the political arena. "I wanted to ensure Portland would have a street named for King" (Foster Interview 1991), and the political history of such attempts in other cities had illustrated the importance of building a broad base of support from the very beginning to help increase the chances for success. As a result of these issues (the complexity of city procedures and other cities' experiences), it was believed that the presence and support of a broadly based advisory committee would enhance the chances for success in a major street renaming request (Foster Interview 1991). Based on this understanding of the task, Foster put together an advisory committee that in his opinion would best meet the challenges of renaming a street in honor of King.

Foster also stated that the selection of individual members for the Martin Luther King Jr. Street Renaming Committee (MLK Committee) was a well thought out process (Foster Interview 1991). The MLK Committee report states that committee members were "selected based on their leadership, visibility, interest, and commitment to the

project" (MLK Committee Report 1987). Following these criteria, Foster sought out leaders representing various interest groups within the community. For example, committee members included representatives from the black community (Carolyn Leonard, Oregon Commission for Black Affairs and Beverly Edmondson, Portland Chapter of the NAACP); local education (Michael Grice, Oregon Alliance of Black School Educators and Monica Little, Portland Community College); the business community (Harry Glickman, Portland Trailblazers and Neil Kelly, Neil Kelly Design); the religious community (Rabbi Emanuel Rose); and governmental offices (Kathleen Sadaat, Director of Affirmative Action, Governor's Office) (See Appendix B for complete MLK Committee membership list). Each committee member has his or her own areas of influence based on their individual experiences, occupational backgrounds, and areas of expertise which when combined provide for the broad community base of support sought by Foster. They represent potentially influential institutions such as public education (1 member), higher education (2 members), elected officials' staff and government agencies (3 members), minority community action groups (4 members), private business (2 members), and local religious groups (2 members) (RQ #1, Who was on the MLK Committee and why they were chosen).

Once the members had been selected, the MLK Committee minutes indicate that Carolyn Leonard emerged as the committee chair (MLK Committee Minutes, August 27, 1987) and show that she has a background in both public education (as Director of Multi-Cultural Curriculum for Portland Public Schools) and in community affairs (Oregon Commission for Black Affairs). As chair of the final MLK Committee Report and the ensuing recommendation for naming a street for King, Leonard joined Foster as co-petitioner for renaming Union Avenue.

With the MLK Committee members in place, they were given the charge (by Foster) to review the street renaming policy (and its requirements) of the City of Portland, talk with their constituents, research and submit a report to Foster that lists three streets, in priority order, to be considered for renaming (MLK Committee Report, 1987).

In order to generate a list of possible streets to rename, the MLK Committee reviewed the recently adopted street renaming guidelines (City of Portland Resolution #34333, August 19, 1987) which included the following:

The proposed new name must be:

- a) Of a person who has achieved high prominence as a result of his/her significance and made a positive contribution to the United States of America and/or the local community.

- b) Of a real person.
- c) Of a person who has been deceased for at least five (5) years.

The street to be renamed must meet the following criteria:

- a) The name of the street shall not be changed if it is of historical significance in its own right.
- b) The street proposed for renaming must start and terminate entirely within the City boundaries.
- c) The name of any street shall be the same for its entire length.

In addition to the city street renaming guidelines, the MLK Committee formulated its own general criteria for possible streets to be renamed. According to committee minutes (MLK Committee Minutes, August 26, 1987) the group proposed the following guidelines:

The Street to be renamed should:

- a) have a high visibility.
- b) be positively impacted (economically) by the renaming.
- c) be close to major freeways.
- d) be close to significant sites (e.g. convention center, airport).

- e) have a close proximity to the Afro-American community.

Using these combined criteria (City guidelines and committee criteria), the MLK Committee discussed at length possible streets that would be appropriate for renaming in honor of King and generated a first draft listed of potential candidates for renaming. According to minutes (August 26, 1987) the following streets were considered (See Appendix A for map locations of streets):

STREET	LOCATION
Union/Grand	East Portland
Fremont	Northeast Portland
7th Avenue	East Portland
15th Avenue	North Portland
Weidler	Northeast Portland
Airport Way	Northeast Portland
Interstate	North Portland
Marine Drive	Northeast Portland
Vancouver Avenue	North Portland
Alberta	North Portland
Killingsworth	North Portland
Water Street	Southeast Portland

After taking a week to think about these possible streets for renaming, it was suggested and agreed upon that

Front Avenue (located on the west side of Portland) be added to the list because of its high visibility during the Portland Rose Festival which draws thousands of visitors to the city's Tom McCall Park along Front Avenue (MLK Committee Minutes, September 2, 1987). The modified list of street names (which included the addition noted above) was reviewed by the committee (against the city and committee criteria) and screened by committee member Sara Long (Multnomah County Library) who checked each street for historical significance. Consideration of the information resulting from this process narrowed the possible list of streets to be renamed to the following six streets: Airport Way, Front Avenue, Interstate, Union Avenue, Vancouver Avenue, Water Street.

From this list of six streets, each committee member provided a list of three rank ordered choices. The results of this ranking are shown in Table II.

Based on this vote, the MLK Committee decided that Union Avenue would be their first choice and Front Avenue would be their second. With a split vote on third choice it was decided that the committee needed to come up with a strong third choice that each member could support. It was suggested by committee member Kathleen Sadaat that Fifth Street be considered as a possible third choice because of its high visibility in the Southwest Business District and

TABLE II

TOP CHOICES FOR STREET RENAMING

COMMITTEE MEMBER	FIRST THREE STREET CHOICES (IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE)
Beverly Edmonds	Front/Union/Vancouver Avenue
Michael Grice	Union/Front/Interstate Avenue
Neil Kelly	Front/Union/Airport Way
Carolyn Leonard	Union/Front/Airport Way
Monica Little	Union/Front/Vancouver Avenue
William Little	Front/Union/Undecided
Sara Long	Union/Front/Vancouver Avenue
Chris Pierce	Front/Union/Airport Way
Betty Thompson	Union/Front/Vancouver Avenue

FINAL TALLY

Union Avenue:	Five times first choice (four times second choice)
Front Avenue:	Five times second choice (four times first choice)
Airport Way:	Three times third choice
Vancouver Avenue:	Three times third choice

Source: MLK Committee Minutes,
September 2, 1987.

Portland City Hall's location (with the main entrance facing Fifth Street and the mailing address also listed as Fifth Street). After discussing this as a possibility (according to committee criteria for streets to be renamed), Fifth Street was recommended as the third choice (MLK Committee Minutes, September 17, 1987).

According to the MLK Committee Minutes and the final MLK Committee Report submitted to Bernie Foster, the three street choices for possible renaming in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. were 1) Union Avenue, 2) Front Avenue, and 3) Fifth Street. But in October 1987 Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard submitted an official request to rename Front Avenue. It is unclear as to how Front Avenue became the first choice to be renamed (over Union Avenue), and there is no reference to how this shift took place in any of the committee documents or newspaper accounts of the controversy. When asked about this change, Bernie Foster could not recall how this took place, but stated that the committee felt that either street would meet the criteria used by the committee and that the members were supportive of both choices (Foster Interview 1991).

The formal application of Front Avenue for renaming set into motion the newly formed city street renaming guidelines which included a review of the historical significance of Front Avenue and a mail survey of the property owners and

tenants along the street. The review by the historical committee set up by the City of Portland Office of Transportation, reported that Front Avenue was one of Portland's first platted streets (1845), was the location of the first school in Portland (1847), was the site of the first election at an outdoor meeting (1851), and was the first paved street in the city (Stein 1987). In addition to the historical significance of Front Avenue, the mail survey of property owners and tenants of the street conducted by the Portland Auditor's Office (as part of the newly adopted street renaming guidelines) showed overwhelming opposition to the proposed renaming with only 9 (4%) of the 225 (48.4% response rate) returned surveys being in favor of the name change (City Auditor Office Memo, March 23, 1989). In response to the historical concerns over the proposed renaming and the intense opposition of property owners and tenants, Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard withdrew their request to rename Front Avenue in December of 1987 (The Skanner 1987).

After a major drive to gain support for the renaming of a street in honor of Dr. King, Foster and Leonard made a formal application to the City to rename Union Avenue (instead of Front Avenue) in November of 1988 (The Skanner 1988) (RQ #2, why Union Avenue was chosen to be renamed). After resubmitting the application to rename Union Avenue

(because the initial application was incomplete) in January 1989 (Mayer 1989a), individuals began coming forward in opposition to the renaming. This opposition can be grouped into four general categories 1) those with concerns that the Union Avenue name was historically significant in its own right, 2) those with concerns that the name change would have a negative economic impact on area businesses, 3) those who believed the city had not followed its own street renaming policy, and 4) those who expressed or were associated with racist issues. These concerns and the number of newspaper articles that made reference to these concerns are listed (in the chronological order in which they surfaced) in Table III.

TABLE III

CATEGORIES OF OPPOSITION

CONCERN IN OPPOSITION TO THE RENAMING	NUMBER OF ARTICLES
Negative Economic Impact	8
Historical Concerns	11
Violation of City Policy and Procedures	28
Racial Issues	31

The issue of economic concerns over the proposed renaming of Union Avenue raised by many local businesses focused on two separate areas. First was the concern over

the cost to all tax payers in the city for the name change. Expenses for conducting public hearings on the issue, city staff time, the mail survey of tenants and property owners required by city policy, changing street signs (\$90 per intersection x 100 intersections), updating city computer data (e.g. emergency services), etc. were projected by the city to total over \$39,000 (Mayer 1989a). Only a small portion of these expenses would be offset by the \$1000 fee submitted by Foster and Leonard with the street renaming application; the remainder of the costs incurred would fall to the city.

The other concern of some opponents was the potential economic impact to businesses located along Union Avenue. Businesses stressed the importance of name familiarity for those who used "Union" in their business name (e.g. Union Glass) and/or the ability of customers to locate Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard instead of the Union Avenue name which was familiar to the community and was listed on current maps. Businesses would also have to bear the cost of changing their stationary, invoices, and business supplies (to reflect their new address), as well as advertising, such as business signs and vehicle sign lettering (Mayer 1989a; Oliver 1990e). These concerns continued despite the city decision that both names (Union Avenue and Martin Luther King Boulevard) would remain on

street signs for five years and the Portland Development Commission was to also explore ways to help offset any business costs involved in the street name change (Mazza 1989).

The second category of concerns focused on the historical significance of the Union Avenue name. Some opponents of the name change believed Union Avenue should not be renamed because it honors the "Union" that won the Civil War (Mazza 1989). Research by the panel of three historians (Carl Abbott, E. Kimbark MacColl, and Stanley Parr) appointed by the Portland Office of Transportation, found that Union Avenue was named in 1891 as part of the "Great Street Renaming" in order to form uniform street names as new areas were incorporated into the city and was indeed named for "The Union." This aside, the historical panel forwarded a report to the city citing they found "no major historical obstacle" to renaming Union Avenue (Mayer 1989b).

Issues surrounding the city's street renaming policy comprised the third category of concerns. In 1987, when Foster first approached City Commissioner Earl Blumenauer with the idea that the city should name a street in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., the city did not have a street renaming policy. In order to accommodate the MLK Committee's project, Blumenauer directed the Office of

Transportation to develop a street renaming policy (Blumenauer Interview 1991). After several revisions of the original draft were suggested, the City adopted (by resolution-#34333) a street renaming policy in August of 1987 at which time the City Council directed the Office of Transportation to develop formal language and codes for implementation guided by the resolution (The Oregonian 1989b).

Much of the opposition to the proposed renaming of Union Avenue focused on whether or not the City followed its own street renaming policy (RQ #3, did the city follow its own street renaming policy?). A comparison of the procedures outlined in the August 1987 Street Renaming Resolution with the actions taken by both the City and the petitioners to rename Union Avenue is presented Table IV.

As can be seen in the comparison, the petitioners failed to meet the requirement to obtain the support of the majority of the abutting neighborhood and business associations, and the use of signatures from a previous attempt to rename Front Avenue is also questionable. Of these two issues, it was the lack of support from the area associations that formed the basis for those who opposed the renaming on the grounds that the city did not follow its own policy. When this became a public issue the Director of Street Systems Management for the city,

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF STREET RENAMING POLICY

CITY STREET RENAMING POLICY BY RESOLUTION	ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CITY AND THE PETITIONERS
1) 3000 signatures in support or 75% of abutting property owners support	3000 signatures gathered (same signatures used in earlier attempt to rename Front Avenue)
2) Letters of support from a majority of abutting neighborhood and business associations	3 of 14 responded- 2 (neighborhood) supportive- 1 (business) neutral
3) \$1000 non-refundable fee	\$1000 fee paid
4) Review by Historical Panel	Review completed- (no historical obstacle)
5) Mail survey of tenants and property owners	Survey completed- 33% response rate 85% opposed to renaming
6) Hearing by City Planning Commission-recommendation sent to City Council	Hearing - March 28, 1989 Recommendation - support renaming
7) Hearing by City Council Decision on proposal	Hearing - April 14, 1989 Decision in support- April 20, 1989

SOURCE: Mayer, 1989a, 1989b, 1989d, 1989f; MLK
Committee Report 1987; City Resolution
#34333.

Don Gardner, made it clear that the city's street renaming policy adopted in August of 1987 was intended as a guide (only) for the preparation of formal codes and the petitioners were, therefore, not technically required to comply with this policy (Mayer 1989d). He also stated that the experience of this case (proposed renaming of Union Avenue) prompted officials to delete the requirement to obtain majority support from area neighborhood and business associations because they (the associations) could prevent a renaming by simply ignoring the issue and not responding. The City Attorney also agreed that the petitioners were not required to follow the city street renaming policy as it was not a legal requirement because the city had not adopted formal code language and they (the petitioners) were therefore, "grandfathered" through the process (The Oregonian 1989b).

This explanation appeared to do little to dispel criticism from the public, many of whom were still convinced the city had violated its own street renaming policy. There was still public frustration over its inability to impact the process (street renaming) and a lingering concern about the nature of the relationship surrounding the parallel development of the recommendation to rename a street in honor of King and the emergence of the new street renaming policy. The understanding of this process was further

complicated in people's minds by the perceived potential influence on the final interpretation and implementation of the policy by Bernie Foster and the MLK Committee, whose actions had initiated the process (of developing a street renaming policy).

Despite this continued criticism the city held firm to its final decision (to rename Union Avenue) and the general policy process which led to the decision. City officials' inaction in response to this public criticism was officially based on the City Attorney's opinion of the legality of their (the City Commissioners) actions. But it may have also involved the notion that there is a slow process of translating public disapproval of specific policies into electoral reprisal which contributes to a wide latitude for official actions. Based on this notion, the City Council could take this action (the renaming of Union Avenue based on their interpretation of the street renaming policy), despite public concern and criticism, with little fear of negative consequences.

The final category focused on insinuations and outright accusations of racist motivations directed toward some of those who were in opposition to the renaming of Union Avenue. The issue of race being a factor for some of those who opposed the renaming surfaced early in the controversy. During March of 1989 there were newspaper references that

this issue (the renaming of Union Avenue) had the "potential for dividing residents and businesses strictly on color lines" (Mayer 1989b) and that racial issues were just beneath the surface (Mayer 1989f).

But concerns over racist motivations intensified after Walter and Rosalie Huss became active in the controversy. Their involvement in the formation of Citizens For Union Avenue Committee (Union Avenue Committee) and the Committee's petition drive to restore the Union Avenue name put the Husses in the spot light. Before the Husses' names were associated with those opposing the renaming, only 11.5% of the newspaper articles focusing on the proposed renaming of Union Avenue mentioned racial issues as being involved, while after their association was made public, over 43% of the articles dealing with the controversy cited racial factors as being involved.

This increase in the number of articles referring to possible racist motivations after the Husses involvement may have been affected by their high profile and by news accounts that focused on their personal, professional, and political background. In January of 1990 The Oregonian printed an article that described Walter and Rosalie Huss as conservative political activists with a history in local politics which runs from an attempted take over of the Republican County Committee in the 1960's to attempts at

elected offices, to a recall challenge of Portland Mayor Bud Clark in 1986. The article goes on to quote City Commissioner Earl Blumenauer who suggests that the Husses are similar politically to ex-Arizona Governor Meachem who cancelled a state holiday to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1987 (Oliver 1990e).

This article was followed by a feature in depth expose in The Willamette Week that outlined the Husses' personal and professional backgrounds. The article raised questions as to the source of their motivation to dedicate time and resources (\$3000 of their own money) to restore the Union Avenue name to a street that was over a mile from their home and on which they do not own any property. Much of the article focuses on their ownership of a bookstore (The Freedom Center) in the 1960's and the material which they distributed (which included their own newspaper - The National Eagle). The bookstore also featured anti-communist material that often contained strong racial overtones including publications that referred to Dr. King as "Martin Lucifer Koon." The Willamette Week article also noted that the Husses also received some of this same literature via personal mailing (Smith 1990).

Shortly after the expose on Walter and Rosalie Huss, the newspapers reported on the visit of Richard Barrett, a Mississippi white supremacist and organizer of the

Nationalist Movement (a white supremacist organization). Barrett held a press conference on the steps of City Hall to lend moral support of those supporting the restoration of the Union Avenue name. The article also noted that Barrett had had dinner with Walter and Rosalie Huss, a fact which was cited by City Commissioner Dick Bogle as proof that "racism is at the root of the anti-Martin Luther King drive" (Gilbert and Oliver 1990).

These series of articles focusing on Walter and Rosalie Huss as leaders of the petition drive to restore the Union Avenue name, along with the information on their personal, professional, and political background and association with racial issues, brought suspicion of the possible racist motivations toward those opposed to the renaming of Union Avenue. Anyone working with or openly supporting the Union Avenue Committee was perceived by many as harboring similar beliefs (as cited by the media) to that of the group's leaders (the Husses).

With the four categories of possible motivations cited above for those opposed to renaming Union Avenue (economic, historical, procedural, and racist), the Union Avenue Committee capitalized on a varied broad base of opposition and were easily able to collect the required number of signatures on an initiative petition (29,620 were needed—over 51,000 were gathered) which would place the question of

whether the Union Avenue name should be restored on the election ballot in May (Mayer 1990a). Rosalie Huss repeatedly stated that the numbers of petition signatures were reflective of the public anger with City Hall and the way they handled the renaming as well as their (city officials) abuse of power and their arrogance in refusing to listen to the people (Mayer 1990a; Oliver 1990e) and the initiative process was a means for "the public" to influence the decision-making process (street renaming).

Once the petition signatures were certified (as legal) by the county elections office, it was the responsibility of the Portland City Council to either vote to formally put the issue on the ballot or to challenge the issue on legal or technical grounds (e.g. whether or not it is a legal use of the process, has a legal ballot title, ballot description is misleading or inaccurate, etc.). In light of the community controversy which had already developed as a result of the renaming of Union Avenue, the numbers of signatures on the initiative petitions, and a poll (conducted by a research firm for The Oregonian (Oliver 1990b) showing 61% of the people favored restoring the Union Avenue name, City Commissioners decided they "didn't want to stand in the way of a public vote on the emotional issue" and believed that by keeping it off the ballot they would "only add more extreme controversy, hard feelings, and confusion" (Oliver

1990f; Mazza 1990). The City Council's decision to place the issue on the ballot came despite a warning from the City Attorney that the decision to rename Union Avenue might be determined to be an administrative decision (not a legislative decision) and therefore not subject to the initiative petition process (Oliver 1990f). This action by the City Council would remove the issue from their realm of responsibility and place it before the electorate for a decision.

After the City Council action had been taken despite concerns over the legality of the use of the initiative petition process, Foster and Leonard (the original co-petitioners to rename Union Avenue in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.) filed a court challenge against the Union Avenue Committee's use of the initiative petition process (Oliver 1990c). Foster and Leonard claimed that the initiative process only applied to legislative acts (the making of new laws) and that administrative acts (the day-to-day decisions in running cities---which includes renaming streets) cannot be legally challenged through this process (Mazza 1990). The Multnomah County Circuit Court concurred with Foster and Leonard and ordered that the issue be removed from the ballot (Leeson and Carlin Ames 1990).

The Husses (on behalf of the Union Avenue Committee) filed an appeal with the Oregon Supreme Court who agreed to

a rare speedy hearing of the appeal in order to render a decision in time for the printing deadline for election ballots (Carlin Ames and Leeson 1990). After hearing the issue the Oregon Supreme Court upheld the lower court decision which removed the issue from the ballot, stating that the issue was an administrative decision and not subject to the initiative petition process (Oliver and Leeson 1990).

But this was not the end of the controversy. Walter and Rosalie Huss once more tried to use the initiative petition to influence the process (street renaming) by taking out a petition which challenged the entire street renaming process and if successful would force a public vote on every street name change, from January 1989 into the future. If passed it would have required Portlanders to vote on the change of the Union Avenue name (Oliver 1990d). The deadline passed for the collection of required petition signatures, the group had failed to turn in the petitions and the initiative process ended. The Husses refused to comment on the failed effort, but others who had supported the renaming of Union Avenue voiced sentiments similar to former Oregon Supreme Court Justice Betty Roberts (who had worked on the effort to keep the King name) who stated "They probably ran out of steam" but "I would also like to think the citizens of Portland became wise to their bigoted

purposes and wouldn't work with them and sign their petitions" (Carlin Ames 1990).

In the end, Bernie Foster and Carolyn Leonard (on behalf of the MLK Committee) had used what vague street renaming policy that existed to rename Union Avenue in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., and ultimately the court system to keep the name. The Husses (on behalf of the Union Avenue Committee) attempted to use Oregon's initiative petition process to restore the Union Avenue name, and the city placed the resulting controversy before the public for a vote on the issue-each attempting to influence the end decision. And to date the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard name stands.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study was an attempt to provide insight into and understanding of the nature of the controversy surrounding the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue. These concluding remarks will provide a brief summary of the study, address selected findings, and discuss their relationship to the theoretical perspectives discussed in Chapter III.

Content analysis of written communication, including newspaper articles, official documents, minutes of both public and private meetings, and material distributed by individual groups involved in the controversy, constitute the major data for the study. This material is supplemented by two interviews of individuals who played key roles in the controversy (City Commissioner Earl Blumenauer and Bernie Foster, who initiated the formation of the MLK Committee).

Data were analyzed to give a chronological ordering of the events involved in the controversy and to illustrate their importance. Data were also selected and analyzed in response to the five research questions outlined in Chapter III. The following discussion is based on these data.

As the idea to rename a street in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. developed, Bernie Foster, using the paper he publishes, solicited support for the project. Based on the amount of support he received, Foster proceeded with the idea and formed a committee which would see the project through. His strategy was to select committee members who would provide a broad base of community representation which would help ensure the success of the project. The members selected were community leaders with high visibility who represented major community institutions (e.g. education, religion, business, and government). The idea behind this strategy was that members would not only generate broad based credibility for the project, but would also provide a channel of communication between their personal and professional networks and the initiators of the project (MLK Committee Report 1987).

It seems probable that this strategy may have had the most influence on the City Council's initial decision to rename Union Avenue. While acknowledging that there would be opposition to the renaming, the City Council went ahead and approved the proposal made by the MLK Committee (whose members represented a broad variety of community groups). Whether the committee membership played a role in the decision by City Council or not is difficult to determine,

but it is apparent that it (the membership) represents the potential for influence.

An important aspect of this controversy centers around the decision to rename Union Avenue after the withdrawal of the request to rename Front Avenue. Facing overwhelming opposition from tenants and property owners along Front Avenue (based on the City Auditor's survey) and a short period of intense media coverage of this opposition, the MLK Committee withdrew its request to rename Front Avenue. This decision was reportedly based (in news media reports) on the findings of a historical committee that decided that Front Avenue was historically significant in its own right and therefore, according to the guidelines of the city street renaming resolution, was not eligible to be renamed.

The MLK Committee's subsequent proposal to rename Union Avenue in honor of King, also drew opposition from tenants and property owners as well as generating continual news coverage of the opposition. And yet, the MLK Committee held to its recommendation despite the concerns of residents over the historical significance of the Union Avenue name.

Facing the same issues and concerns, why did the committee choose to proceed with the Union Avenue proposal and not the Front Avenue request? It is not clear why this decision was made, but statements by the media indicated that the historical committee's findings concerning the

historical significance of Front Avenue prompted the decision. But in addition to this, one might speculate on another factor that may have been involved in this decision. Front Avenue is located in the downtown business district and its tenancy includes major corporations and big businesses, while those along Union Avenue are mostly small local businesses. It stands to reason that big business has more of a potential to influence community decision-making and /or mount a successful opposition than does small local business. Whether big business and its prominent members actually impacted this decision or whether the perception of their potential to influence decision-making or the potential strength of their opposition entered into the MLK Committee decision to shift their proposal to Union Avenue is unclear. But based on Mills' perspective of the nature of elites' potential to influence decisions, this possibility should be recognized.

Another point of interest is the role the City Council played in this controversy. In its decision to rename Union Avenue, the City Council was accused of not following the city street renaming policy, of not being responsive to its constituency's wishes, and of misusing its power. In response to these concerns, the Council certified the initiative petition and placed the issue to restore the Union Avenue name on the ballot, despite the opinion of the

City Attorney that this was an illegal use of the initiative petition process. This decision by the Council set the stage for a court challenge of the proposed election where the issue was settled by the Oregon Supreme Court who ruled that this had been an illegal use of the initiative petition process. As important as the ruling itself, was the fact that the decision of the City Council resulted in the shifting of the perception of the issue from that of a political controversy to a legal decision. This allowed the City Council to wipe its hands of the controversy and its role in the development of the issues, and left the public with a perception that it had been settled on legal grounds.

A key aspect of this controversy was the tremendous opposition (and its short lived overt presence) that developed after the City Council's adoption of the proposal to rename Union Avenue. One indication of this opposition was the over 52,000 signatures the Union Avenue Committee (under the leadership of Walter and Rosalie Huss) gathered on an initiative petition seeking the restoration of the Union Avenue name. These signatures represented the Husses' ability to build an informal coalition composed of those who opposed the renaming based on economic, historical, and procedural (City Council's perceived violation of city policy) issues, as well as alleged racial concerns.

But a series of events triggered the slow disintegration of this informal alliance. Shortly after the initiative petition signatures were filed and the issue was headed to the ballot, an expose featuring Walter and Rosalie Huss appeared in a local newspaper. This article detailed the Husses' controversial political past and more importantly, their history of racist beliefs and activities. Two days after this article appeared, the newspapers reported on the visit of white supremacist leader, Richard Barrett, to lend support to the Union Avenue Committee and on his dinner meeting with the Husses. The media link between the Husses and racist motivations generated public speculation as to the true motives of all those who opposed the renaming of Union Avenue. This link, and the fear of being categorized as racist, in addition to the generally short political attention span of much of the public, may have been factors in the Union Avenue Committee's inability to gather sufficient signatures on their third attempt to challenge the city street renaming policy (and thus the renaming of Union Avenue).

THEORETICAL AND RESEARCH SUMMARY

The theoretical perspectives discussed in Chapter III helped provide a framework and guide for data collection and analysis in this study. Mills' Power Elite Model and Dahl's Pluralist Model and the potential compatibility of their approaches described by Domhoff were valuable in providing insight into the variables involved in the decisions made by key groups and the types of potential influence available (to them). In this study it was not often possible to clearly determine who had control over the decision-making processes, but one could speculate on the potential for influence (vs. control) by numerous players based on a synthesis of these models. This integrated model facilitates the consideration of the potential influence of big business (Mills' "local elite") on the decision by the MLK Committee to withdraw the request to rename Front Avenue, while at the same time including the possible influence of the members of the MLK Committee with their varied background (local elite and middle class community leaders) on the City Council (and the general public) and the committee's disbandment when the decision-making process was completed (Dahl's pluralistic Model). The emergence of potential influence groups around this specific decision-making issue is also evident in the formation of the short lived Union Avenue Committee and its supporters.

It is also important to note the possible role played by the media in this controversy, as well as by those who had potential for influencing its (the media) actions. Both Mills and Domhoff discuss the media in relation to community decision-making and the influence that the elite may exert on it. When considering the central role the media played in shaping community perspectives of the nature of the controversy and the key groups involved, this element of potential influence stands out as important to an understanding of community decision-making.

In examining the various key groups that had potential for influencing the decision-making process involved in the renaming of Union Avenue, the exclusive use of either Mills' model or Dahl's model has limitations as to understanding the nature of the decision-making process involved in the controversy. But the use of Domhoff's perspective of the two models and their possible compatibility, provides a more comprehensive framework for capturing the variables involved in the decision-making process which surrounded the renaming of Union Avenue.

In addition to the value of using the synthesis of these two perspectives discussed above, it should be noted that this theoretical model was less capable of providing an adequate framework for understanding the possible covert action of individuals and groups who may have had influence

in the decision-making process surrounding this controversy. The lack of observable or detectable action by the elite necessitated speculation as to the nature of their possible influence. Elements of the elitist perspective make reference to the importance of nondecisions, and both the elitists and pluralists comment on the relationship between resources and political influence. But the incorporation of other perspectives, such as the latent structural (resource mobilization) model of community decision-making, which focuses on the possible influence exerted through the mere awareness of an individual's potential to mobilize not only of their own personal resources, but that of their network of contacts (Glaskiewicz 1979) may add to the overall understanding of latent influences.

This perspective may be especially valuable in understanding the nature of the influence or potential influence of the southwest business interests (predominately corporations and large businesses) who most likely played some behind the scenes role in averting the renaming of southwest Portland's Front Avenue. These individuals' and their associated organizations' potential for influence may rely on more than their own available resources---it also may involve the ability to mobilize the resources of others as well, primarily through coalition building with other individuals and organizations. Even though they (the

southwest business interests) took no observable action other than to simply voice their opposition to the renaming of Front Avenue, their potential to mobilize vast resources may have played a role in the MLK Committee decision to shift their efforts toward renaming Union Avenue where local residents (mostly small local businesses) may have been perceived as having less of a potential for mobilizing massive resources in opposition.

Also important to the understanding of the data is Fischer's perspective on the urban environment and the resulting social network. This perspective sheds light on the strategy employed by Bernie Foster in the development of the broad based MLK Committee and its importance to the eventual success of the proposal to rename Union Avenue. Each of the MLK Committee members not only interacted with their neighbors (traditional residential based network), but also belonged to many other (often independent) networks based on such characteristics as business/work relationships, church affiliation, and social groups membership and participation. This multiple network membership increased the potential for MLK Committee members to influence other community members which in turn may have impacted the final decision-making process.

Social networks may also have been a factor contributing to the ability of the Husses to gather the

large number of petition signatures in such a short period of time. This may have been facilitated not only by the informal coalition of the groups opposing the renaming discussed above, but also by the numbers of networks with which people were involved (one person with a petition might be involved in several different networks from which signatures could be gathered). These network memberships also provide additional avenues for the dissemination of information and possible influence of community members, which in time have the potential for affecting the decision-making process.

Although Fischer's perspective on the role of social networks is useful, it does little to shed light on the possible role of individuals' networks which extend beyond the local community. In addition to these "horizontal" networks, individuals and the organization to which they belong have "vertical" links to others outside the community. These vertical ties are often stronger than horizontal links and frequently involve a different set of norms, behavior patterns, and role expectations (Warren 1988; orig. 1963) and may therefore, have an affect on individuals' and groups' information and resource base and their resulting conceptualization of the issue. Understanding the nature of the role of these vertical links may have provided additional insight into the actions of the

involved groups in the controversy over renaming Union Avenue. It may have been especially helpful in exploring (1) the development of the original idea to rename a street and not some other facility (building, bridge, park), as well as the MLK Committee's commitment to the idea and its relationship to the national trend of major cities renaming streets in honor of King, 92) the possible influence of parent corporate structures (located outside Portland) on the successful effort to avoid the renaming of Front Avenue in the southwest Portland business district (3) the City Council's strategy to support the renaming of Union (and not Front Avenue) and to later shift the issue out of the political arena and whether this tactic was a result of their contact with other cities who have dealt with a similar challenge, and (4) the impact of outside support for the Union Avenue Committee which opposed the renaming of Union Avenue.

Analysis of the data did provide some cursory indication of the vertical ties of some key players. The MLK Committee membership roster specifies each member's primary organizational affiliation which identifies several potential extra-community links which may have had some influence in the decision-making process: for example Carolyn Leonard, Oregon Commission for Black Affairs; Beverly Edmonds, NAACP-Portland Chapter; Kathleen Sadaat;

Oregon Governors's Office; and Chris Pierce, Congressman Les Aucoin's Office (MLK Committee Report 1987). Media accounts of Walter and Rosalie Husses' past association with nationally distributed racist publications, as well as their February 1990 meeting with Mississippi White Supremacist and organizer of the Nationalist Movement, Richard Barrett, also indicate another vertical link which may have impacted the decision-making process. These initial indications of key players' vertical links suggest that what was seen as a local issue (the controversy surrounding the renaming of Portland's Union Avenue) may, in reality, have been impacted by extra-community influences. Additional exploration of the vertical ties of the players involved in this controversy may have been valuable.

CONCLUSION

As briefly described here, the theoretical perspective based on the synthesis of Mills' model and Dahl's model and Fischer's perspective on the nature of the urban environment were generally applicable to this study and provided a framework for understanding the variables involved in the decision-making process surrounding the controversy over renaming Union Avenue. These perspectives, although useful, were often not adequate to fully explore the complexities involved in this controversy. The synthesized model did

provide an over-arching framework for organizing much of the data, but the incorporation of other perspectives (e.g. resource mobilization and community vertical pattern links) may add more depth to the analysis, especially in assessing the nature and role of subtle variables and covert actions in the decision-making process.

Some of the difficulties in this study arose from the involved players' reluctance to discuss the issue. Failed attempts to set up and conduct interviews with the majority of City Council members, the involved business community, and those opposing the renaming of Union (especially the Husses) made it difficult to explore the "behind the scenes" activities that impacted the decision-making process. Even the Portland Metropolita Chamber of Commerce which normally speaks on behalf of community business interests and the City Club, a professional and social organization which has a history of debating and taking a stand on social and political issues, were only willing to provide a prepared press release on the issue. This reluctance to discuss the issue forced a heavier reliance on analysis of print material and prevented the use of interview questions designed to further explore involved player actions and motivations which were not always readily evident.

Because of the escalating intensity of this type of community controversy and the reluctance of key players to

discuss this issue as it intensifies, it may be advantageous in this type of study to begin conducting interviews early in the controversy and to attempt follow-up interviews as the process continues. If early contact is made with those involved, it may facilitate the use of interview questions which may expose some of the behind the scenes actions which may be impacting the decision-making process. These interviews may also make it easier to assess extra-community links which may also affect the nature of the controversy. This type of information would provide a greater understanding of the dynamics involved in community decision-making.

Therefore, early access to the key players involved in the controversy, as well as the inclusion of the role of resource mobilization and individual and group extra-community ties as an expansion of the elitist and pluralist perspectives, may be desirable for the future study of power and decision-making involved in community controversies.

This study has presented some insights into the key groups involved in this street renaming controversy, their possible influence in the decision-making process, and their impact on the outcome. This information may be especially valuable in light of the number of cities which are experiencing similar controversies surrounding their efforts to rename streets in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Future research focusing on this apparent pattern may benefit from the data discussed in this study.

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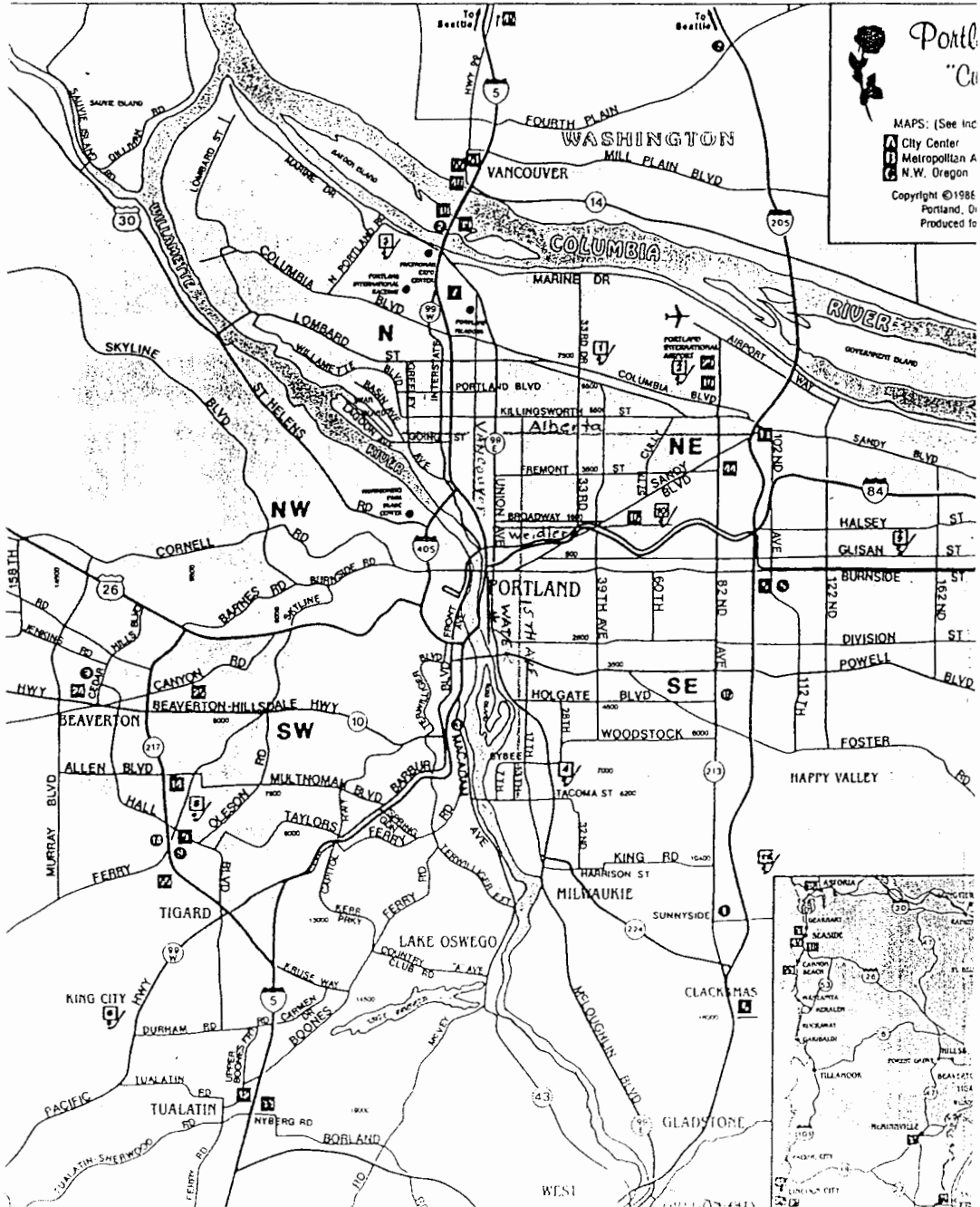
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APPENDIX A

CITY OF PORTLAND MAP



APPENDIX B

THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. STREET RENAMING COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP LIST

Carolyn Leonard, Chairperson	Oregon Commission for Black Affairs
Beverly Edmondson, Representative	NAACP, Portland Chapter
Harry Glickman, President	Portland Trail Blazers
Michael Grice, President	Oregon Alliance of Black School Educators
John Jackson, Reverend	Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
Neil Kelly, President	Neil Kelly Design/ Remodeling
Monica Little, Attorney	Member Portland Community College Board
William A. Little Consultant	Portland State University
Sarah Long, Director	Multnomah County Library
Chris Pierce, Office Representative	Congressman Les Aucoin's
Emanuel Rose, Rabbi	Congressional Beth Israel
Kathleen Sadaat, Director of Affirmative Action	Oregon Governor's Office
Betty Thompson, Retired	Oregon Association of Colored Women
William Wyatt, Director	The Association for Progress

APPENDIX C

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH
REVIEW COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

DATE: August 27, 1990

TO: Patricia Antoine, SOC

FROM: Joan Shireman, Chair, HSRRC 1990-91

RE: HSRRC approval of your application

In accordance with your request, the Human Subjects Research Review Committee has reviewed your proposal entitled "Battle for the Boulevard" for compliance with DHHS policies and regulations on the protection of human subjects.

The committee is satisfied that your provisions for protecting the rights and welfare of all subjects participating in the research are adequate and therefore the project is approved. Any conditions relative to this approval are noted below:

None

JS:jp

c. Office of Grants and Contracts
Joseph Jones