

# Who Rules Cincinnati?

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A Study of Cincinnati's Economic Power Structure  
And its Impact on Communities and People

By  
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# Summary

This investigation into Cincinnati's power structure finds that a handful of national and multinational corporations dominate the economic, social and cultural life of the city. Wealthy individuals who own, manage and sit on the boards of these companies play an inordinate role in the social institutions and the political life of Cincinnati. Decades of corporate control have led to a distorted development and to grotesque contrasts between rich and poor like those we associate with Third World countries. This distorted development has had a particularly damaging impact on the African American population.

The principal findings are:

- **Seven corporations, by virtue of their enormous wealth and power, dominate the economic and social life of Cincinnati** – 1) Procter & Gamble; 2) Kroger, 3) Macy's/ Federated Department Stores/; 4) Fifth Third Bancorp, 5) Western and Southern Financial, 6) American Financial Corp, and, 7) E.W. Scripps. They can be said to rule Cincinnati and among them, Procter & Gamble plays the predominant role.
- **In Cincinnati the seven dominant corporations and some other companies guide all the important civic, cultural, and social organizations of the city.** They influence or control the boards of directors of foundations, universities, museums, and social welfare organizations. They sit on boards while community members and working people are virtually excluded from participation. Middle class and working class people have almost no role in these organizations or at best have token representation.
- **Cincinnati corporations and wealthy families play an inordinate role in financing and shaping local politics.** Corporate Political Action Committees or PACs, such as the P&G PAC, and corporate families loom large in local, regional and state politics. The Lindner family (American Financial Group) and the Pepper family (Procter & Gamble) make large financial contributions to political candidates and ballot issues. These firms and families contribute significant funding to local Republican, Democratic, and Charter candidates in order to shape the city's government and the educational and judicial systems.
- **To achieve their goals, Cincinnati corporations have created a series of private organizations—CBC, DCI, 3CDC—which have usurped democratic control from the city council, from city agencies and from the public.** Creation of the “strong mayor,” abolition of the planning department, and handing over public planning functions to private organizations have all worked to the detriment of public discussion, debate and democratic control.

- **Control of the city's economic and political life for profits and the accumulation of corporate wealth and property has made Cincinnati the third poorest mid-sized city in the United States.** Social and economic indicators in areas of unemployment, health care, segregation and education reflect devastation from corporate priorities. Cincinnati's middle class and working class neighborhoods have declined while corporations focused on downtown development. The inevitable growth of crime out of poverty further degrades the lives of all working people in Cincinnati while also imposing the heavy costs of the police and judicial apparatus.
- **Corporate control of Cincinnati's economic and political life has preserved and sometimes deepened patterns of racial segregation, discrimination and outright racism.** The focus on downtown development and emphasis on expensive entertainment and luxury consumption, redefining the city in terms of the interests of white suburban visitors, and creation of a climate of fear of African Americans have all worked to the detriment of the city's black population.

## Recommendations

Corporate control has dangerously corrupt Cincinnati's economic development, political ideals, and social welfare. If this situation is to be remedied, a number of steps must be taken.

1. Cincinnati's working class and middle class populations need to organize, unite, and speak out in order to take power from the corporations and change the city's priorities.
2. A change in the balance of power must occur. Labor unions, African American organizations, and neighborhood groups must play a large role in the life of this city if we are to shift priorities from corporate profits to economic and social justice.
3. Cincinnati's priorities need to change from development that favors narrow corporate objectives to development that strengthens neighborhoods, creates industrial, technical and service jobs with high wages, and that favors a green, sustainable economy.
4. Cincinnati—and the rest of America—needs once and for all to address the legacy of racial discrimination toward African Americans and further, create a welcoming environment for today's immigrants from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. Discrimination of all sorts—whether against blacks, Latinos or Arabs or against women, lesbians or gays—must be banished from our society.
5. Cincinnati needs political and social leaders who see criminal justice not in terms of police and jails, but instead who will focus their energies on eradicating the causes of criminality by ending economic and social injustice in our city.

This report has been researched and written with the hope of contributing to discussion and debate about Cincinnati and our future and encouraging citizens to take action. (The author offers a contribution to that discussion in the section at the end of this document titled "Discussion.") The hope for the future of Cincinnati lies not with those on the top who now rule it, but with the majority of the city's middle and working class people who in a democracy have, if they organize, the numbers, the power, and the votes to decide the city's fate.

# Preface

This study is written in the spirit and tradition (though not pretending to measure up to the literary quality or political acuity) of books such as C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* (1956), E. Digby Baltzell's *An American Business Aristocracy* (1962), G. William Domhoff's *Who Rules America?* (1967), and Ferdinand Lundberg's *The Rich and the Super Rich: A Study in the Power of Money Today* (1968). More recently historians Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle returned to this theme in their book *Ruling America: A History of Wealth and Power in a Democracy* (2005).

These studies, most of them published forty or fifty years ago, demonstrated how wealthy individuals and corporations dominated not only the American economy but also society and politics. While we like to think of ourselves as a democracy, those studies suggested that we are in reality what nineteenth century social critics called a plutocracy, a nation ruled by the rich. Since then, the very wealthy and the corporations have only gotten stronger while citizens' organizations, labor unions, social movements have grown weaker. Today we might say that we are a corporatocracy (or corpocracy), a nation ruled by corporations.

While we Americans are used to thinking of our country as being a land of opportunity, a meritocracy where those who work hard get ahead and some come to be our leaders, those studies found that in reality a small wealthy group cornered most of the opportunity. Some call this wealthy group a "business aristocracy," others name it a "power elite," or an "establishment," while some describe it as a "ruling class." Today this elite while somewhat more diverse, remains an elite with overwhelming power, a wealthy aristocracy, a dominant ruling class.

## **Not a Conspiracy, a Class**

Whatever one wants to call it, such an elite does not constitute a conspiracy. The members of the elite often live together in the same communities, belong to the same social clubs, and sit on the same corporate boards. They have many opportunities to confer, to collaborate, even, if one prefers, to collude. They see things from the vantage point of their position in the higher echelons of society. In part because they have great vested economic interests and in part because as owners and managers they are accustomed to administer and to direct, they think they often know what's best for society as a whole.

What might sometimes appear to be a conspiracy by the wealthy and powerful corporate elite is simply the way that their interests and outlooks coincide, leading them to act together to carry out their will politically. This commonality of outlook and action is not a conspiracy. It is simply upper class economic interests expressed in social and political organization and policy.

Yet, corporate leaders, either because they have specific interests based in different economic sectors or because they hold different ideologies, do not always agree. For example, Procter & Gamble offers domestic partnership benefits to its employees and their partners who may not be

married or may be same-sex partners while Chiquita does not offer such benefits. Still, though they might disagree on some issues, corporations more often agree on economically important ones, such as moving taxes from the corporations and the wealthy onto workers and consumers. And they might share a common view that health care costs should be shifted from the company to the employees. Corporations sometimes form rival economic blocs, take on different social causes, and might support different political parties or candidates. Then again they unite around a party or a politician who will serve their interests.

The corporate world is not a conspiracy and it is not monolithic, but it does have a great deal of social cohesion based on its wealth and property and it is a real force in politics at every level. The corporations, acting in the market and within the framework of the state, constitute modern capitalism. Consequently, the corporate owners and executives will often share common conservative attitudes about the system and common hostile reactions to challenges to it. It is this which despite their differences and disagreements makes them an establishment, a power elite, a ruling class.

## **Who Rules Cincinnati?**

In this study we look at the question of who rules Cincinnati. No one has asked this question and proposed a serious answer for more than twenty years. The last comparable treatment to the one presented here was done in the 1980s, when Polk Laffoon IV wrote “Who Runs Cincinnati?” for the *Cincinnati Post*. Since then there have been few critical and in depth examinations of the city’s power elite. Yet, the question of who runs Cincinnati is certainly worth asking. The people of Cincinnati have a right to know who runs their city, how they run it, and what it has meant for people and communities.

Our first question is: Who owns what? Consequently much of this study is made up largely of lists and tables of the boards of directors of banks, corporations, foundations and civic organizations. Much of this information is now readily available on the internet, made public under the law, or posted by the companies themselves to attract investors. Other information comes from government documents, academic studies or newspaper reports. While not all information is from the same year, the information presented here is generally the most recent available.

The second question is: How do the owners of property use their wealth to influence social organizations and to influence politics? Once again, the internet provides lists of boards of directors of social organizations and lists of contributors to political parties.

Our third question is: What has corporate control meant for Cincinnati? To answer that question we use a number of previously published studies that look at social conditions in our city.

The first section of this report then simply describes the economic powers-that-be in Cincinnati. The second section looks at the media and at politics. The third section describes what corporate rule has meant for the city and its people. The fourth section gives a narrative history of the role

of the ruling elite in ruling Cincinnati for a hundred years. Finally the "Discussion" at the end offers the author's contribution to the discussion over the facts presented here, suggesting what he thinks needs to be done to begin to change the situation.

As this study demonstrates, Cincinnati's largest corporations exert enormous influence over the principal decisions about what happens in the city of Cincinnati. The corporate board members and directors do not, however, run the city by themselves. The corporations dominate the commanding heights of the economy and organize around themselves a constellation of lesser companies and smaller businesses. The corporations also hire law firms and deploy armies of attorneys in the defense of their firms, their wealth, and their activities. They have on their staff public relations people and hire when needed advertising companies to put forth their views.

The corporations use their economic power to influence all of the major civic organizations: foundations and philanthropies, colleges and universities, and even the churches. They set the parameters of local politics and their donations finance the candidates. Corporations not only sway civic organizations and political parties, they also shape our society and our culture.

In certain respects, the dominant corporations here in Cincinnati have had even greater influence than those in other cities because for so long they have avoided open conflicts, remained united, and have faced little serious organized opposition. In part they have had so little opposition because their opponents have not been clear about the nature of corporate power and how it works. This pamphlet is intended to make clear the corporate domination of Cincinnati in order that its opponents might more successfully challenge it.

The point of writing such an exposé of Cincinnati's ruling elite is obviously not only to criticize corporate power but to argue for an alternative. The alternative to what amounts to the economic domination of the few is clearly the democratic rule of the majority. If Cincinnati's working people, all of us, black, white and immigrant were to unite, we could change the city. If they have the money, we have the numbers. If they own the corporations, it is we as working people who make those corporations run. If they manipulate the parties and the politicians, we have the ability to mobilize and to create an independent political alternative.

# Introduction

## Corporate Power in America: A Brief History

Corporations first became a major force in American society during the late nineteenth century when J.P. Morgan Bank, John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, and Andrew Carnegie Steel Company created the first great corporate powers. During the twentieth century, through growth and mergers, corporations with names like General Mills, General Motors and General Electric consolidated their position at the center not only of the economy, but also of politics. Corporate leaders of that era believed they knew what was best for America; they believed that their interest was the public interest. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Charles E. Wilson, the head of General Motors, to be Secretary of Defense in 1953, Wilson told the Senate Armed Services Committee that he could see no conflict between his corporation and national interest because, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country."

Corporations dominated the American economic landscape throughout the last century, but within a framework established by the government, a government over which the corporations themselves exerted the greatest influence. Two great movements emerged to regulate the corporations and protect the people. The first arose from the corporations themselves and the second from popular movements of farmers and working people.

Employers themselves accepted and indeed often sought government regulation to prevent destructive competition, to assure stable markets, and to create political and social stability in which they could make profits. Corporations and the government working together created the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), the Federal Reserve Bank (the Fed), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) establishing the capitalist rules of the game. These various government agencies helped to stabilize and thus to legitimize the corporate economy.

Social movements of farmers in the 1890s, workers in the 1930s, and African Americans in the 1960s also pressured government to create social programs to protect the population from the market's boom and bust cycles and from the arbitrary power of big business. The Social Security Administration, the National Labor Relations Board, unemployment insurance, state social welfare programs, Medicare and Medicaid, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration were all results of social movements fighting for greater protection from the market and for shelter from the abuses of corporate power.

For half a century American capitalism functioned under that combination of government regulation and social programs. The peak of prosperity was reached in the period between 1938 and 1974, and particularly after World War II when the United States came to dominate the world economy. Throughout those year corporations made great profits and workers in heavy industry and those who were represented by unions—about a third of all workers—received a share of that wealth. Even the other two-thirds of working people saw some gains, though

African Americans, Latinos and the poor of Appalachia and women generally did not do as well. In addition to the regulatory framework, social programs, and the post-war economic supremacy, another factor in the prosperity of the period from the '30s to the '80s was America's permanent war economy. The United States fought one war after another from 1941 until 1975: World War II, the Korean War, and then the Vietnam War. Under a system that might be called military Keynesianism, during the 1950s to the 1970s the U.S. government spent between 5 and 10 percent of its GNP on arms production. Arms production became, in part, a regulator of the American economy.

U.S. military might made the United States the dominant world power, challenged only by the Soviet Union. As Great Britain yielded preeminence to American military, political and economic power after World War II, the United States came to dominate South America, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. U.S. oil companies came to control Middle Eastern oil and American corporations dominated not only Central but also South America. The combination of arms production, war, and the imperial control of resources and markets were critical to the profitability and the power of American corporations.

So, for about 50 years Americans accepted corporate domination because the system seemed to work well for so many in the United States. Though it always worked best for the corporate elite.

## **Corporations: What's Different Today**

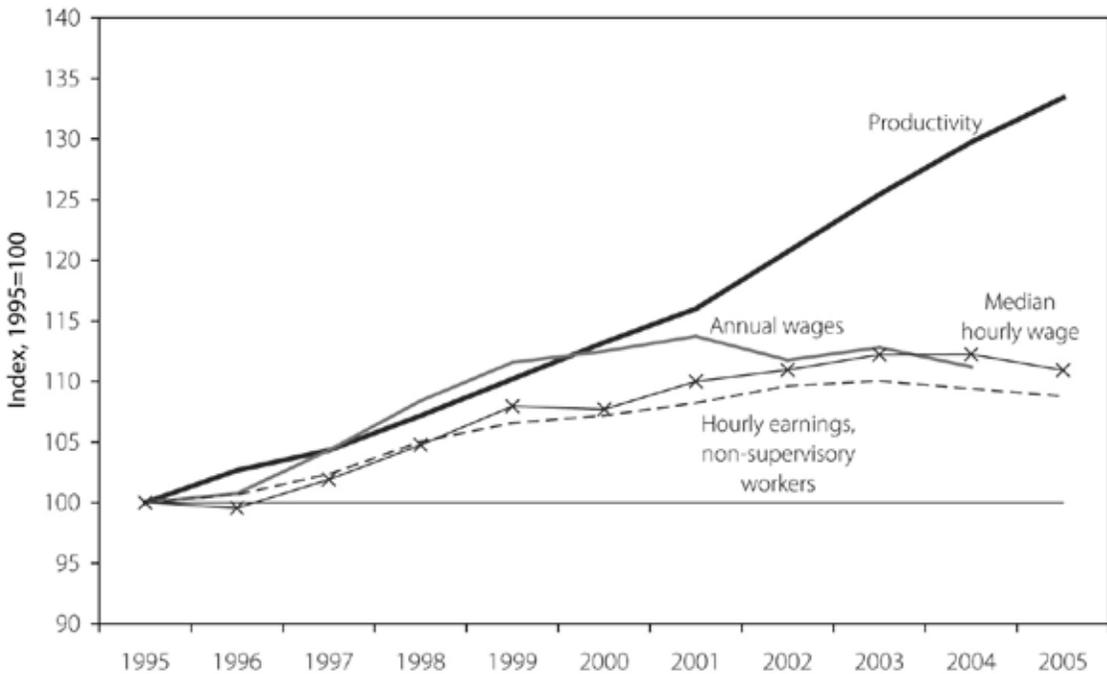
Beginning around 1975, however, with the rise of competition from Europe, Japan and later China, the United States found its economic, political and military preeminence challenged. While many Americans believed that their country was "number one," by the 1980s by many measures the United States had fallen behind economically. The most powerful example was the growing presence of Japanese cars in the American automobile market. Faced with foreign competition, America's corporate leaders decided to overhaul not only their industrial plants, but also the entire system of government, and the social pact that had guaranteed many American people a decent life.

American corporations transformed themselves once again and changed their relationship to government and to society in ways that have affected us all. America today is a result of the transformation carried out in the 1980s and 1990s as corporations threw off government's regulatory controls, ratcheted down corporate taxes, broke labor unions and lowered wages. Above all, corporations embraced the new global economy that allowed them to create a world-wide manufacturing and marketing system. Deregulation at home was accompanied by free trade abroad, a combination that shattered the old economic and social relations of the post-war period. The social pact that had assured high wages, decent pensions, health insurance and social stability for many went straight into the shredder.

How could it happen? Corporations, as any corporate executive will tell you, exist solely to produce profits for their stockholders, so, faced with competition, corporations attempted to lower their costs by lowering wages and benefits, and also by cutting the social programs and

thereby reducing corporate taxes. Since the 1980s corporations have engaged in several strategies to reduce labor costs. They have moved plants abroad to find cheap labor in places like Mexico or China. When possible, corporations broke unions or forced unions to accept lower wages, fewer benefits, and harsher working conditions. They out-sourced or contracted work to non-union or substandard subcontractors. Consequently U.S. workers' wages remained stagnant for more than thirty years and if families were able to maintain their standard of living, it was largely due to the increased role of women workers in the economy.

**Changes in hourly and annual wages and productivity, 1995-2005**



Source: Authors' analysis.

Figure 3B from: Mishel, Lawrence, Jared Bernstein, and Sylvia Allegretto, *The State of Working America 2006/2007*. An Economic Policy Institute Book. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, an imprint of Cornell University Press, 2007.



Economic Policy Institute. (Lawrence Michel et al, *State of Working America, 2006-2007*, at: [http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/webfeatures\\_snapshots\\_20060816](http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_snapshots_20060816))

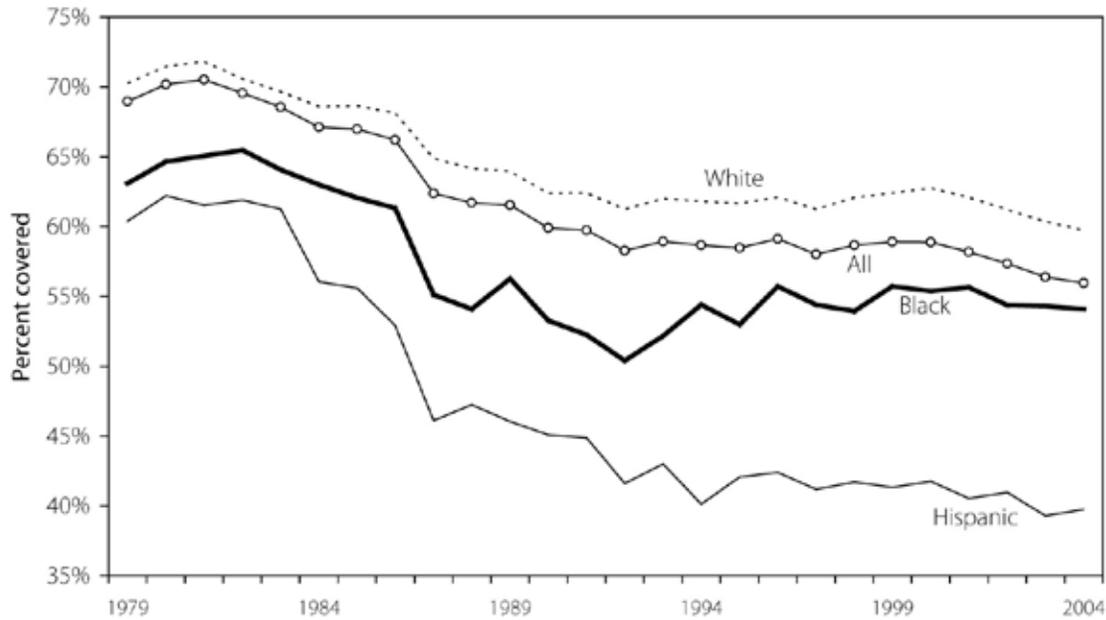
## Cutting Benefits

At the same time that they lowered wages, corporations also worked to cut the cost of benefit programs. Employers forced unions to negotiate concessionary or give-back contracts throughout the period from the 1980s until today. Under these contracts employees gave up health and pension benefits and found a greater share of health costs foisted on them by the employers.

“Fewer employees receive health insurance through their employers now than in the past, as coverage has declined from 61.5% in 1989 to 58.9% in 2000 and down to 55.9% in 2004 (the

latest data available). Less well known is the fact that those who still receive employer-provided coverage are now paying a larger share of those insurance costs,” according to a study by the

### Private-sector employer-provided health insurance coverage, 1979-2004



Source: Authors' analysis of March CPS.

Figure 3H from: Mishel, Lawrence, Jared Bernstein, and Sylvia Allegretto, *The State of Working America 2006/2007*. An Economic Policy Institute Book. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, an imprint of Cornell University Press, 2007.



Economic Policy Institute. (Lawrence Michel et al, *State of Working America, 2006–2007*, at: [http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/webfeatures\\_snapshots\\_20060816](http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_snapshots_20060816))

## Cutting the Social Wage

In the 1980s President Ronald Reagan, backed by the major corporations, took steps to weaken unions, reduce the budget and to cut taxes on the wealthy. Historically workers have received not only a wage from their employers (wages + benefits) but also a social wage from the government. The government provided education, health care and social welfare programs such as unemployment insurance, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and general assistance for the indigent. Government agencies—public schools and universities, health clinics and hospitals, the waterworks and the sewage district, the unemployment and the welfare office—required tens of thousands of workers to provide these social services.

Reagan's Director of the Office of Management and the Budget, David Stockman, developed the concept of the "strategic deficit," that is using a permanent federal deficit to justify cuts in government programs, employment, and beneficiaries. Beginning in the 1980s corporations supported government reduction of services to millions of Americans, cutting tens of thousands

of government jobs. So, as employers cut wages and benefits, the government also cut the social wage, all of these together cutting the total wage bill for American workers.

## **Free Trade, Neoliberalism and Globalization**

U.S. corporations had undertaken the reorganization of themselves and their relationship with the government and their employees in order to be able to compete on the world market against Germany and Japan. With the decline of Japan, the competition was principally with the Germany and the other countries of the European Union, though by the 1990s China had begun to become a major economic power as well. To compete with the European Union, the United States also sought to construct its own common market region in the form of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and Mexico. This accelerated the tendency to move U.S. plants to Mexico and other low-wage, developing countries.

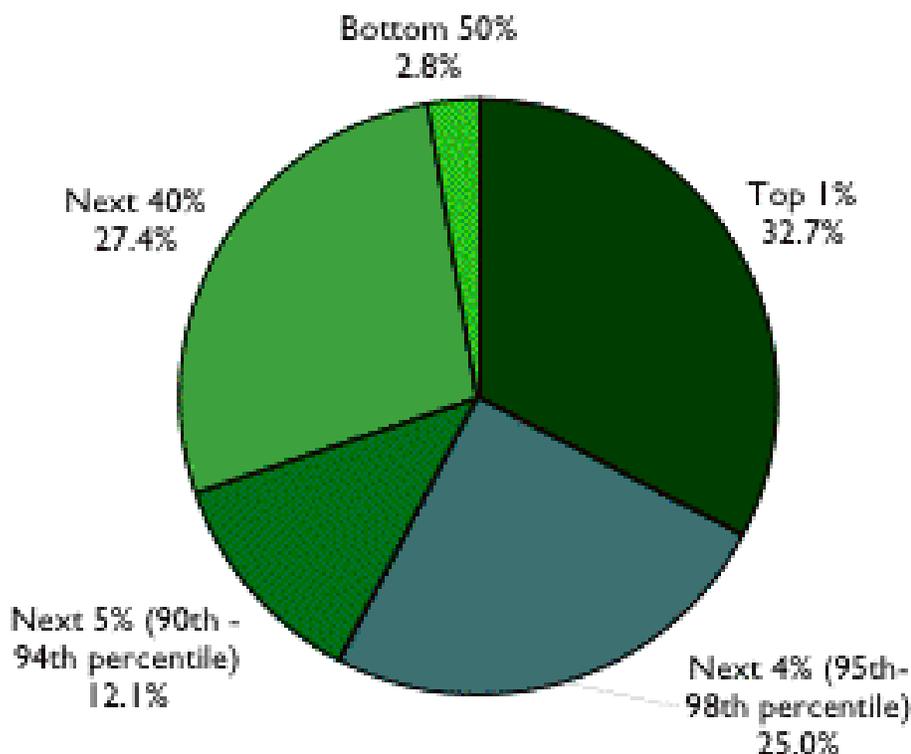
The U.S. used its powerful role in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to force developing countries to accept structural adjustments that mirrored the transformation of the U.S. economy: privatization, deregulation, budget cuts, tax cuts for corporations, weakened labor unions. American corporations generally supported the U.S. policy of transforming the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) into the World Trade Organization and inviting China to become a part of it. This took place within the framework of a general lowering of tariffs and trade barriers to create what was called “free trade.” In reality it meant freedom for U.S. corporations to invade foreign markets.

All of this taken together came to be called neoliberal globalization, that is, a return in many ways to the laissez-faire, free trade economic ideals of the nineteenth century. We raced back into the past where workers had no rights or benefits.

## **Wealth Gap**

The result of the corporate reorganization of America was growing wealth and power on the one hand and increasing poverty on the other. The middle class shrank, the working class sunk, and the number of poor increased.

## Distribution of U.S. Wealth Ownership, 2001



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Total Net Worth in U.S.: \$42.3892 trillion (\$42,389,200,000,000) Source: [Arthur B. Kennickell, "A Rolling Tide: Changes in the Distribution of Wealth in the U.S., 1989-2001,"](#) Table 10. (Levy Economics Institute: November, 2003) at: [http://www.faireconomy.org/research/wealth\\_charts.html](http://www.faireconomy.org/research/wealth_charts.html)

The top five percent of the population control more than 50 percent of the wealth of the country. They reinvest that wealth in their corporations which in turn bring them more profits, while the incomes of most Americans who depend on wages have stagnated.

### Cincinnati Corporations Reorganize

Cincinnati corporations participated in the corporate-governmental-social reorganization of the period of the 1980s to the 2000s to varying degrees. Like corporations around the country, they fought for free trade and attempted to weaken unions and lower wages. Procter & Gamble, for example, used its political power to promote free trade, supporting the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and later the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the fast track authority used to avoid the usual legislative process in order to push those agreements through Congress. Procter & Gamble was frequently cited as a U.S. corporation that would be one of the principal beneficiaries of CAFTA. (See John Pepper's speech in praise of NAFTA and for renewing fast track at <http://www.usaengage.org/archives/legislative/pepper.html> and Thomas B. Edsall "CAFTA in Peril on Capitol Hill, One Business Leader Gives

Lawmakers an Ultimatum,” Washington Post, Sunday, June 12, 2005; A06, at: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/11/AR2005061100575\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/11/AR2005061100575_pf.html))

Chiquita, the Cincinnati-based banana company, also fought for free trade, but did so by paying terrorist death squads in Colombia, right-wing groups that fought left-wing guerrillas, murdered innocent villagers and assassinated labor union leaders. Chiquita was charged with paying more than \$1.7 million starting in 1997 to the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, a violent right-wing group known by its Spanish acronym AUC. Chiquita admitted that it had and pled guilty to the charge and paid a \$25 million fine.

(Matt Apuzzo, “Chiquita to Pay \$25M Fine in Terror Case,” Associated Press, in *Washington Post*, at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/15/AR2007031500354.html>)

Like corporations around the country, Kroger Company, faced with competition from non-union Walmart, fought a series of battles with unions in the 1990s and again in the 2000s in an attempt to lower wages and shift benefit costs on to its workers. After the United Food and Commercial Workers Union struck Safeway stores in California in 2003, both Kroger and Albertsons (later acquired by Kroger) locked out more than 70,000 workers.

During that same 2003–2004 strike Kroger’s West Coast grocery chain, Ralphs, engaged in strike-breaking tactics that eventually led to a court suit and a \$50 million judgment against the company. As reported in the San Diego Union, “The Ralphs Grocery Co. policy of illegally rehiring workers under false identities during the 2003–2004 California United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) strike and lockout led to one of the largest criminal settlements ever between a company and a labor union. Ralphs pled guilty to ‘identity theft, conspiracy and submitting false tax information’ in order to avoid trial on a 53 count indictment including the above offenses and other charges. The UFCW [United Food and Commercial Workers Union] and the federal government will divide almost \$50 million, most of which will go to compensating union workers for lost wages, as well as repaying the union for lost union dues and financial assistance dispensed during the lockout.” (San Diego Union-Tribune, 07/01/2006, cited at: <http://www.coopamerica.org/programs/rs/profile.cfm?id=254>)

During this period some corporations simply closed plants here in Cincinnati and moved the work to the South, to Mexico, or to other countries. General Motors, for example, closed its assembly plant in Norwood several years ago and the Ford Motor Company has just closed a transmission plant in Batavia. Meanwhile these and other corporations have built and expanded auto production facilities in Mexico. When those plants closed, other industries in Cincinnati such as machine tools and parts plants were also affected. Ultimately local companies that sold everything from groceries and clothes to stoves and cars also lost business. While the big corporations continued to make a profit, small businesses closed, workers become unemployed, and communities suffered.

So we see that globalization and business restructuring form the contemporary context for understanding the role of corporations today both nationally and locally. Let’s turn then to describe corporate power in Cincinnati.



# Part I

## Corporate Power in Cincinnati

### The Great Corporations

The starting point of an analysis of economic, social and political power in Cincinnati has to be the identification of the largest corporations. We will look at various measures of economic power and influence here: sheer size in the city or region and whether or not the company has a headquarters here. We look first at corporations, then banks, next the construction industry, and finally at law firms. We look at corporate salaries and personal wealth. Finally we conclude with a brief description of the largest and most powerful Cincinnati corporations.

The most important factor in a corporation's role in the city and region is the size of the corporation as measured in revenue. Ten Cincinnati corporations appear on the *Fortune* magazine list of the 1,000 largest corporations in the United States and two of those corporations, Procter & Gamble and Kroger, are in the top 30. While these corporations and their executive do not absolutely control Cincinnati's major social institutions, they are influential and often decisive in every major decision and action of significance taken in Cincinnati and Southwest Ohio. (See Table 1.)

#### Cincinnati Corporations on the Fortune 1000 List

Corporation	Nat'l Rank	Revenues in Millions \$
The Kroger Co.	21	60,552.9
Procter & Gamble Co.	24	56,741.0
Federated Department Stores (Macy's)	76	28,711.0
Fifth Third Bancorp	308	7,495.0
Western & Southern Financial	473	4,313.9
Chiquita Brands Intl	488	4,499.1
American Financial Corp	503	4,254.0
Cintas	589	3,403.6
Convergys	684	2,789.8
E.W. Scripps	704	2,666.3

Cincinnati Corporations on Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 Lists  
<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune500/2007/states/OH.html>

## The Region's Largest Corporations

A look at the largest corporations in the region, rather than simply in the Cincinnati area, gives a somewhat different list, one that includes other important corporations such as AK Steel, Ashland Inc., and Omnicare.

### Cincinnati Region Largest Corporations Based on Fortune 500 List

Corporation	Nat'l Rank	Revenue in Millions \$
The Kroger Co.	21	60,552.90
Procter & Gamble Co.	24	56,741.00
Cinergy Corp. (merged with Duke Energy 2005)	117 (Duke's rank)	18,944.00
Ashland Inc. (Chemicals)	239	7,834.00
Fifth Third Bancorp	308	7,495.00
AK Steel	385	5,647.50
Omnicare (Health)	406	5,292.80
Western & Southern Financial	473	4,313.90
American Financial	492	4,038.30

Cincinnati Area's Largest Corporations  
Based on Fortune 500 List

## Financial Institutions

Financial institutions represent a particularly important part of any economy because they concentrate wealth and provide credit and financial services. In the Cincinnati area five banks dominate the local financial sector, though only two of them are based in the Cincinnati area and only one of them is among the largest corporations.

### Largest Tri-State Banks and Bank Holding Companies

Corporation (Based in City of)	CEO, President or Director
Fifth Third Bank (Cincinnati, Ohio)	Kevin T. Kabat, CEO, Director and Pres.
Provident Bank / National City Bank (Cleveland)	Robert L. Hoverson, President
US Bank (Minneapolis)	Jerry Grundhofer, CEO
PNC Financial Service Group (Pittsburgh)	James E. Rohr, Chairman and CEO
First Financial Bancorp (Hamilton, Ohio)	Bruce E. Leep, President and CEO

Largest Tri-State Banks and Bank Holding Companies  
Business Courier

<http://cincinnati.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/stories/2003/06/23/list1.html>

## Corporations with Headquarters in Cincinnati

While a dozen or so corporations found on these two lists are the dominant powers, we might include in our analysis of local corporate power all 36 corporations which have their headquarters in Cincinnati or in the region.

### Corporations Headquartered in Cincinnati

Corporation	Location	Parent, Subsidiary, Brand
513 Ventures		
Chiquita Brands Int'l		
Cincinnati Bell		
Cincinnati Financial Corp		
Cintas	Mason, OH	
Comair Airlines	Erlanger, KY	Delta
Convergys		
Cornerstone Brands		Inter-Active Corp.
The David J. Joseph Co. (metal scrap)		
Duro Bag Manufacturing Co.	Ludlow, KY	
Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc.		Johnson-Johnson
E.W. Scripps Company		
Fifth Third Bank		
Formica Corporation		
Fujitec America	Lebanon, OH	
Great American Financial Grp		
GE-Aviation	Evendale, OH	
General Cable Company		
Kao Brands		Kao Corp/Jergens
Kroger		
La Rosa's Pizza		
LCN Solutions		
Luxottica Retail	Mason, OH	Lenscrafters, Pearl, etc.
Milacron		
Mitsubishi Auto. Electric	Mason, OH	
Omnicare	Covington, KY	
Paycor. Inc.		
Portion Pac	Mason, OH	

*(Chart continues on next page)*

Procter & Gamble		
Roto-Rooter		
Skyline Chili		
Totes		
Toyota Motor Mfg. N.A.	Erlanger, KY	
United Dairy Farmers		
United Playing Card Co.	Norwood, OH	
Western & Southern Finc'l		

Cincinnati's Corporate Headquarters

Wikipedia List at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_company\\_headquarters\\_in\\_Cincinnati,\\_Ohio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_company_headquarters_in_Cincinnati,_Ohio)

This list adds other important corporations such as GE Aviation, Toyota Motor Manufacturing of North America, and Comair airlines.

## Cincinnati and the Military Industrial Complex

Some of Cincinnati's multinational corporations provide services and products to the military, with contracts amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue.

### Top Five Military Contractors in State of Ohio

Corporation	Product, Service	Total Amount
General Electric Company, Inc.	Aircraft Engines	\$ 437,173,000
Procter & Gamble	Food Items	\$ 231,448,000
Science Applications International	Logistics	\$ 146,511,000
CFM International Inc.	Aircraft Engines	\$ 123,882,000
The British Petroleum Co. PLC	Fuel	\$ 101,982,000
Total of above		\$1,040,996,000

Ohio Military Facilities

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/ohio.htm>

A corporation like General Electric forms part of the military-industrial complex, that group of corporations and military officials at the center of the defense industry and national military policy. While General Electric and Procter & Gamble are the biggest military contractors there are dozens of other Cincinnati companies engaged in military production with contracts ranging from a few thousand to millions of dollars.

## Construction Industry

The construction industry remains relatively independent of Cincinnati's major corporations, though of course it is ultimately dependent on the banks for financing. Unlike manufacturing and many service industries, construction remains made up of some large and many medium-sized and small building companies, contractors and subcontractors. Turner, based in New York and with an office in the Cincinnati area, is one of the country's largest construction companies.

Allied Construction Industries (ACI), a nonprofit trade association, is made up of over 600 member companies who employ more than 30,000 individuals throughout Greater Cincinnati. ACI encompasses many companies engaged in construction in the tri-state area. The organization's executive committee and board of directors reflect the more decentralized and diverse character of the industry.

### ACI Executive Committee

Tim Beischel, President	R. J. Beischel Building Co.
Mike Strawser, First Vice President	Valley Interior Systems Inc.
Mark Luegering, Second Vice President	Messer Construction Co.
John Neyer, Secretary	Neyer Construction Inc.
John Wilson, Treasurer	The Bank of Kentucky
Ken Fender, At Large	Baker Concrete Construction Co., Inc.
Jim Imbus, Current Past President	Imbus Roofing Co., Inc.

### ACI Board of Directors

Joseph Albert	Siemering Tile Co., Inc.
Jack Coors	Northside Bank & Trust Company
Jim Donnellon	Barnes & Dennig, Inc.
Mark Douglas	Ben Hur Construction Co., Inc.
Kathleen Fischer	Craftsman Electric, Inc.
James Flach	Flach Brothers Masonry
Scott Gurney	Frost Brown Todd LLC
Jim Manning	Engineering Excellence, Inc
Jay Meyers	Dugan & Meyers Construction Co.
Willie Reeves	Mirage Caulking, Inc.
Jack Scott	H.C. Nutting Company
Steve Spaulding	Turner Construction
Levon Thompson	FOXX Construction

Allied Construction Industries at: <http://www.aci-construction.org/>

Only the very largest of Cincinnati's construction companies play a significant role in city politics and social organizations. For example, Pete Strange, president of the Messer Construction Co., one of the region's largest privately owned companies, sits as the chair of the Regional Leadership Forum, an extension of the Chamber of Commerce. ("Messer President to chair regional leadership group," *Business Courier*, Jan 12, 2005, at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/stories/2005/01/10/daily38.html> )

## Cincinnati's Most Important Law Firms

Cincinnati's corporations hire the services of the city's largest law firms to deal with many aspects of their corporate business, some of the national and some of the local companies. In many respects, corporations function through the law firms which represent their economic interests with regard to government, other corporations, their employees and the public. Consequently corporations and their law firms develop close relationships and economic partnerships which lead to social relationships and to political alliances.

### Cincinnati's Largest Law Firms Based on Number of Attorneys in the Cincinnati Office

<b>Law Firm</b>	<b>Attorneys in</b>	<b>Major Clients</b>
Dinsmore & Shohl	c. 190	Procter & Gamble, Castellini, Huff, Milacron
Frost Brown Todd	c. 160	AK Steel, Cincinnati Bell, Convergys, E.W. Scripps, Luxottica, Turner Construction
Taft, Stettinius & Hollister	c. 140	U.S. Bank, Cincinnati Bengals, AK Steel, Chiquita
Keating Muething & Klekamp	c. 110	Cintas, Fifth Third Bank, National City Bank, American Financial Group, Walmart
Thompson Hine	c. 60	Convergys, Fifth Third Bank, Goodyear, Kroger, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield
Gordon Head & Ritchie	c. 60	Unknown
Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease	c. 60	Fifth Third Bank, Western Southern Life,
Lerner Sampson & Rothfuss	c. 60	Unknown
Strauss & Troy	c. 50	PNC Bank, BP, Corporex, Meier, Bank One Cincinnati, Vandecar Holdings
Ullmer & Berne	c. 40	Unknown

*Business Courier* and other sources.

Some of these law firms are themselves important businesses with national and even international business. Take, for example, Thompson Hine:

Established in 1911, Thompson Hine today is among the largest business law firms in the United States....With more than 370 lawyers, Thompson Hine serves premier businesses worldwide, including: AK Steel Corporation, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Avery Dennison, BIC Corporation, CH Energy Group, Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation, Crown Equipment Corporation, The Davey Tree Expert Company, Developers Diversified Realty Corporation, Eaton Corporation, Energizer/Eveready, Fifth Third Bank Firstmerit Corporation, Ford Motor Company, Formica Corporation, Goodrich Corporation, The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, The Hartford, Jo-Ann Stores, KeyCorp/KeyBank, LexisNexis, Limited Brands, The Lubrizol Corporation, MeadWestvaco, Milacron Inc., Miller Brewing, Morgan Stanley, Nationwide Insurance, Netjets, Inc., Newell Rubbermaid, Nordson, Office Depot, Inc., Oglebay Norton, Parker Hannifin, Polyone, Procter & Gamble, S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., Sherwin-Williams, Smythe, Cramer Co., Solvay Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Steris Corporation, Time Warner Cable, Toro Company, Verizon, Victoria's Secret, and Whirlpool Corporation.  
<http://www.martindale.com/Thompson-Hine-LLP/1428427-law-firm-office.htm>

Such large and powerful firms also become players in local politics in their own right. In fact, they are themselves large corporations.

## The Wealth of Corporate Directors and Executives

The major corporations based in Cincinnati pay their CEOs and other top executives' enormous salaries.

### Corporate CEO's Salaries in Cincinnati

Individual	Corporation	Annual Salary
A.G. Lafley, Chair & CEO	Procter & Gamble	\$26,577,000
Terry Lundgren, Chair	Macy's	\$ 16,271,923
Ken Lowe, CEO	E.W. Scripps	\$ 9,760,844
David Dillon, CEO	Kroger Co.	\$ 7,466,062
Carl Lindner III, Co-CEO	American Financial Group	\$ 7,102,328
S. Craig Lindner, Co-CEO	American Financial Group	\$ 6,827,544
Fernando Aguirre, Chair	Chiquita Brands	\$ 1,893,673
Scott Farmer, CEO	Cintas Corp.	\$ 1,333,400
Mike Contreras, Senior VP	E.W. Scripps	\$ 1,322,610
Tanios Viviani, Pres.	Fresh Express	\$ 1,211,176

Cincy: The Magazine for Business Professionals  
 December 2007 issue, posted on November 15, 2007  
[www.cincybusinessmag.com](http://www.cincybusinessmag.com)

The sheer wealth of corporate directors and executives makes it possible for them to have a tremendous influence on the economic, social and political life of Cincinnati and the region. The millions of dollars they earn in salaries—not to mention other sources of wealth—makes it possible for them to fund political parties, to donate to charities, to give to the arts. Through all of these activities they exert their influence on every aspect of life in our city.

Ownership and management of Cincinnati-based corporations has made two local business leaders among the richest 400 people in the United States. Richard T. Farmer and Carl Lindner both have wealth measured in billions of dollars.

### **Cincinnati's Wealthiest**

<b>Individual and Firm</b>	<b>Estimated Wealth</b>	<b>Source</b>
Carl Lindner and Family, American Financial Group	\$2.3 Billion	Forbes 400 List 2007
Richard T. Farmer, Cintas Corporation	\$1.4 Billion	Forbes 400 List 2005

Forbes 400 List of the Richest Americans, 2005 and 2007

## **The Dominant Corporations**

When we look at these lists and when we look at their connections to local institutions (discussed below) we find that seven corporations play a dominant role in the economic and social life of Cincinnati: 1) Procter & Gamble; 2) Kroger, 3) Macy's/Federated Department Stores; 4) Fifth Third Bancorp, 5) Western and Southern Financial, 6) American Financial Corp, and, 7) E.W. Scripps. These seven companies constitute the dominant cluster of corporations in the area and their board members, presidents, and CEOs make up the decision-making elite of the city and the region. Of all of these, Procter & Gamble has for the last 100 years and continues today to play the greatest role in the life of the city.

## **The Character of Cincinnati's Dominant Corporations**

Cincinnati's dominant corporations are national and multinational corporations that have their corporate headquarters here though they have most of their actual operations either around the United States or in other parts of the world.

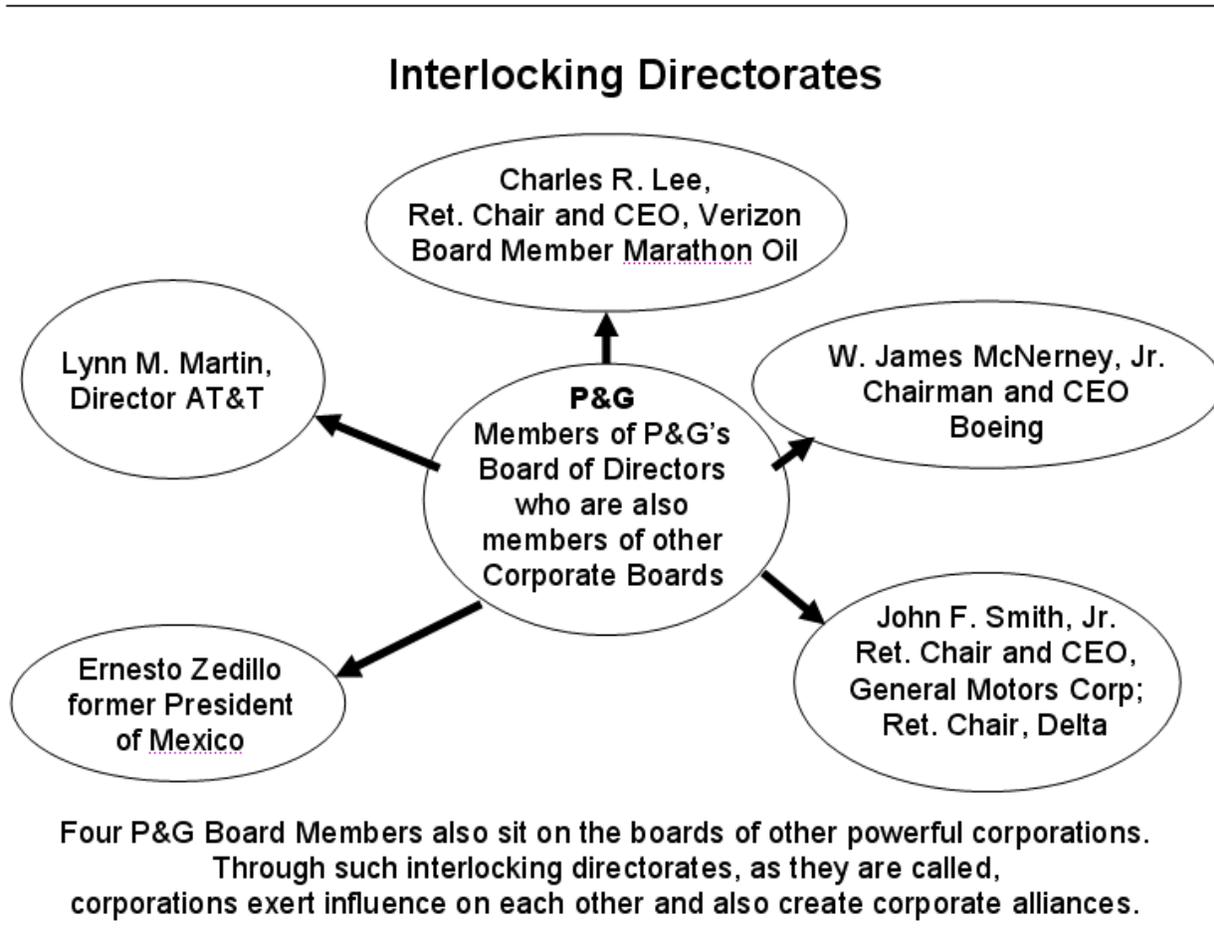
- P&G is number one in the household and personal products industry and number 25 in the Fortune 500 list. P&G has operations in nearly 80 countries and sells its products in 140. Last year, P&G generated 56% of its revenues, almost \$39 million, abroad. P&G employs 138,000 employees around the world.

- Kroger is number one among food and drug stores and ranks number 26 on the Fortune 500 list. Kroger operates 2,491 retail grocery stores in 31 states under nearly two dozen different names. The company also operates 780 convenience stores in 16 states under five names, 406 jewelry stores under several names, 664 supermarket fuel centers, 1,960 pharmacies in its stores, and 42 food processing or manufacturing facilities. Altogether Kroger employs 310,000 people, most of those who are blue collar workers are unionized.
- American Financial Group (AFG) is a holding company engaged in the insurance and investment business. AFG has dozens of subsidiaries, mostly insurance companies. The corporation employs about 5,000 people, has over a billion dollars in sales and hundreds of millions in annual income. It competes successfully with firms such as Allstate, Prudential, Progressive and State Farm.
- Fifth Third Bancorp is the fourteenth largest commercial bank in the U.S. and number 299 on the Fortune 500 List. It is a diversified financial services company, has \$101 billion in assets, operates 18 affiliates with 1,182 full-service Banking Centers, including 104 Bank Mart(R) locations in grocery stores and 2,149 ATMs in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, Tennessee, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Missouri. Fifth Third is one of the largest money managers in the Midwest. As of June 30, 2007 it had \$232 billion in assets, of which it managed \$34 billion for individuals, corporations and not-for-profit organizations.
- Federated Department Stores (now Macy's), owner of Macy's and Bloomingdale's stores, is the fourth largest general merchandiser in the country (after Walmart, Target and Sears) operating over 450 stores in 34 state, Puerto Rico and Guam, and employing over 100,000 employees. Federated/Macy's has total revenues of \$28.7 million.
- E.W. Scripps is a diverse media corporation, the ninth largest entertainment corporation in the country (after such giants as Time Warner, Walt Disney, News Corp, CBS, Viacom, Clear Channel, Live Nation, and Warner Music Group). Scripps has revenues of \$2.6 million and is listed as 704 on the Fortune 1000 list. Scripps Networks owns five national lifestyle television networks and related websites such as Home & Garden Television (HGTV) which is distributed to more than 91 million United States households. Scripps Networks has a 12% interest in FOX Sports Net South.

## **Cincinnati Corporations and National Corporate Power**

While we are not doing a national study of corporate power here, we should note that Cincinnati corporations are tied to other corporations and banks and to important national and international political figures through what are called "interlocking directorates" or "interlocks." That is, board members of Cincinnati corporations also sit on the boards of other corporations. In this way Cincinnati's corporate elite comes to form part of a national corporate elite.

For example, Procter & Gamble board members also sit on the boards of other major corporations as indicated in the following diagram.



As we see here, Procter & Gamble board members are also members of such important corporations as AT&T, General Motors, Boeing and Delta. Collaborating on the Procter & Gamble board, and on others, these industrialists form relationships and often develop common outlooks that might lead to other economic, social and political relationships. Interlocking directorates are the tendons and sinews that tie together the corporate class.

## How Do Corporations Rule?

How do Cincinnati's corporations run the city? First, corporation board members, and executives sit on the boards of directors of all of the city's most important social organizations whether foundations, museums, or social welfare organizations. Second, these corporations provide, often in the form of philanthropy, much of the funding that pays for the work of those organizations. Third, corporations and their law firms provide not only legal support but also programmatic ideas for those institutions. Fourth, the major corporations create together with

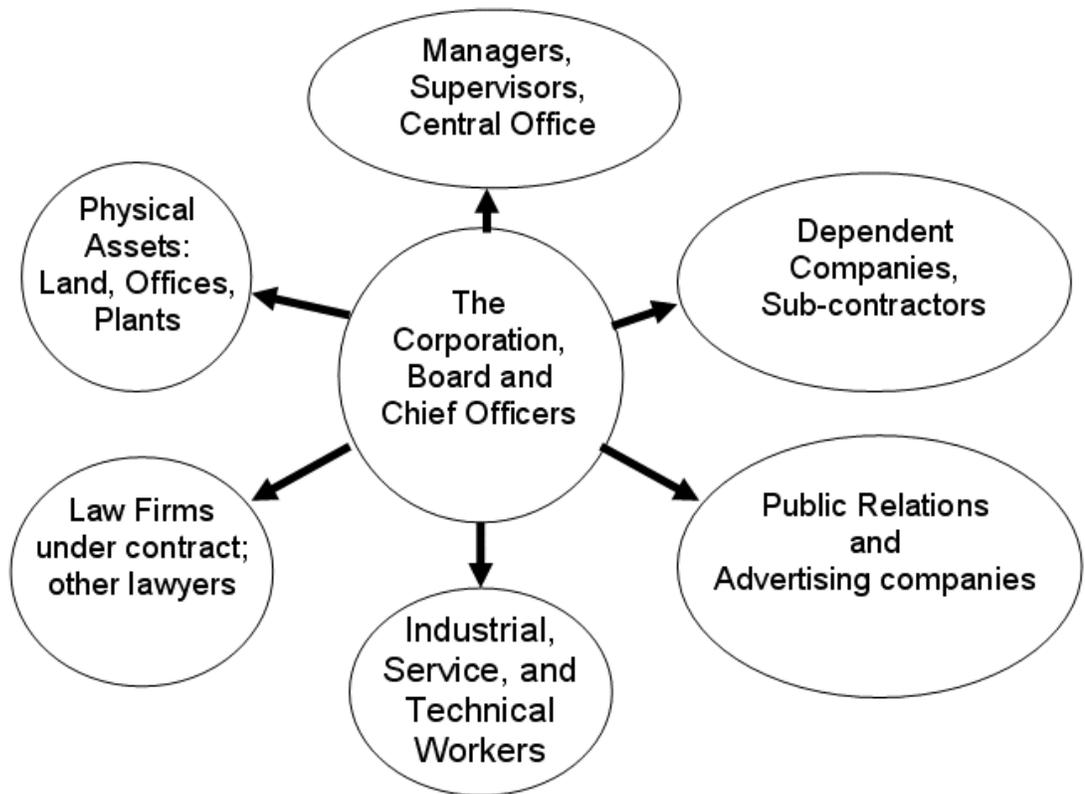
other corporations, businesses and institutions such corporate alliances as Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI), and Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) to promote their economic development plans. Finally, corporations generate the wealth that allows both the firms and the corporate-connected families to influence civic politics through financial contributions to parties and candidates. Through this array of organizations, lubricated with corporate money, corporations come to dominate the news media and corporate ideology, programs and plans become the dominant information available.

Where one family has been central to the founding, ownership or management of a corporation, such as the Lindners of the American Financial Group, we might find that family name, their friends and associates, recurring on corporate boards and other social organizations. Where we are dealing with a multinational corporation such as P&G or Kroger, the corporate leadership will change from decade to decade, though for many years one man (or less frequently woman) will be the key figure. David Dillon of Kroger, for example, is at present a central figure in the Cincinnati constellation of corporate and civic boards of directors. In some cases a figure who is not from one of the richest and most powerful corporations, but who is quite wealthy, well-connected, and ambitious will play a more central role. Robert H. Castellini, Chairman of the Castellini Co., for example, has been active in Cincinnati corporations, on civic boards, and in politics.

## **The Direct Power of Corporations**

Corporations such as P&G, Kroger, Macy's/Federated Department Stores, American Financial Group, Cintas, Chiquita and E.W. Scripps have the ability to exert their power both directly and indirectly. Corporations exist to make profit for their stockholders and they take the measures necessary to do so. Those straight-forward, profit-seeking measures constitute the direct power of the corporation. Corporations dispose of as they wish their wealth, land and other property. They contract other companies, hire attorneys and public relations firms, and contract the services of many others. As we see in the diagram below, they exert direct control or influence over many different groups and individuals.

## Corporations Exert Direct Economic Power



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Corporations can open or close plants, offices or stores, they can hire or fire personnel, they can raise and lower salaries and wages, and increase or decrease benefits, and they can invest or disinvest in different regions, cities or neighborhoods.

### **Example: Cintas**

The case of Cintas shows the kind of power that corporations wield directly over their employees. Here is the description of the company found on the Cintas company website:

Headquartered in Cincinnati, OH, Cintas Corporation provides highly specialized services to businesses of all types throughout North America.

Cintas operates more than 400 facilities in the U.S. and Canada, including 11 manufacturing plants and seven distribution centers that employ more than 34,000 people.

Cintas has grown for 38 consecutive years, with fiscal 2007 sales of \$3.71 billion, an increase of 8.9% from 2006. Net income of \$334.5 million increased 3.4 percent from \$323.4 million last year, and earnings per diluted share increased 8.9 percent from \$1.92 last year to \$2.09 this year.

Cintas was founded by Richard T. Farmer, Chairman of the Board. Scott Farmer was appointed President & Chief Executive Officer in 2003 and Bob Kohlhepp serves as Vice Chairman. (<http://www.cintas.com/company/>)

In 2003, some Cintas workers joined a campaign by two labor unions, UNITE-HERE and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, to organize a union. The union focused its campaign on health and safety. It gave as its prime example the March 2007 death of Eleazar Torres Gómez who was killed at the Cintas's Tulsa laundry after being caught in an inadequately guarded conveyor and dragged into an industrial dryer. While worker safety was the prime concern, issues of wages, benefits and dignity on the job were also important factors for workers who became involved. The unions accused the company of racial and gender discrimination as well as failing to pay workers the wages due them under the law.

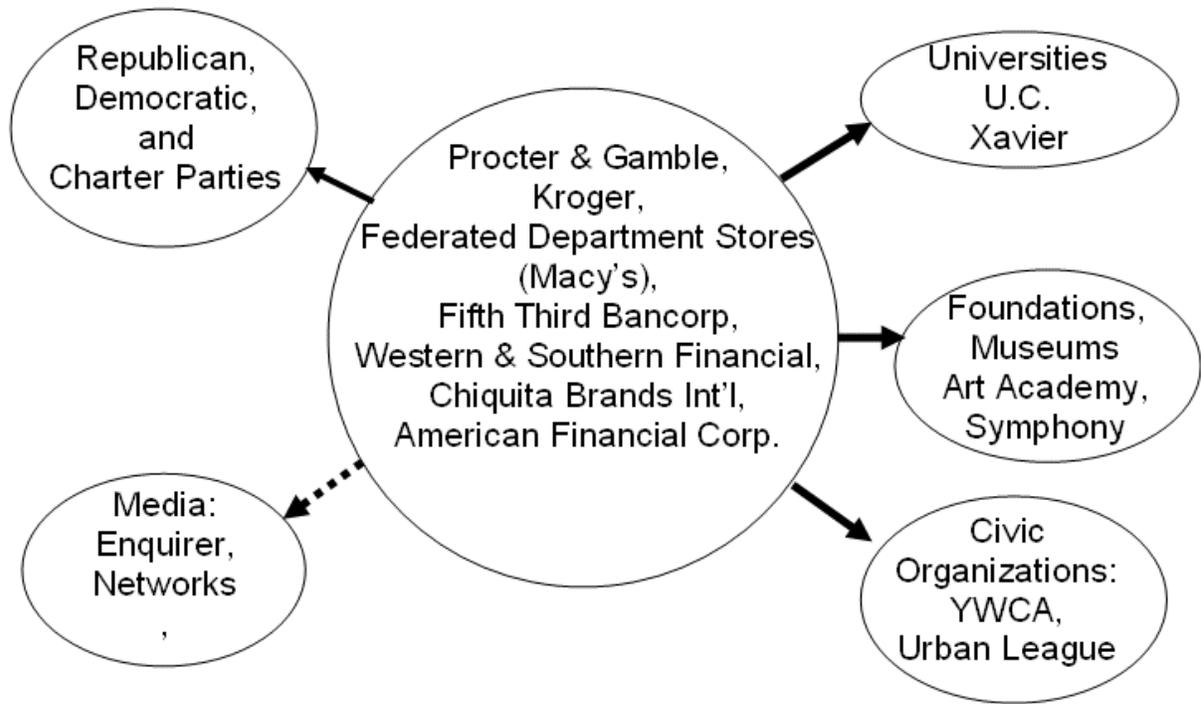
Cintas responded by hiring attorneys and public relations companies to fight the union's campaign. It was, in turn, accused by the union of engaging in illegal activities. The General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) charged Cintas with illegally firing workers, threatening plant closures, and unlawfully interrogating workers to stop them from forming a union. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia upheld an NLRB decision that found the company's handbook illegal because it discouraged workers from talking about their wages and working conditions with others.

([http://www.uniformjustice.org/files/Why\\_Cintas\\_workers\\_want\\_a\\_union.pdf](http://www.uniformjustice.org/files/Why_Cintas_workers_want_a_union.pdf))

Cintas has continued to resist the efforts of its more than 30,000 employees to organize a labor union and engage in collective bargaining for wages, benefits and conditions.

## **The Indirect Power of Corporations**

While corporations wield direct control over their operations and their employees, they also wield great influence over other institutions. Corporations place their directors and top executives—or often retired chairs and former CEOs—on the boards of local foundations and philanthropies as well as colleges and universities. While the corporations argue that this shows their commitment to the community, it is in any case another extension of their power and influence. The diagram below shows how corporate influence flows to other organizations.



Seven corporations dominate the boards  
of virtually all Cincinnati institutions

Corporations take seats on these boards for a variety of reasons, but principally because corporations desire to influence every aspect of economic, political and social life. With their men and women on these boards, they know everything that goes on in the city, and they have a voice and a vote on every important decision. They take these seats principally to protect and further their own interests and to put forward their vision of society. They work to protect and enhance their own real estate investments and to steer social development into channels profitable for them. Everywhere they put forward their notion that markets, competition, and individualism should be the dominant values. In a general sense they work to construct a consumer culture. The corporate board members and executives by occupying on these boards keep others from other sections of society—small business, labor unions, African American organizations—from filling those seats. Before about 1980 it was often thought necessary to include a representative of organized labor on public and even private boards, but with the declining power of the unions that is seldom done now except in cities like San Francisco and New York where unions remain important. Corporations take seats on the boards of directors of many institutions to ensure that they are in control, and that rival groups with other visions, strategies, and cultural values do not challenge them.

## Cincinnati's Most Important Foundations

Corporations and the wealthy often endow charitable foundations. These foundations extend corporate power into the area of philanthropy, the arts, and not-for-profit social organizations. While the corporations and the wealthy do not directly control the foundations and their policies, corporate board members, executives, and their allies often hold positions on the foundation board and are in a position to shape the foundations' activities.

### Top 20 Foundations Awarding Grants in Cincinnati c. 2000

Foundation		Type	Dollar Awards	No. of Grants
Procter & Gamble Fund	OH	CS	\$9,315,669	96
Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati	OH	IN	\$4,402,962	7
Greater Cincinnati Foundation	OH	CM	\$3,059,282	85
Firststar Foundation [now USBank]	OH	CS	\$2,295,710	58
Charles H. Dater Foundation	OH	IN	\$2,216,000	85
H.C.S. Foundation	OH	IN	\$2,165,000	12
Cinergy Foundation	OH	CS	\$2,100,901	54
Jacob S. Schmidlap Trusts 1 and 2	OH	IN	\$1,846,333	31
Federated Department Strs. [Macy's]	OH	CS	\$1,179,044	61
Cleveland Foundation	OH	CM	\$1,500,000	1
Kresge Foundation	MI	IN	\$1,450,000	3
Scripps Howard Foundation	OH	CS	\$1,095,425	27
The Whitaker Foundation	VA	IN	\$1,014,594	2
The PNC Foundation	PA	CS	\$ 844,892	33
Mathile Family Foundation	OH	IN	\$ 752,800	14
Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation	FL	IN	\$ 741,227	1
Fidelity Foundation	MA	CS	\$ 555,000	12
GE Fund	CT	CS	\$ 448,524	4
San Francisco Foundation	CA	CM	\$ 351,000	1
Wesner Foundation	OH	IN	\$ 330,871	1

Foundation Center

[http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/statistics/pdf/03\\_fund\\_geo/2005/50\\_rec\\_p\\_msa/r\\_cincinnati\\_05.pdf](http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/statistics/pdf/03_fund_geo/2005/50_rec_p_msa/r_cincinnati_05.pdf)

As seen from this chart, the large corporate foundations give tens of millions of dollars to organizations in Cincinnati. Corporate foundations often act as a link between the corporate power and the world of charity, education and the arts. Through the foundations, corporations thus play a role in establishing the acceptable parameters of research and investigation, cultural expression, and social reform.

## Corporations and Universities

Corporations and the wealthy have thought it important to play a role in order to shape educational institutions and their programs. Corporate endowments, donations, and financing of construction, support for programs and research, and promotion of corporate ideology have all become an ever larger part of higher education in the United States. Universities themselves have become corporations; they are administered, organized, and run along corporate lines.

Corporations take an interest in universities because they are important to corporations. Universities train the workers, technicians and managers who work for them and they conduct research that benefits them. The presence of corporate executives on the boards of directors of colleges and universities also appears to demonstrate the corporations' commitment to higher education and to the good of the community. Whatever the corporations' motives, their influence is everywhere in education.

Historically both private and public institutions of higher learning have been dominated by the corporations with local small businesses and professionals playing a lesser role. Throughout the United States corporations, in addition to already controlling private universities, corporations have been taking greater control of what were once public universities. While from the 1950s to the 1970s many states generously funded public education, since the 1980s states have reduced university funding, cut back on the number of permanent full-time professors teaching classes, and raised tuitions for students.

The fiscal crisis of the universities has allowed private corporations to step in, providing funding for university research, but also taking greater control of public universities. (See the excellent article by David Schultz, "the Corporate University in America," *Logos A Journal. Of Modern Society and Culture*," Vol. 4, No. 4 (Fall, 2005) at: [http://www.logosjournal.com/issue\\_4.4/schultz.htm](http://www.logosjournal.com/issue_4.4/schultz.htm)) Ohio's public universities like those throughout the nation have faced such cuts in public funding, increases in tuition, and cuts in programs or permanent full-time staff. While the University of Cincinnati and Miami University were once public universities, today only about 10 percent of their budgets come from public funds. The universities have become beholden to the corporations.

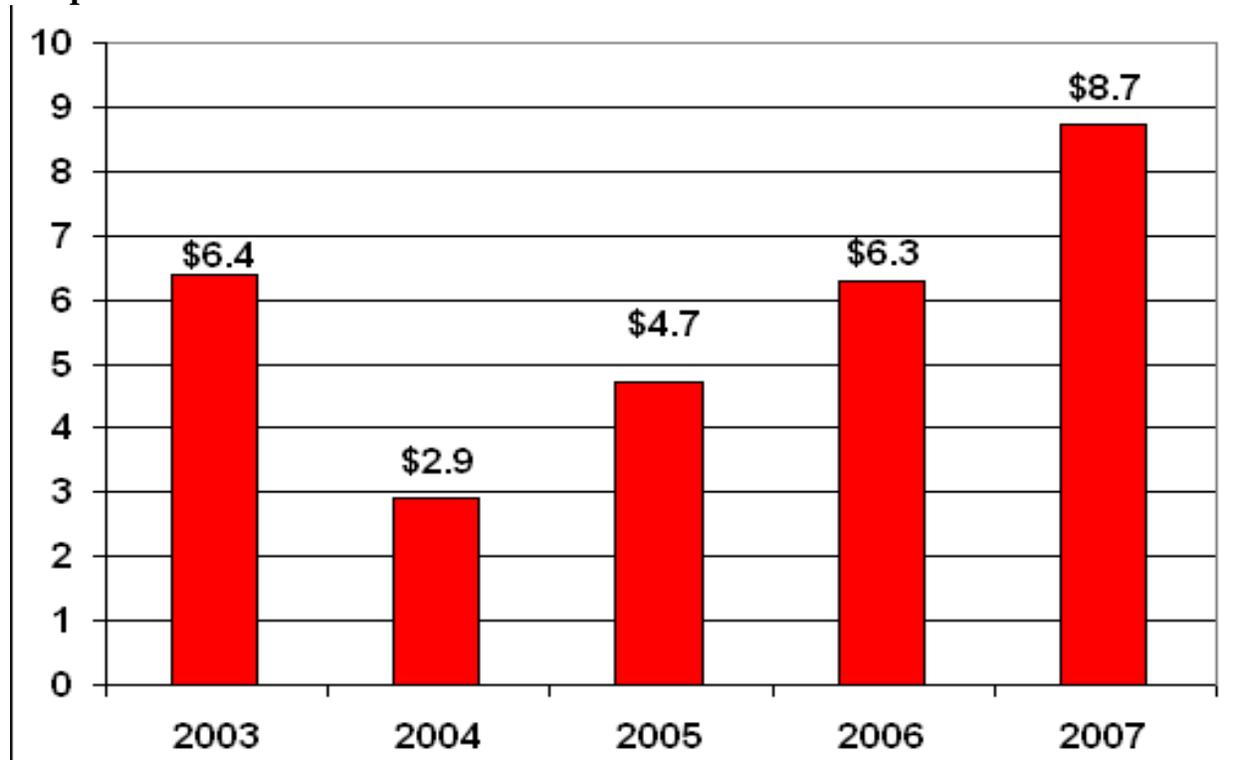
### **Example: The University of Cincinnati**

We can take some local examples of the corporations' indirect power. The University of Cincinnati has a ten-member Board of Trustees, including one student trustee. All of the members of the current board, except the student, are corporate executives, small businessmen, attorneys or professionals in private practice. The corporate board members are Sandra W. Helmann, vice president of American Financial (the Lindner firm) and Margaret Buchanan the president and publisher of the Cincinnati Enquirer (Gannett Company). No working class or poor people, no unions or minority organizations are represented on the board even though this is a public university which serves many working class people.

Though Cincinnati's population is half African American there is only one African American board member, Phillip R. Cox of Cox Financial Corp. He is less a representative of the African American community, than another a representative of corporate power. Cox also sits on the boards of the Federal Reserve Bank, Cinergy, Cincinnati Bell, Touchstone Mutual Funds, Bethesda Hospital, and the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. In addition, he chairs the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), and recently accepted a position on the board of the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC). (<http://www.uc.edu/trustees/trustees.html>)

Corporations also influence the University of Cincinnati through their contributions to university research, an amount that now reaches almost nine million dollars.

### Corporate Research Investment in UC - in Millions



President's Report Card to the Board of Trustees  
<http://www.uc.edu/reportcard/Sept07/goal2-6.htm>

### Example: Xavier University

We find a similar situation with Xavier University, though as a private institution the corporations are far more dominant. Xavier has forty-four trustees and four trustees emeritus most of whom are corporate executives. Xavier includes on its board some members with ties to corporations outside the Cincinnati area, such as Katherine S. Napier, a consultant who was formerly a senior vice president of McDonald's Corporation based in Hinsdale, Illinois. There is also Dr. John C. Lechleiter, president and COO of Eli Lilly and Co. based in Indianapolis,

Indiana. The majority, though, come from Cincinnati area corporations and, again, the largest corporations are well represented.

**Xavier University Board of Trustees**  
**Trustees with Business Connections to Cincinnati Region**

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Corporation</b>
Phyllis Adams, CEO	Professional Data Resources
Richard L. Antoine, Global H.R. Officer	The Procter & Gamble Co.
Gordon F. Brunner, Ret. Chief Tech Officer	The Procter & Gamble Co.
Robert H. Castellini, Chairman	Castellini Co.
Thomas G. Cody, Vice Chairman	Federated Department Stores (Macy's)
Michael J. Conaton, Vice Chairman	The Midland Co.
Robert A. Conway, Chairman	Bistro Group
Gerald J. DeBrunner, Ret. Vice Chairman	Deloitte & Touche
Dr. Salem Foad	Arthritis Center
Charles P. Gallagher, Chairman and CEO	Gallagher Enterprises
Barbara J. Howard	Howard & Bodnar Co.
Gregory G. Joseph, Vice-President	Joseph Auto Group
Donald P. Kiekamp, Senior Partner	Keating, Kuething & Kiekamp
Robert J. Kohlhepp, Vice Chairman	Cintas Corporation
W. Rodney McMullen, Vice Chairman	The Kroger Co.
Ralph S. Michael III, Pres. And COO	Ohio Casualty Insurance Co.
James A. Miller, Chairman and CEO	Bartlett and Co.
James A. Pichler, Ret. Chairman & CEO Chair of the Xavier Board of Trustees	The Kroger Co.
Janet Butler Reid, Principal Partner	Global Lead Management Consulting
Joseph L. Rippe, Principal Partner	Rippe and Kingston Co.
Robert A. Sullivan, President and CEO	Fifth Third Bank
Thomas L. Williams, President	North American Properties
William J. Keating, Ret. Chair & Publisher Trustee Emeritus	Cincinnati Enquirer
Lawrence A. Lester, Ret. Chairman Trustee Emeritus	E.W. Scripps Co.
Vincent H. Beckman Trustee Emeritus	Beckman, Well, Shepardson

Xavier University Board of Trustees  
<http://www.xu.edu/about/board.cfm>

## Example: YWCA

Just as they sit on college and university boards, corporate executives also tend to play a large role in philanthropies and charities. Corporate support for philanthropic and charitable organizations creates an appearance of concern for the community and the underprivileged. As with their presence in higher education, involvement with charity helps to legitimize corporate control of the economy while extending the corporations' influence in society.

We might take as an example the Cincinnati YWCA. The YWCA has thirty-eight board members many of whom hold positions at other local institutions such as Children's Hospital, the Cincinnati Zoo, or the Jewish Hospital. Many of the board members, however, are corporate executives of the dominant Cincinnati corporations.

### YMCA Board Members Partial List, Those with Cincinnati Corporate Connections

Board Member	Corporation
Jean Coggan, Dir. Community Relations	Federated Department Strs (Macy's)
Myrita Craig, Vice President for Small Business	Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber
Mildred Adams Curtis, Senior V.P, Legal and HR	Luxottica Retail
Heidi Jark, Vice President, Foundation Office	Fifth Third Bank
M. Denise Kuprionis, Vice Pres., Legal	The E.W. Scripps Company
Carol Talbot, Assistant. Director of Corporate Contributions and Community Relations	Procter & Gamble

YWCA Board of Directors

<http://www.ywca.org/site/pp.asp?c=agLGKXNOE&b=281565>

While only six corporate executives sit on the 38-member Board of the YWCA, because of the power and money of those corporations, and their ability to bestow or withhold their approval and their funding to the Y's projects, their voice will be significant in many of the organization's deliberations.

## The Corporate Elite and Culture

Cultural institutions are important for corporations. Corporate participation in the boards of museums, orchestras, and theaters not only lends status and prestige to corporation board members and executives, but it also legitimizes corporate domination of the society in general. High culture claims descent from the great periods of Western civilization: from ancient Greece and Rome, from the religious art of the medieval period, from the European Renaissance, and from the schools of modern European and American art. To support culture is to identify oneself with the ruling classes of earlier periods, with their knowledge and their power. A neoclassical building like that which houses the Cincinnati Art Museum says of the city's contemporary

rulers: we are the Greeks and Romans of today. A Contemporary Arts Center says that even old money is not behind the times. Culture legitimates, aggrandizes, and embellishes corporate power.

**Example: The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra**

Support for the symphony, which plays at Music Hall, is not only an investment in a local cultural institution but also represents a stake in the preservation of historic structures in Over-the-Rhine as part of the planned corporate revamping of that neighborhood. The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra recently chose new officers and members to its board of directors. The new board members include A.B. Cruz, Senior Vice President and General Counsel for The E.W. Scripps Company; Tom Hardy, President and CEO of the Unity Financial life Insurance Company; and Bruce Lee, an officer of Fifth Third Bancorp and vice president of its Commercial Banking Division. (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra news release July 12, 2007. See: <http://www.cincinnati-symphony.org/AboutUs/boards.asp>)

**Example: The Cincinnati Art Museum**

Like the symphony, the Cincinnati Art Museum is both a center of and a symbol of high culture and dominated by the major Cincinnati corporations. The Museum has a board of directors and several other important boards that influence policy. One of these is the corporate council. Once again, among the nine members of the council we find several of the most important local and regional corporations.

**Cincinnati Art Museum Corporate Council**

<b>Council Member</b>	<b>Corporation</b>
Thomas G. Cody, Chairman	Federated Department Stores/Macy’s
John F. Barrett, Vice-Chairman	Western & Southern Financial Group
Jeff Chapman	Fifth Third Bank
Paul W. Chellgren (Retired)	Ashland, Inc.
James L. Mahon	Bartlett & Co.
Craig F. Maier,	Frisch’s Restaurants, Inc.
Valerie L. Newell	RiverPoint Capital Management
Christopher R. Sehring,	Local 12 WKRC
Timothy E. Stautberg,	The E. W. Scripps Company
George H. Vincent, Esq.	Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
J. Philip Vollmer,	JPV Investment Company
W. Breck Weigel,	Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP
John P. Williams Jr., (Retired)	Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce

Cincinnati Art Museum, Annual Report  
[http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/61-reporttothecommunity\\_2006.pdf](http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/61-reporttothecommunity_2006.pdf)

## **Example: The Art Academy of Cincinnati**

The Art Academy, recently relocated to Over-the-Rhine, stands at the frontline in the battle over gentrification between developers and community groups. The Art Academy Board reflects corporate concern not only with the arts but also with urban real estate. Members of the board include Catherine O. Bradford, vice president PNC Advisors; Mary Lynn Ferguson-McHugh, president, Family Care P&G; and Paul L. Reynolds, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Fifth Third Bank. ([http://www.artacademy.edu/AF\\_Trustees.html](http://www.artacademy.edu/AF_Trustees.html))

## **Example: National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum**

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum represents one of the most interesting examples of corporate power in Cincinnati since it brings together elites from many sectors of society. Economic power joins political influence, intellectual status and religious prestige in heading up an institution that while dedicated to the concept of freedom embodies at the same time the reality of corporate domination. While a black minister, Damon Lynch, Jr., nominally heads this institution, the real power lies with the corporations that paid the construction costs, created the endowments, and exert their influence to shape a museum that defines freedom in classic terms of representative democracy, the free market place, and equality of opportunity—terms that in practice have meant inequality, poverty and oppression to so many in Cincinnati. (See the discussion of the Freedom Center in Part 4 below.)

The museum has 37 board members, some of whom are honorary, and includes well known figures not only from the corporate world but also from the African American and Jewish communities. We list here only some of the directors to show the role of the corporations that represents the money power which will always be powerful and often decisive.

**National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum  
Corporate Members of the Board of Directors**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Cororation</b>
John Pepper, Former Chairman and CEO Co-Chair	The Procter & Gamble Company
Ken Robinson, Vice President, Finance Treasurer	The Procter & Gamble Company
Paul Alexander, Vice President Advertising	Campbell Soup Company
David L. Calhoun, Chairman & CEO	VNU – Neilson Corporation
Phil Castellini	Cincinnati Reds, Dir. Operations
Richard K. Davis, CEO	U.S. Bancorp
James Orr, President & CEO	Convergys
James R. Stengel, Global Marketing Officer,	The Procter & Gamble Company
Charles Whitehead, Retired President	Ashland Oil Foundation
Jim Wiseman, Vice President, External Affairs	Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum – Board of Directors  
<http://www.freedomcenter.org/about/board-of-directors/>

As can be seen from this table, ten of the 37 directors of the museum come from powerful Cincinnati or Ohio corporations. Since these corporations provide significant contributions to the museum, it can be expected that their board members will be quite influential.

### **Example: The Urban League**

Corporations work to control the entire metropolitan area, including its African American community. Of all African American organizations in the United States the Urban League is everywhere the most dominated by corporations and Cincinnati is no exception. The Cincinnati Urban League Board of Trustees though small with only five members includes three major area corporations. Corporate influence over African American organizations is a key social and political task in a city like Cincinnati where blacks make up about half the population.

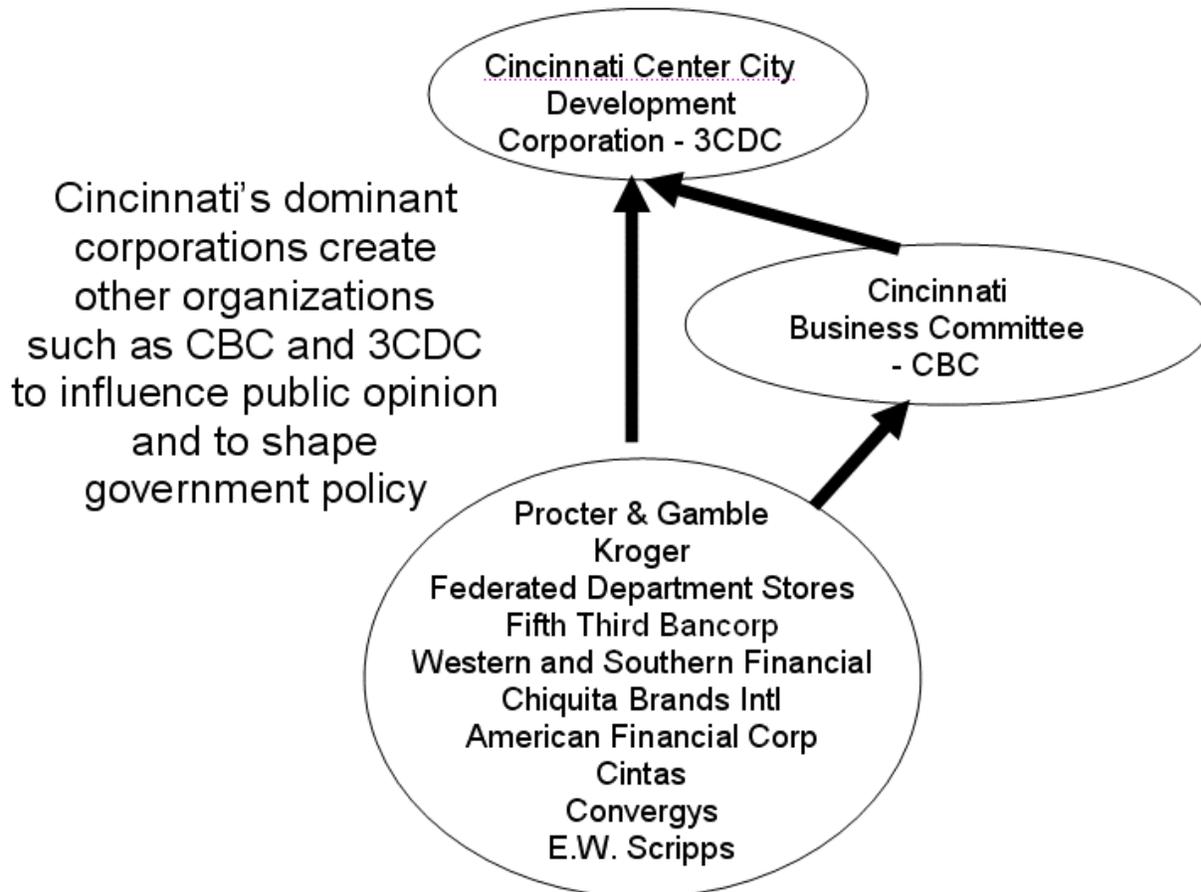
## Urban League Board Members

Board Member	Corporation
Mark D. Walton	Fifth Third Bank
Dave Dillon	The Kroger Company
Bradley Hunkler	Western & Southern Financial Group
Daniel R. Groneck	U.S. Bank NA (Part of US Bancorp)
Richard L. Moore, Esq.	Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease LLP

Urban League Board Members  
[http://www.gcul.org/Employees\\_Board.html](http://www.gcul.org/Employees_Board.html)

## Corporations as an Organized Force

Each corporation by itself with its enormous economic resources and large and highly trained staff plays a large role in the city. Corporations, however, are even more powerful when they form coalitions and alliances to influence the economic and social policy of the city, the county or the region. The diagram below shows how Cincinnati corporations influence or control the major business coalitions in the city.



In most cities it is the Chamber of Commerce which acts as the voice of corporate power. The Chamber's Board of Directors has 16 members and 33 Additional Directors as well as a four-member Senior Council. The Senior Council's four members include three from the dominant locally-based corporations.

**Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber  
Senior Council Members**

Senior Council Member	Corporation
Robert L. Hoverson, President	Provident Bank
Charlotte R. Otto, Global External Relations	Procter & Gamble
Janet B. Reid, Managing Partner	Global Lead Management Consulting
George A. Schaefer, Jr., President and CEO	Fifth Third Bank

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Senior Council  
[http://www.cincinnatiachamber.com/usaccc\\_b.aspx?id=523](http://www.cincinnatiachamber.com/usaccc_b.aspx?id=523)

While Chambers of Commerce often play the role of the principal voice of corporate power in a city or region this has not been true in Cincinnati. For whatever reason, perhaps because the Chamber's leadership is too large and contains too many middle- or light-weight players, it has not functioned as the corporations' policy vehicle.

Cincinnati's business elite has therefore created other organizations to play that role: the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI) and the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC). These three organizations, created by the largest and most powerful corporations in Cincinnati, have come to dominate city planning and development.

**Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC)**

The Cincinnati Business Committee was established in 1977 with a board made up of 25 of Cincinnati's major companies. Sociologists have described CBC as "a typical land-based elite with stakes in the exchange-value of the built environment, the CBC has always given priority to downtown development issues." All of its members at that time were white male executives and the CBC did not admit its first African American member until 1994 and its first woman until 1998. (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999)

**Cincinnati Business Committee  
Board of Directors (2007)**

Corporation	CBC Member
Chiquita Banana	Fernando Aguirre
Western Southern Financial Group	John Barrett
Cincinnati Enquirer	Margaret Buchanan
GE Aviation	Scott Donnelly
Castellini Cos.	Bob Castellini
Cox Financial Corp./Cincinnati Bell Inc.	Phillip Cox
Kroger Co.	David Dillon
Cintas Corp.	Scott Farmer
UNIFI Cos.	John Jacobs
Sencorp	George Juilfs
Procter & Gamble Co.	A.G. Lafley
American Financial Group Inc.	Carl Lindner
E.W. Scripps Co.	Kenneth Lowe
Craig Maier,	Frisch's Restaurants Inc.
Duke Energy Corp.	Sandra Meyer
Ohio National Financial Services	David O'Maley
Convergys Corp.	James Orr
National City Bank	T. Michael Price
Fifth Third Bancorp	George Schaefer
Cincinnati Financial Corp.	John Schiff
U.S. Bank	James Schwab
PNC Bank	Replacement to be named (Formerly was John Taylor)
AK Steel	James Wainscott
North American Properties	Thomas Williams
Toyota Motor Engineering and Mfg. N.A.	James Wiseman
University of Cincinnati	Nancy Zimpher
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber	Ellen van der Horst

CBC Board of Directors

*Business Courier*, June 22, 2006. At: [222.bizjournalis.com/Cincinnati/stories/2007/06/25/store.html...](http://222.bizjournalis.com/Cincinnati/stories/2007/06/25/store.html...)

The Cincinnati Business Committee brings together all of the largest corporations in Cincinnati and the region in order to attempt to influence city and county governments and to determine the long-range economic, social and political planning in the area.

## Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI)

Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI) is as the name indicates focused on the city's downtown area. The Cincinnati Business Committee took the initiative to found DCI in 1993 with the goal of developing Cincinnati's downtown and promoting the growth of business and residence there to make it not only the center of the city but the center of the broader region. The City of Cincinnati funded the group for its first three years.

The DCI board includes not only powerful corporations like Procter and Gamble, Fifth Third Bank and Macy's, but also representatives of city and county government, some downtown businesses and several important law firms.

### Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated Board of Director

Board Member	Corporation or Government Body
Mario San Marco, President and CEO Chair	Eagle Realty Group
Mark Mallory, Mayor Honorary Chair	City of Cincinnati
Patricia Mann Smitson, Partner-in-Charge Vice Chair	Thompson Hine LLP
James C. Ellerhorst, Managing Partner Treasurer	Deloitte Tax LLP
Martine' R. Dunn, Partner Secretary	Baker & Hostetler LLP
Pat DeWine, Commissioner	Hamilton County Board of Commissioners
Milton R. Dohoney, Jr., City Manager	City of Cincinnati
Monica Donath Kohnen, Partner	Graydon Head & Ritchey LLP
David N. Ginsburg, President and CEO	Downtown Cincinnati Inc.
Melvin J. Gravely, II, Managing Director	Institute for Entrepreneurial Thinking
Louise Hughes, Director, Ohio Government & Community Relations	The Procter & Gamble Company
Richard M. Kimbler, Principal	North Pointe Group
Steven G. Leeper, President and CEO	Cincinnati Center City Development Corp (3CDC)
Laura L. Long, Executive Director	Cincinnati Business Committee

*(Chart continues on next page)*

John Luken, Partner	Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
William J. Moran Senior Vice President, Corporate Facilities	Fifth Third Bank
Charlotte R. Otto Global External Relations Officer	The Procter & Gamble Company
Steve Richter, Director, Asset Services	CB Richard Ellis
Jack Rouse, CEO	Jack Rouse Associates, Inc.
W. N. (Nick) Sanders, President	Tavern Restaurant Group, Inc.
Ellen van der Horst, President and CEO	Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber
Cynthia Ray Walker, Vice President, Area Research	Macy's, Inc. (Federated Department Stores)

Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated, Board of Director  
<http://www.downtowncincinnati.com/board>

Much of DCI's activity focuses on creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere and promoting the image of downtown, and it is concerned with economic development.

### **Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC)**

The Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC), founded in July 2003, focuses its work on determining the future of Cincinnati's downtown and the surrounding area. Again, the same large corporations play a central role in 3CDC as seen in the composition of its board, though here important public institutions, local development corporations, lawyers and realtors have a larger part.

**Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC)  
Board of Directors**

<b>Corporation</b>	<b>3CDC Board Member</b>
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Med Ctr.	James M. Anderson, Pres. and CEO
Western & Southern Financial Group	John F. Barrett, Pres. and CEO
Ex-Interim Dir. Of 3CDC	Thomas C. Blinn
Boorn Partners	John P. Born, Managing Partner
Towne Properties	Neil K. Bortz, Partner
Cincinnati Enquirer	Margaret E. Buchanan, Pres. and Publisher
Dinsmore & Shohl LLP	Calvin D. Buford, Partner
Cincinnati Bell	John F. Cassidy, Pres. And CEO
Castellini Company	Robert H. Castellini, Chairman
Kroger Company	David Dillon, Chairman and CEO
GE Aviation	Scott Donnelly, Pres. and CEO
Federated Department Strs, Inc. (Macy's)	Karen Hoguet, Exec. VP and CFO
The Procter & Gamble Co.	A.G. Lafley, Chair., Pres. and CEO
3CDC	Stephen G. Leeper, Pres. and CEO
American Financial Group	Carl H. Lindner, Chairman
African American Chamber of Commerce	Seven Love, Pres. and CEO
The E.W. Scripps Company	Kenneth W. Lowe, Pres and CEO
Duke Energy of Ohio & Kentucky	Sandra Meyer, Pres. and CEO
The Ohio Casualty Group	Ralph S. Michael III, Pres. and CEO
Convergys Corporation	James F. Orr, Chairman of the Board
The Kroger Co.	Joseph A. Pichler, Vice-Chair, Ex. Chair and Ceo
Global Lead Management Consulting, Inc.	Janet B. Reid, Pres.
Jack Rouse Associates	Jack Rouse, CEO
Fifth Third Bancorp	George A. Schaefer, Jr. Chairman and CEO
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber	Ellen van der Horst, Pres. and CEO
Toyota Motor Engineering & Mfg of N.A.	James M. Wiseman, V.P. External Affairs
Federated Department Stores (Macy's)	James M. Zimmerman, Ret. Chair and CEO
University of Cincinnati	Nancy L. Zimpher, President

3CDC Board of Directors

[www.3cdc.org](http://www.3cdc.org)

3CDC is a private corporate-based development group “created to accelerate development activities in Center City Cincinnati as recommended by the Cincinnati Economic Development Task Force.” 3CDC’s specific goal for Over-the-Rhine is to “revitalize Over-the-Rhine as a vibrant, economically and racially diverse mixed use neighborhood.” ([www.3cdc.org](http://www.3cdc.org)).

While Over-the-Rhine’s population is mostly African American, there are few black members of the 3CDC board. Those blacks that are on the board represent not the neighborhood’s African American population but rather corporate interests. For example, Janet Reid, whose name appears on many Cincinnati boards, might be an important businesswoman and leader, but her presence on the board serves principally to strengthen the claim by the corporations and civic institutions that they have included African Americans.

Cincinnati then is dominated by a handful of corporations— Procter & Gamble, Kroger, Macy’s/ Federated Department Stores, Fifth Third Bancorp, Western and Southern Financial, Chiquita Brands International, American Financial Corp—which dominate the region’s economic, social, cultural and political life. Among them all, Procter and Gamble has historically been and remains today the predominant power in the city. Through the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI), and the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC), these corporations act to influence the shape of local government, legislation, and policy. We turn next to look at the role of corporations in the media and politics.

## Part II

# Corporate Power in the Media and Politics

While the great corporations dominate the economy and social institutions of Cincinnati their control over the media and politics is less direct. National and multinational corporations, not Cincinnati-based corporations, dominate the Cincinnati media. Politics, on the other hand, is dominated by Cincinnati-based corporations and wealthy individuals from the area.

### **Cincinnati's Media**

Today the media in the United States are controlled by a shrinking oligopoly of multinational media corporations that in the words of a famous book and video shape the news and “manufacture consent.” Print and electronic media in the United States are held in the hands of about 25 corporations. According to the Fortune Five Hundred list the top publishing companies are R.R. Donnelly & Sons, Gannett, Mc-Graw-Hill, Tribune, Washington Post, New York Times, Reader's Digest Assn., Scholastic, McClatchy, American Greetings, Donnelly, Dow Jones, Deluxe, Meredith and Belo. The top ten media corporations of 2007 according to the Fortune Five Hundred list are Time Warner, Walt Disney, News Corp, CBS, Viacom, Clear channel Communications, Live Nation, Warner Music Group, E.W. Scripps, Regal Entertainment Group, Univision Communications and AMC entertainment.

This handful of media conglomerates have bought up local newspapers, radio stations and television channels. Those corporations own the most important media in the United States. With a small group of giant media corporations controlling publishing houses, local periodicals and the electronic media in all of its forms it becomes increasingly difficult for other voices to be heard.

Cincinnati is no exception to these national developments. The newspapers, radio stations, television and much of its Internet are controlled by multinational media corporations. Most of these corporations have boards of directors linked to national and international banks and corporations rather than to Cincinnati-based companies.

# NEWSPAPERS

## **The Cincinnati Enquirer**

Cincinnati's major newspapers, the Cincinnati Enquirer and the Cincinnati Post, both belong to multinational corporations, respectively Gannett and E.W. Scripps. The Cincinnati Enquirer, after a series of owners from the 1950s to the 1970s that included both Carl Lindner and the E.W. Scripps Corporation, eventually became part of the Gannett Corporation in 1979. Gannett is a multinational corporation that publishes 85 daily newspapers in the United States including USA Today, as well as 1,000 non-daily publications. Altogether, Gannett has a U.S. circulation of 7.2 million with *USA Today* having 2.3 million readers. The company also owns *USA Weekend* which is carried by 600 local papers reaching 23.0 million readers. Gannett is the largest newspaper publisher in the United States. In addition to its U.S. holdings, Gannett owns Newsquest in the United Kingdom which operates 17 daily newspapers and 300 non-daily publications. Newsquest is the second largest regional newspaper publisher in the U.K.

In addition to print media, Gannett operates 23 television stations in the United States which reach more than 20.1 million households. Gannett daily newspapers and television stations also operate many local internet sites which claim an online audience of 23.2 individual visitors or about 14.8 percent of the internet audience. Gannett also has several other media and marketing services such as PointRoll, Planet Discover, CareerBuilder, Classified Venture, Topix.net, Shermans Travel, Shop Local, and 4INFO. (Columbia Journalism Review Resources at: <http://cjrarchives.org/tools/owners/gannett.asp>)

The Cincinnati Enquirer with a circulation of 225,000 daily and 332,010 on Sundays is the largest and most important of the local newspapers.

## **The Post and The E.W. Scripps Company**

The Cincinnati Post with a circulation of 55,800 (weekdays) and 79,903 on Saturdays is owned by E.W. Scripps, a multinational media corporation. Scripps owns daily and community newspapers in 18 markets as well as the Washington-based Scripps Media Center which is home to the Scripps Howard News Service. Scripps Television Station Group includes six ABC-affiliated stations, three NBC affiliates and one independent. Scripps also operates broadcast television stations in Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Phoenix, Tampa, Baltimore, Kansas City, Mo., West Palm Beach, Fla., Tulsa, Okla., and Lawrence, Kan. Scripps is also the owner of United Media, a global licensing and syndication company which distributes Peanuts, Dilbert and about 150 other features and characters.

Scripps also has interactive internet shopping sites that include Shopzilla, uSwitch and UpMyStreet. Shopzilla sells the products of 65,000 merchants while uSwitch allows British consumers to compare and to switch rates on gas, electricity, home phone, digital television,

broadband, credit cards, and secured and unsecured personal loans. Scripps networks includes lifestyle television networks such as HGTV, Food Network, DIY Network, FINE LIVING, GAC and HGTVPro. Scripps Networks websites include HGTV.com, FoodNetwork.com, DIYnetwork.com, fineliving.com and gactv.com. Scripps Networks programming is viewed in more than 170 countries. (Columbia Journalism Review resources at: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/>)

The Post closed Dec. 31, 2007.

## **Multinational not Locally-Based Corporations**

As multinational corporations, Gannett and The E.W. Scripps Company both have corporate boards that reflect their national and international concerns rather than connections to Cincinnati. While there are not strong economic and organizational ties between the media and the locally based corporations, there is nonetheless often a strong corporate commonality and community of interest. Since Cincinnati is its home base, the E.W. Scripps company takes an active role in the social, policy and political organizations of the local elite. The Enquirer, though now part of a multinational corporation, also plays a significant role on local civic boards.

The Cincinnati Enquirer and The Post generally both take conservative positions on politics and corporate positions on issues of county and city policy and development issues. Both newspapers present limited news coverage, offer few points of view from liberal or left-of-center commentators, and generally neglect in depth analysis of local, regional or national issues. In general it has been possible for the Cincinnati-based corporations to count upon the multinational media's local affiliates to support the local corporate agenda. This may be a reflection of the importance of local corporations' advertising, but it also represents the convergence of outlook between local powers-that-be and media executives in the local subsidiaries and affiliates.

## **Cincinnati CityBeat**

Cincinnati CityBeat is an independent entertainment newspaper with a circulation of 50,000 free copies. Financially backed by local businessman Thomas Schiff and co-founded by John Fox the CityBeat tends to take more liberal positions than the Enquirer or the Post. CityBeat exerts an important influence on youth and liberal public opinion in Cincinnati but is not an important force in the corporate or political world.

## **Cincinnati Beacon**

The Cincinnati Beacon, a monthly tabloid, began publishing in 2007 offering an alternative voice and a critique of Cincinnati politics. Founded by Jason Haap and Justin Jeffre, the Beacon first appeared as a blog and then as a print publication with the aim of offering a critical perspective on city politics.

# RADIO

Cincinnati has 37 radio stations but is dominated by two national media corporations, namely Clear Channel and Bonneville International, both with strongly conservative views.

Clear Channel owns six Cincinnati radio stations making it the dominant force in that medium. Established in 1972 as Clear Channel Communications, the company was until recently dominated by the Mays family of Texas. Under their direction, Clear Channel gained a reputation for its right-of-center politics and its conservative talk radio commentators. In 2006 it was bought by two private equity firms, Thomas H. Lee Partners and Bain Capital Partners, a firm that engage in buyouts as a business strategy.

Bonneville International, is a broadcasting company wholly owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS Church or Mormons) and based in Salt Lake City, Utah. Bonneville has 3 radio stations in Chicago, Illinois; three in Washington D.C., three in Seattle, Washington, four in Phoenix, Arizona; four in St. Louis, Missouri; four in Cincinnati; and eight in Salt Lake City, Utah. (<http://www.bonnint.com/section-e.php?p=2-0>)

Ten of Cincinnati's radio stations are owned by national media corporations with conservative politics. Most of the other stations are owned by a number of small businesses, churches, and universities and while they influence public opinion, they are not important players in the local economy or politics. The existence of the university based stations as well as independent channels does provide some space for alternative views on local radio.

However, as described here, the two conservative corporate radio groups are dominant. While there are not strong economic or organizational ties between these corporations and Cincinnati-based corporations, once again as with the print media, there exists a strong sense of common social and political values. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonneville\\_International](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonneville_International))

## **WAIF – Community Radio**

The one exception to the corporate-controlled radio of Cincinnati is WAIF Community Radio owned by the not-for-profit Stepchild Radio of Cincinnati, Inc. Membership in WAIF is open to those who make a \$15 annual contribution. Programming reflects Cincinnati's diverse communities.

# TELEVISION

Cincinnati has 11 local television channels almost all of which are corporate owned. The corporate owners are:

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Corporate Owner</b>
WLWT – Channel 5	NBC	Hearst-Argyle
WCPO – Channel 9	ABC	Scripps-Howard
WKRC – Channel 12	CBS	Providence Equity Partners
WKRC-DT2 – CinCW	The CW	Run on WKRC
WXIX - Channel 19	Fox	Raycom Media
WOTH-LP – Channel 25	AI/UATV	Owned by WBQC-CA
W36DG-LP	TBN	
WBQC-CA – Channel 38	Independent	
WCET	PBS	
WCVN-TV – Channel 54	KET/PBS	
WSTR-TV	MyNetworkTV	Sinclair Broadcasting Group

Chart adapted from:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Media\\_in\\_Cincinnati](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Media_in_Cincinnati)

Once again it should be noted that there are not strong economic or organizational ties between local Cincinnati corporations and the television channels, the networks or the corporations that own these channels. Nevertheless, as large national or multinational operations, the media corporations that own local television often share a common corporate outlook on many national, regional and local issues.

Much of the local online media is affiliated with one or another of the local newspapers, radio stations, or television channels. Those who subscribe to cable or satellite TV receive programming mostly from corporate media sources.

## **Cincinnati WCET Channel 48 – PBS Affiliate**

Cincinnati's public broadcasting affiliate, WCET (Channel 48) has a board that includes many by corporate directors. The board has 16 members, four of whom are from the largest corporations, two from law firms, and the rest with backgrounds in education or as private consultants.

**Cincinnati WCET Channel 48 – PBS Affiliate – Board of Trustees**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Corporation</b>
Bryan Dunn, President Chairman	Western & Southern Agency Group of Western & Southern Financial Group
Jerome C. Kathman, President & CEO Vice Chair	Lybby Perszyk Kathman, Inc.
Susan Howarth, President and CEO	Greater Cincinnati Television Educational Foundation
Dawn Bertsche, Vice-President Secretary	
Bradley R. Mays, Vice President – Tax Treasurer	Federated Department Stores, Inc. [Macy's]
David Hoguet Assistant Secretary	Private consultant
Lee A. Carter	Community volunteer
Senator Richard H. Finan, Attorney at Law	Calfee, Halter & Griswold & Richd H. Finan, Atty
Michele L. Heath, Senior Manager	KPMG, LLP
Marcia R. Humes	Community volunteer
Dr. Stanley Kapan, Professor Emeritus	University of Cincinnati, College of Medicine, Kaplan Foundation
Lorrence T. Kellar, Vice Pres., Retail Dev.	Continental Properties
Dr. Mitchel D. Livingston, Vice President	University of Cincinnati
Maria G. Molina, Latin America Dev. Mgr.	Procter & Gamble
Robert A. Sullivan, President	Fifth Third Bank
Miriam E. West,	Private consultant

WCET Website, Board of Trustees  
<http://www.cetconnect.org/about/board.asp>

As shown here the largest Cincinnati corporations hold four of the sixteen seats on WCET board of trustees.

## **Media, Society and Politics in Cincinnati**

Many people in Cincinnati as around the country get their news from their local newspaper, the Enquirer which is owned by Gannett, from radio that is very likely a local Clear Channel station, and from the local affiliate of one of the major networks or from FOX or CNN. These powerful conservative corporate national and multinational media dominate the print media and the airways. Since the media are mostly multinational and based in other cities, it is difficult for local opponents of the corporate agenda to put forward their positions. Cincinnati CityBeat, WAIF, local National Public Radio (NPR) affiliates based at local university campuses, the local cable access TV channel, and some local alternative websites and blogs such as the Cincinnati Beacon represent the alternative channels available for dissident viewpoints.

## **Cincinnati Politics**

Historians and social scientists have often noted that in the United States while the corporate elite rules it often prefers that people from the upper middle class or the middle class govern. In general, few members of the corporate elite run for public office or take a large role in political parties. This distance between the corporate elite and the political leadership has many advantages for the real rulers. Like the puppet master in his black clothing standing behind the screen, in American politics the elite disappear from view making it difficult to identify their role and to hold them accountable. If things should go well, the elite may step forward to claim some of the credit and rewards, but if things go badly, they can simply let the political puppets face the crowd. While political parties and candidates may come and go, providing the public with the illusion of change, the great corporate interests tend to remain in place behind the scenes.

The corporate elite are able to pull the strings in several ways. First, they often have a hand in the political party organization either directly or through political operators who are often attorneys. Second, the corporate elite puts up much of the money that goes to finance political campaigns and candidates. While we are dealing here with Cincinnati politics, we should note that when Cincinnati's corporate elite donate to the national political parties they also increase their leverage of the state and local party organizations. Third, the corporate elite have economic leverage that they can bring to bear on city, county, state and even the federal government, pressuring politicians to accede to their demands.

The corporate elite have several economic levers they can use to put pressure on city or county government. The banks and corporations use their influence with the civic boards and other institutions in order to create powerful social pressure on city and county government. Pressure, however, doesn't always work. Banks and corporate boards and CEOs can threaten to disinvest by moving corporate offices out of the downtown area or closing production plants in the region. On the other hand they can promise new downtown development or new plants and offices in the area if they get what they want. Ultimately banks and corporations can use their influence with local financial institutions and bond ratings agencies to affect the city's credit rating though that is a risky strategy for all involved.

## The Corporations, the Parties and the Candidates

Cincinnati's corporations and those that own and run them use their money to influence politics at all levels. Many corporations, their owners and managers will hedge their bets, giving money to both the Republican and Democratic parties. American Financial Group, headed by Carl Lindner, gives money to both parties, though much more to the Republicans.

### American Financial Group Financial Contributions

Election Cycle	Total	Democrats	Republicans	% to Dems	% to Repubs
2008	\$391,300	\$12,050	\$379,250	3%	97%
2006	\$721,150	\$10,300	\$708,350	1%	98%
2004	\$964,051	\$31,686	\$932,365	3%	97%
2002	\$2,260,308	\$343,200	\$1,917,108	15%	85%
2000	\$1,671,685	\$677,750	\$993,935	41%	60%
1998	\$1,284,595	\$286,750	\$997,845	22%	78%
1996	\$1,163,565	\$179,450	\$984,115	15%	85%
1994	\$1,114,340	\$524,570	\$589,770	47%	53%
1992	\$921,700	\$17,500	\$904,200	2%	98%
1990	\$80,170	\$21,490	\$58,680	27%	73%
TOTAL	\$10,572,864	\$2,104,746	\$8,465,618	20%	80%

The numbers in the graph above are based on contributions of \$200 or more from PACs and individuals to federal candidates and from PAC, individual and soft money donors to political parties, as reported to the Federal Election Commission. While election cycles are shown in charts as 1996, 1998, 2000 etc. they actually represent two-year periods. For example, the 2002 election cycle runs from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2002. Data for the current election cycle was released by the Federal Election Commission on Monday, October 29, 2007. NOTE: Soft money contributions were not publicly disclosed until the 1991-92 election cycle and are not allowed in the 2003-2004 cycle. (Center for Responsive Politics at <http://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/summary.asp?ID=D000000121&Type=P>)

## P&G Global Government Relations and P&G PAC

Corporations often form their own political action committees (PACs) to support the political program, candidates and parties that will be represent their interests in elections. Procter & Gamble, for example, has a Global Government Relations (GGR) program that includes its "P&G Political Action Committee, strategic grassroots initiatives and issue advocacy efforts."

The P&G PAC was first established in 1992 to encourage employees to support the company's lobbying efforts. While employees contribute their money to the fund, it is company board members and executives who run it. "The PAC is governed by a set of bylaws and supervised by a diverse board of Company senior managers, US Government Relations personnel, and Legal

counsel.” While contributions are voluntary, employees may feel under some pressure to follow the company line and to make contributions to the PAC.

## **P&G PAC Motivation: The Company Bottom Line**

P&G PAC’s website explains that “P&G participates in the political process to help shape public policy that has a direct impact on the Company.” P&G Global Government Relations program engages in lobbying. “P&G’s Global Government Relations team (P&G GGR) represents the Company’s point of view in Washington, DC, in U.S. state capitols and in key country capitols around the world. Working with the businesses, P&G GGR focuses on legislative and public policy issues that impact the Company’s bottom line.”

The P&G GGR also engages directly in electoral politics. “P&G engages in the political process by providing financial support to state ballot initiatives and issue advocacy campaigns that have a direct impact on the business.”

P&G PAC’s financial contributions are significant. In the 2006 election cycle P&G PAC gave \$166,500 to candidates in federal races running for office in states and districts throughout the country. While P&G PAC gave most of its money to Republicans, it also supported Democrats in some cases.

### **P&G PAC Financial Contributions U.S. House of Representatives Candidates from Ohio**

Candidate	District	Party	Contribution
Blasdel, Chuck	OH-6	Republican	\$2,000.00
Boehner, John	OH-8	Republican	\$3,500.00
Chabot, Steve	OH-1	Republican	\$9,000.00
Gillmor, Paul	OH-5	Republican	\$2,000.00
LaTourette, Steve	OH-14	Republican	\$1,000.00
Padgett, Joy	OH-18	Republican	\$5,000.00
Pryce, Deborah	OH-15	Republican	\$4,000.00
Regula, Ralph	OH-16	Republican	\$1,000.00

2006 P&G PAC Contributions, at:

[http://www.pgpac.com/page.asp?g=pg&content=06\\_pac\\_contributions&parent=PGPAC](http://www.pgpac.com/page.asp?g=pg&content=06_pac_contributions&parent=PGPAC)

P&G PAC also contributed \$2,000 to the 2006 Senate campaign of George Voinovich, Republican candidate from Ohio.

## **P&G PAC State and Local Contributions**

In addition, the P&G PAC contributed another \$62,150 to Ohio state and local races in 2006, again supporting mostly Republicans but also some Democrats. For example the P&G PAC gave \$10,000 to the campaign of Ken Blackwell, Republican candidate for governor. At the same time, in the local elections, P&G gave \$2,000 to Mark Mallory, the Democratic Party candidate for mayor of Cincinnati and \$4,000 to David Pepper, the Democratic Party candidate for the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners.

P&G PAC also contributes to candidates in races in other several states giving them some \$34,105. The total amount contributed by P&G PAC in 2006 to influence elections at all levels throughout the country was \$260,880. With more than a quarter of a million dollars in play, P&G PAC represented a significant contributor to local, state and national political campaigns.

P&G also has a separate P&G PAC in the state of Massachusetts where it gives all of its financial support to Democrats in amounts of under \$500 each for a total of \$4,300. (P&G PAC Candidate Contributions, at: [http://www.pgpac.com/page.asp?g=pg&content=candidates\\_open&parent=pgpac](http://www.pgpac.com/page.asp?g=pg&content=candidates_open&parent=pgpac))

## **P&G Report Cards on Legislators**

The P&G PAC website also lists federal and Ohio senators' and representatives' votes on key issues, indicating whether from the P&G PAC's perspective they voted right or wrong on four issues. (<http://www.pgpac.com/lookup.asp?g=pg>) The P&G PAC is particularly concerned that federal representatives and senators vote for free trade: namely for the Dominican Republic Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) and the Oman Free Trade Agreement. P&G PAC supports DR-CAFTA because it will directly benefit the company in that region, though many human rights groups criticized the proposed treaty because of the failure of Central American governments to protect workers' rights and human rights.

## **A City Council Campaign**

Companies such as American Financial Corporation also contribute to local political candidates. Let's take, for example the campaign of Christopher Bortz for Cincinnati City Council in 2007. While it is true that Bortz had 530 contributors to his campaign most of them donating between \$240 and \$1,000, corporate contributors were significant among them. Carl Lindner contributed \$1,000 to Bortz's campaign for council. Carl Lindner III also contributed \$1,000 to the same campaign as did Courtney O'Neill Lindner, David Lindner, Edith Lindner, Martha Lindner, and Robert Lindner. Betty Lindner gave \$500. Frances Pepper, homemaker, also contributed \$1,000 to Bortz's campaign, as did her husband John Pepper former chairman of the board of Procter & Gamble. A. Lafley, also of P&G, gave \$500 on behalf of a PAC. Joseph Pichler, former chair and CEO of Kroger, contributed \$500. Fifth Third Bank Corporation gave \$750. Members of the

Castellini family contributed over \$2,000 to Bortz. Duke Energy PAC contributed \$1,000 and Convergys PAC contributed \$500. The largest contributor to Bortz's campaign was the Charter Campaign Committee which gave \$10,000 to its party's candidate.

While it is true that many individuals of more modest means and even three labor unions gave to Bortz's campaign, it is clear that he was a candidate endorsed and supported by Cincinnati's corporate elite. Aware that tens of thousands of dollars of his campaign contributions came from several of Cincinnati's seven most powerful local corporations, Bortz will be likely to lend them his ear.

Let's look at the Lindner family contributions to all city council candidates in 2006. The Lindner family made 55 contributions totaling \$50,000 to 11 candidates. Most of the Lindner money went to Gerald "Jeff" Berding, Christopher Bortz, and Chris Monzel and Charles Winburn. Berding received \$13,000 from the Lindners while Bortz got a little less than \$10,000 and Charles Winburn received \$7,000. Candidates also receiving at least \$2,000 from the Lindners included Laketa Cole, John Cranley, John Eby, Patrick Fischer, Leslie Ghiz, Sam Malone, while Minette Cooper received \$1,000.

In the 2005 mayoral election campaign candidate David Pepper received a total of 2008 individual donations, many of ten or twenty dollars but some much larger donations as well. The Lindner family gave over \$13,000 to David Pepper's campaign, exceeded only by the \$70,000 from Pepper himself. Winner Mark Mallory received 640 contributions, the great majority of them from small donors, though there several from labor unions and attorneys, and some from P&G PAC and other major corporations.

The Pepper family which is linked to Procter and Gamble made 33 contributions totaling more \$20,000 to the 2006 city council elections, principally to Berding, Bortz and Ghiz, but also significantly giving to John Cranley and David Crowley. Pepper money also helped Melanie Bates, Laketa Cole, Minette Coooper, Brian Garry and Cecil Thomas. (All of the Cincinnati City Council campaign contributions can be found at: <http://city-egov.cincinnati-oh.gov/menu.ec.html> )

The Lindner and Pepper families' financial contributions represent among the largest amounts of money raised for political candidates. The Lindners contributed strictly to conservative candidates while the Peppers contributed to conservative, moderate and liberal candidates. Republicans, Democrats and Charterites all became beholden to the largest corporations that dominate Cincinnati's economy, social life, and politics. The City Council may govern, but the great corporations will continue to rule. City council members will vote, but the corporations will be pulling the strings.

# Part III

## Corporate Power and Social Classes in Cincinnati

Corporate rule over Cincinnati has resulted in a city, like many American cities, that is deeply divided by race and class. The relative power of Cincinnati's corporate elite and the corporations they head has increased substantially over the past forty years as corporations have grown in wealth and power and labor union organizations and social movements have declined even more dramatically.

In the previous sections, we outlined the extent of corporate power in Cincinnati and identified the major players. In this section, we look at the results of the control this ruling class has over our city. These results represent more than benign neglect when corporations pay attention only to shareholders, for if corporations rule and have the greatest influence, they also bear the greatest responsibility.

The corporate elite has fashioned a world that secures its position and its power and suppresses, exploits and neglects others. Class power and privilege and the lack of it determine and clearly mark every aspect of life in the city and the region. The ruling corporate elite of Cincinnati live differently than the middle class, the working class and the poor. The elite not only have incomes many times higher than other Cincinnatians, but they also live in different areas, have much larger and more expensive homes, and send their children to different schools.

But not only do the rich live apart, so do the other classes. Class segregation by neighborhoods and communities results from those with more money buying larger homes in different subdivisions, neighborhoods or suburbs, so that the wealthy, the upper middle class, the middle class, the working class and the poor usually reside in their own separate neighborhoods.

Residential racial segregation also divides white from black in both the city of Cincinnati and in the suburbs and residential segregation means school segregation. African Americans and whites also generally attend segregated places of worship, often go to different entertainment events, and even see different movies.

### **Cincinnati's Population, Employment and Social Classes**

The Cincinnati metropolitan area, made up of 15 counties in Southern Ohio and Northern Kentucky, has a population of about two million people. Of those, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2003 population estimate, about 331,000 live in the city of Cincinnati itself.

Within the city of Cincinnati, African Americans make up 43% of the population while in the entire metropolitan area they make up only 13.4%. That is, blacks make up 220,000 out of the metropolitan area's two million people, but most of them are in Cincinnati itself. (2000 census)

Cincinnati has 1,021,800 people in its regional labor force according to the 2004 estimate. Only few thousand make up the elite at the top of the corporate hierarchy, though a few tens of thousands form part of the region's upper class.

## Small Business Owners

Small business owners, those whose companies employ less than 100 people, make up another several thousand people. Cincinnati has a total of 24,534 firms most of which are small businesses. The Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce estimates that of its 6,000 members approximately 50% have fewer than 10 employees and 85% have fewer than 50 employees. The Chamber then would have at least 5,100 small businesses as members and there must be many thousands more which have not affiliated. We can estimate that 20,000 Cincinnatians make a living running their own business, half with less than 10 employees and the great majority with less than 50. Together with their families small business people must number about 100,000 or 5% of the area's two million residents. These small business owners join corporate middle managers, self-employed professionals such as lawyers, and institutional employees such as college professors in the city's middle and upper middle classes.

While some Cincinnatians own their own businesses most, however, are working people employed in industry, services, or by the government.

### Cincinnati Metropolitan Area Work Force

Industry	Number of people
Trade, transportation and utilities	208,100
Professional and business services	144,700
Government	133,900
Educational and health services	130,300
Manufacturing	125,000
Leisure and hospitality	102,700
Financial activities	65,000
Construction and Mining	52,700
Other services	42,500
Information	16,300
Total	1,021,800

Adapted from chart at:

<http://www.city-data.com/us-cities/The-Midwest/Cincinnati-Economy.html>

Clearly most Cincinnatians work for wages and salaries forming part of the working class, though they often describe themselves as part of the middle class. They work as construction workers, factory workers, or truck drivers, as service workers in retail sales, hotel employees or bank tellers, or as government employees such as sanitation workers or school teachers.

### Cincinnati's Largest Employers

Employer	Number of Employees
University of Cincinnati	15,400
Kroger Company	13,000
The Procter & Gamble Company	13,000
Toyota Motor Mfg. of N.A., Inc.	8,360
Fifth Third Bank	7,800
Cincinnati Public Schools	7,335
City of Cincinnati	7,223
Trihealth, Inc.	7,055
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Med. Ctr.	7,029
Mercy Health Partners	6,785

Adapted from chart at:

<http://www.city-data.com/us-cities/The-Midwest/Cincinnati-Economy.html>

A Cincinnati production worker employed in manufacturing made in 2003 on the average \$15.94 per hour which comes to \$637.60 per week or \$33,155 per year. Many people working in services and clerical work make much less per hour than manufacturing workers. Consequently it is not surprising that median household income in Cincinnati in 2003 was only \$30,850 with an average of 2.15 persons per household. This also reflects Cincinnati's high unemployment rate of about 6%. (U.S. Census data at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Ranking/2003/R07T160.htm>)

Federal, Ohio and Cincinnati minimum and living wage legislation provide a floor for wages in the area.

### Minimum Wages -

FEDERAL	Future Effective Date	Minimum Wage per hour
	2007	\$5.85
	July 24, 2008	\$6.55
	July 24, 2009	\$7.25
OHIO	Annual Cost of Living Increase	\$6.85
Cincinnati Living Wage	Effective until April 30, 2008	\$9.14 with benefits 10.70 without benefits

Various sources.

The City of Cincinnati living wage applies to all full-time and part-time employees and to contractors and subcontractors who do business with the city. (Cincinnati living wage: <http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityfinance/pages/-13316-/>) Some undocumented immigrant workers, especially those working in construction may be earning less than the minimum wage.

## **Deindustrialization and the Decline of Employment in Cincinnati**

Cincinnati was once an important industrial city, but the city suffered many vicissitudes in the nineteenth and early twentieth century that led one industry after another to eventually collapse and disappear. Once the capital of pork packing, after the Civil War Cincinnati lost out to Chicago packing companies. Cincinnati's carriage building industry was once one of the largest in the country, but lost out to the auto industry that grew up in Detroit in the 1900s. The brewing industry became a mainstay of the Cincinnati economy, employing thousands of workers, but was wiped out by prohibition in 1920.

During the past several decades the city's manufacturing industry has shrunk significantly. The machine tool industry has virtually disappeared, while the auto and airline industries have declined. Most of these were higher paying skilled jobs or, if unskilled, many of them were union jobs with higher wages.

## **Cincinnati Machine Tool Industry**

Cincinnati was the machine tool capital of the world for almost a hundred years. From 1850 to 1930 the machine tool industry made precision interchangeable parts for a variety of industries. Cincinnati's plants produced about 13 percent of all machine tools used around the world. At the industry's peak around 1930 more than 40 firms employed 15,000 workers. The largest of the firms was originally called Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, and later became Cincinnati Milling Machine and finally Milacron.

Milacron sold its machine-tool unit to Unova, a California company, and closed its headquarters in Oakley in 1998. At that time Milacron still employed 1,375 workers in Cincinnati. Facing the possibility of bankruptcy in 2004, Milacron refinanced. Its work force had by then been reduced to 1,000 in Cincinnati. Many other machine tool firms went out of business, sold out, or moved. (Cincinnati Museum Center, at: [http://www.cincymuseum.org/pdf/educators\\_researchers/educators/teacher\\_resources/MachineToolgalleryguide.pdf](http://www.cincymuseum.org/pdf/educators_researchers/educators/teacher_resources/MachineToolgalleryguide.pdf))

## **Auto Industry**

The American auto industry was for many decades centered in Michigan, northern Indiana and northern Ohio. Cincinnati was never part of that core geographic region, but it did at various times have auto plants and auto parts plants that provided significant employment. Powell Crosley's independent Crosley auto company produced cars in the Cincinnati area (Richmond

and Marion, Indiana) between 1939 and 1952 and employed an estimated 2,000 workers. General Motors Norwood Assembly Plant employed 4,000 workers in the 1970s and the Ford Batavia Transmission Plant employed 2,000 up to December, 2007.

### Auto Plant Closings

1952	Crosley, Richmond and Marion, Indiana	Est. 2,000
Aug., 1987	General Motors, Norwood, Assembly	4,000
Dec., 2007	Ford, Batavia, Transmission	2,000

Various sources.

Toyota is currently the only auto manufacturer in the region. Toyota opened its Georgetown, Kentucky plant in the late 1980s and the plant currently employs about 7,000 workers. After two decades, the United Auto Workers (UAW) has failed to organize those workers who do not have a union contract. The Georgetown plant is 60 miles from Cincinnati, putting it beyond the city's economic periphery but within the broader regional economy.

### GE Aircraft Engines

Wright Aeronautical in Evendale (taken over by General Electric in 1949) employed 30,000 workers in 1942. However, it employed only about 20,000 workers in 1990 and less than 10,000 by 2000.

#### GE Aircraft Engines Greater Cincinnati employment 1990-2000

1990	18,900
1991	17,300
1993	13,000
1994	8,500
1995-2001	8,000 to 8,500

Mike Boyer, "GEAE to Slash 4,000 Jobs," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Oct. 4, 2001.

[http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2001/10/04/fin\\_geae\\_to\\_slash\\_4\\_000.html](http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2001/10/04/fin_geae_to_slash_4_000.html)

### Labor Union Organization

Cincinnati's workers' incomes reflect the national trend toward stagnation and even a decline in workers' real wages largely as a result of the decline of industry and manufacturing and in part because of the reduced power of labor unions. In the United States only 12 percent of all workers belong to labor unions, with 36.2 percent of government workers being unionized and only 7.4 percent of private sector workers belonging to unions. Ohio's rate of unionization is somewhat higher than the national average with 15.5 percent of workers belonging to labor unions. (US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Few workers have any experience in union struggles. Strikes in the United States have declined dramatically in the past 35 years. In the 1970s there were 1,000 major work stoppages involving more than one million workers each year throughout the country. By 2006 there were only 20 major work stoppages involving only 70,000 workers. Most Cincinnati workers have never participated in a union meeting much less a strike.

Cincinnati's union membership roughly corresponds to national union membership levels, though perhaps generally lower than other Midwestern areas and somewhat higher than the national average.

**Union Membership - Cincinnati-Middletown OH-IN-KY**

Sector	Sample		Member	Covered		%Covered
Total	1,033	976,002	118,342	130,007	12.1	13.3
Private	925	872,349	70,625	73,293	8.1	8.4
Public	108	103,654	47,717	56,714	46.0	54.7

Union Membership, Coverage, Density and Employment by Combined Statistical Area (CSA) and MSA, 2006 (details in table note) Note: Sample size (Obs) for many cells are small and should be used with care. <http://www.unionstats.com/>

Cincinnati's AFL-CIO Labor Council is made up of 130 unions. As in other parts of the country, the labor movement is now divided between the AFL-CIO unions and the new Change to Win Federation. Such large and important unions as the Carpenters, the Teamsters and SEIU have left the AFL-CIO for Change to Win.

**Some of Cincinnati's Largest Labor Unions**

Union	Members
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1099, Kroger	11,000
Teamster Local 100 (Freight)	6,000
Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT), Cincinnati Public Schools	3,200
United Steel Workers (USW), AK Steel, Middletown, Ohio	2,700
American Association of University Professors (AAUP), Univ. of Cincinnati	2,300
United Auto Workers Local 647 at GEAE	1,300
International Association of Machinists Local 912 at GEAE	600

Estimated membership from various news reports.

For more than twenty years the Cincinnati Labor Council had the country's largest Labor Day picnic, but Cincinnati's unions declined in members and saw few gains in collective bargaining. Unlike developments in other areas, during those years the AFL-CIO leadership did not create activist groups such as Jobs with Justice, Street Heat, or a local Committee for Occupational Safety and Health. The AFL-CIO generally preferred to rely on contacts with the Democratic

Party to improve the labor situation, rather than mobilizing union members to fight their employers.

Cincinnati's first major organizing effort in many years was led by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Janitors won an important victory in July 2007 when SEIU won a contract from cleaning companies that clean about two-thirds of the buildings in Cincinnati. The agreement called for wages to rise to a minimum of \$7.05 an hour by Oct. 1, 2007 and to \$9.80 an hour by Jan. 1, 2012. Before that, janitors earned between \$5.85 and \$6.85 an hour. The agreement provides janitors access to employer-subsidized group health insurance starting Jan. 1, 2010 at a cost of \$20 a month for those in a single plan and up to \$198 a month for the most expensive family plan. ("Justice for Janitors," Editorial, *Cincinnati Post*, July 31, 2007 at: <http://news.cincypost.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070731/EDIT/707310304/1003>)

UNITE-HERE and the Teamsters have had an organizing campaign at CINTAS, and though the corporation is headquartered in Cincinnati, the campaign does not focus on CINTAS workers in the Cincinnati area. UNITE-HERE has also been organizing workers at some national hotel chains some of which have hotels in Northern Kentucky.

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) has been engaged in some new organizing in meat packing and processing plants in the region.

Cincinnati labor unions and churches helped to establish the Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center located in downtown Cincinnati. The Workers Center has been engaged in a campaign to organize day laborers and other unorganized groups in Cincinnati.

Still, despite these recent organizing efforts, the Cincinnati labor unions remain a small minority among all workers, have taken few efforts to expand their influence, and have seldom used their economic power in the form of strikes, boycotts, and protest demonstrations. The weakness of the labor unions and other social movements has left Cincinnati's corporate elite free to wield its power.

## **The Geography of Corporate Power and Social Space**

Corporate power has structured social space in Cincinnati in such a way as to create patterns of class and racial segregation. While some people live in security and luxury in exclusive suburbs in multimillion dollar mansions, others live in inner city neighborhoods in dilapidated housing and surrounded by social problems. But even within the city of Cincinnati some live in relatively comfortable and secure neighborhoods while others live in disintegrating slums. Social class and economic power largely determine who lives where and under what conditions, and class is determined by the power of the corporations we have discussed here.

## The Social Space of the Elite

Just as the corporate elite has structured the city of Cincinnati, so it has also structured its own space in the exclusive suburbs of the region. A comparison between the average incomes and home values of Cincinnati and those of the suburb of Indian Hill where many of the corporate elite live shows how social class, based on property, wealth and power, are reflected in the social geography.

### Comparison of Wealth and Property Cincinnati and Indian Hill

	Median Income 2007	Value of Homes 2007
Cincinnati	\$ 40,956	\$ 93,000
Indian Hill	\$363,000	\$1,200,000

"Rating the Burbs," [www.cincybusinessmag.com](http://www.cincybusinessmag.com), Dec. 2007, based on 2006 figures; and, <http://www.city-data.com/us-cities/The-Midwest/Cincinnati-Economy.html>

Indian Hill has only 5,907 inhabitants living in 2,066 households and is 94% white with less than one percent each of African Americans, Native Americans, Asians or Hispanics. Indian Hill is one of the safest cities in the region with 0.35 violent crimes per 1,000 population, compared to 10.65 per 1,000 in the middle class neighborhood of Clifton in Cincinnati. Indian Hill also has the second best public school system in the region though many send their children to the Cincinnati Country Day School. Indian Hill, home of corporate board members, CEOs, and other top executives has none of the problems of poverty that working people in Cincinnati live with. It is an island of wealth and security in a sea of economic insecurity, poverty and social distress.

While only the wealthiest can afford to live in Indian Hill, other members of the elite live in other expensive suburban neighborhoods, as do members of the upper middle class. The simplest way to rank these suburbs is by property values, though other factors such as school systems and public safety will also be important in how people decided where to live. The following chart shows those thirteen suburbs where median home sale prices in 2006 were over \$200,000. By and large these are the suburbs where Cincinnati's more comfortable upper and middle classes reside, many of them independent business owners, corporate executives, middle managers, and professionals.

**Cincinnati's Upper and Middle Class Suburbs  
(Ranked by Property Values Only)**

Suburb	Median Home Sale Price 2006
Indian Hill	\$1,200,000
Terrace Park	\$ 480,000
Montgomery	\$ 370,950
Symmes Township	\$ 304,500
Amberley Village	\$ 292,000
Mason	\$ 290,000
Wyoming	\$ 285,000
Mariemont	\$ 282,000
Clear Creek Township (Warren County)	\$ 268,000
Turtle Creek Township (Warren County)	\$ 257,000
Glendale	\$ 255,000
West Chester (Butler County)	\$ 225,000
Madeira	\$ 201,000

Chart adapted from: Rating the Burbs," [www.cincybusinessmag.com](http://www.cincybusinessmag.com), Dec. 2007, based on 2006 figures

The corporate elite of Cincinnati has created a regional social geography that protects itself and its interests, supports a secure upper middle class, and maintains a dependent middle and working class, but allows thousands of poor people, particularly women and children, to fall into poverty in many inner-city neighborhoods.

**Cincinnati's Middle Class, Working Class and Poor**

Corporate control has made Cincinnati the third poorest medium-sized city in the United States according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. While Ohio is 21 in the nation in terms of poverty with 13.3 percent of the people living below the poverty line, Cincinnati is a truly poor city. According to the survey published in August 2007, 27.8 percent of Cincinnati's residents lived in poverty in 2006. The city had been number 22 in 2004 with 19.6 percent of its people in poverty, but in 2006 the survey showed Cincinnati in the top ten poorest cities with 25 percent of its population living in poverty in 2005.

Social class acts to structure poverty within the city of Cincinnati. Social scientists who study urban issues have divided Cincinnati into four zones based on an index of socio-economic status.

## Cincinnati Residential Zones Based on SES Indicators

SES Area	Communities (or parts thereof)	SES Indicators
SES I	Lower Price Hill, Linwood, North Fairmount-English Woods, Camp Washington, South Cumminsville-Millvale, Fay Apts., Winton Hills, Over-the-Rhine, tracts in East Price Hill, Westwood, South Fairmount, Northside, Roselawn, Avondale, Evanston, parts of Walnut Hills, Mt. Auburn, the West End.	Total pop.: 64,284 81% African American High school ed.: 53%; Households below poverty: 45% Unemployment rate: 18%; Receiving public assistance: 32% Median family income: \$17,487; 1 child in 4 in two-parent home.
SES II	Mt. Airy-Northside Slopes, Winton Place, Corryville, Bond Hill, Linwood, Carthage, Evanston-East Walnut Hills, parts of West End and Mt. Auburn, clusters in Avondale, Fairview-Clifton Heights, and Madsonville.	Total pop.: 81,339 80% African American Unemployment rate: 8% Households below poverty: 24% Receiving public assistance: 23% Median family income: \$30,190
SES III	Riverside-Sayler Park, Kennedy Heights, Sayler Park, University Heights, parts of Mt. Auburn, Westwood, West Price Hill, Oakley, Madisonville, Evanston, Walnut Hills, Central Business District, 3 sections on north fringe.	Total pop.: 96,066 38% African American Unemployment rate: 6% Households below poverty: 14% Receiving public assistance 20% Median family income: \$41,848
SES IV	Mt. Lookout, Oakley, Mt. Adams, California, Mt. Washington, Mount Lookout-Columbia Tusculum, Clifton, East Walnut Hills, North Avondale-Paddock Hills, and tracts in Central Business District, Pleasant Ridge, Mt. Airy, Westwood, West Price Hill, and Fairview-Clifton Heights.	Total Pop: 96,059 13% African American Unemployment rate: 3% Households below poverty: 9% Receiving public assistance: 18% Median family income: \$73,723

Michael Maloney and Christopher Auffrey, *The Social Areas of Cincinnati: An Analysis of Social Needs*, Fourth Edition. (Cincinnati: School of Planning University of Cincinnati, 2004). Based on figures from 2000 U.S. Census, at: <http://www.socialareasofcincinnati.org/>

## Racial Segregation in Cincinnati

Closely related to the patterns of economic stratification in Cincinnati and its surrounding suburban area are patterns of racial segregation. Cincinnati has by 2002 become the country's sixth most segregated city:

According to the census data, among major metropolitan areas with at least 1 million residents and at least 20,000 blacks, Cincinnati ranks behind only Greater Milwaukee, Detroit, Greater Cleveland, St. Louis and Newark, N.J., in residential segregation. Indianapolis ranked 13th and Columbus was 22nd in the Census Bureau's segregation index.

After more than three decades of steady white population flight -- and, to a lesser extent, black middle- and upper-class flight -- to the suburbs, Cincinnati's racial inequities extend far beyond the glaring contrast between tony neighborhoods such as Hyde Park and communities on the lower end of the economic spectrum such as the West End.

Despite having a relatively balanced overall population of 331,000 that is 53 percent white and 43 percent black, Cincinnati, across all income levels and demographic categories, is largely a city of white neighborhoods and black neighborhoods, but very few black-and-white neighborhoods.

.....

[Some] 29 of Cincinnati's 48 neighborhoods have white or black majorities of even more than 3-to-1, in some cases, substantially more. The population gap is even wider throughout Greater Cincinnati, where blacks comprise only 13 percent of the tri-state's 1.6 million residents.

Barry M. Horstman, "Cincinnati Now 6<sup>th</sup> Most Segregated City," *Cincinnati Post*, Nov. 30, 2002. at: <http://www.cincypost.com/2002/11/30/census113002.html>

## Poverty Among Women and Children

Cincinnati then, while it has some affluent areas, is a poor city. Poverty particularly affects women and children. In Cincinnati, 70 percent of poor families have female heads of household. In Hamilton County, which includes many more prosperous suburbs, 16 percent of children live in poverty which affects not only their material well being, but also their social life, their psychological development and their future chances in life.

## Child Poverty in Hamilton County

County Population	808,652
Child Population	24.9%
Over all Poverty Rate	11.6%
Child Poverty Rate	16.1%

Children's Defense Fund, 2006 fact sheet for Hamilton County, Ohio

[http://www.cdfohio.org/publications\\_research/state\\_local\\_data/factsheets/2006\\_FactSheets/fs06\\_Hamilton.pdf](http://www.cdfohio.org/publications_research/state_local_data/factsheets/2006_FactSheets/fs06_Hamilton.pdf)

Among 50 cities studied, Cincinnati fell in the bottom one-third based on 8 of 10 indicators of child well being in a study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation using 1990 statistics. Cincinnati scored particularly poorly in terms of low birth weight babies, birth to teenagers, percentage of children in single parent families and number of children living in distressed neighborhoods. That study found that one third of the city's 91,352 children under 18 lived in neighborhoods characterized by poverty, in female-headed families which suffered from unemployment and welfare dependency. (Cited in Social Areas of Cincinnati, Chp. 7, p. 8.)

Cincinnati is notorious for its infant mortality rate which is comparable to that of many Third World nations. In Hamilton County in 2005, there were 11,445 births and 159 infant deaths or about twice the national average.

### Infant Mortality Comparison, 2005

#### Geographical Region Deaths per 1,000 live births

Hamilton County	13.9 (159 deaths ÷ 11,445 births)
<b>Ohio</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>6.8</b>
<b>Japan</b>	<b>3.28</b>

The infant mortality rate is calculated as the number of live-born infants who die before their first birthday, divided by the number of live-born infants. This result is multiplied by 1,000 in order to convert it to a rate per thousand.

Statistics from Hamilton County, Ohio Department of Health, National Center for Health Statistics.

At: <http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/NR/rdonlyres/7F643A93-60FA-4A42-BD7C-F829E0645715/0/infantmortalityreportfinal.pdf>

## Childhood Asthma

Childhood asthma is also a growing issue in Cincinnati and the region. The growth in asthma may be linked to Cincinnati's poor air quality and to other environmental exposures.

### Percent of Children with Doctor-Diagnosed Asthma in 2000

Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Clermont (Ohio)	12%
Kenton, Boone, Campbell (Kentucky)	13%
Dearborn and 5 other counties (Indiana)	16%

Source: Child Policy Research Center of Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005, at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

### Childhood Lead Poisoning

Cincinnati has thousands of children who have been exposed to lead poisoning, especially in the inner city. City and county government have carried out lead abatement programs and screenings of children, but the exposure levels remain high.

Childhood Lead Exposure	Hamilton County		Cincinnati	
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Total Screened for Lead Poisoning	9,416	8,089	8,890	7,673
Elevated Blood Levels	383	410	351	383
Percentage Elevated Blood Levels	4%	5%	4%	5%

### Education

Cincinnati Public Schools claims a graduation rate of 76.6 percent. However, a recent Johns Hopkins University study of “drop out factories,” schools that produce extremely high rates of high school drop outs, found that nearly 10 percent of Ohio’s high schools, or just under 70 schools statewide, qualified as dropout factories, including seven of 17 high schools in the Cincinnati Public Schools district. (Nancy Zuckerbrod, “Drop Out Factories,” Cincinnati Post, Oct. 30, 207) The exception is Walnut Hills High School, one of the best in the state and the nation, which largely serves as a college prep high school for many of Cincinnati’s upper middle class and middle class children.

The Sustainable Cincinnati 2005 report found that education here was not adequate for students to find jobs in the new high tech economy. “AngelouEconomics used a composite score of SAT/ACT, graduation rates, dropout rates and student/teacher ratios as a benchmark of educational performance in ‘tech metros.’ The highest score was achieved by Boston (99.8). The Cincinnati Standard Metropolitan Area scored 77.8, lowest of any tech metro except Colorado Springs. These data suggest that our students are not ‘work ready’ for the high technology jobs desired in the region.” (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005, at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

The problem is not the teachers. Cincinnati’s unionized teachers are the best educated and trained in the state, with more nationally certified teachers than any district in Ohio. (Enquirer at: <http://news.enquirer.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071221/NEWS0102/712210411/1058/>)

[NEWS01](#)) Conservative political activists on previous school boards caused deep divisions and paralyzed the board. Teachers and parents hope that a new school board and successful school levies will make it possible to improve the system.

## **Environment**

Cincinnati's distorted economic development has also affected our environment. Cincinnati ranked 11th in the nation for unhealthy smog days in 2003, compared with Columbus and Cleveland which tied for 25<sup>th</sup>. In the Cincinnati region some 59% of our the streams which are tributaries of the Ohio River and its Ohio and Kentucky tributaries fall short of State and Federal water quality standards. (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005 at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

## **General Health**

Cincinnati's citizens, pushed by corporate advertising, have come to live an unhealthy lifestyle. In the Greater Cincinnati area (encompassing 22 counties) almost 61% of the population is overweight and 22% is obese, according to Body Mass Index measurements. Those who are overweight and obese are at a greater risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and other health problems. (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005 at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

Smoking is also a serious health problem. The Great Cincinnati Health Status Surveys for 1999 and 2000s found that 33.3 of those living in the 14-county area smoke. This is 50% higher than the national average of 1 in 4. The recent smoking ban in Cincinnati could have resulted in improvements in these areas. Tobacco use contributed to many illnesses including lung cancer and heart disease. (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005 at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

Suicide levels in Cincinnati are higher than they should be. In this area (14 counties) the annual average age-adjusted suicide rate for 1994-1998 was between 6.0 and 16.8 per 100,000. The Healthy People 1010 goal is to reduce suicide to 5.0 per 100,000. (Sustainable Cincinnati 2005 at: [http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sustainablecincinnati.org/sc_2005.pdf))

(See the Indicators of Health Communities 2006 report of the Health Collaborative for Greater Cincinnati for current figures for current health statistics at: <http://www.the-collaborative.org/Portals/4/docs/Indicators%20Reports/indicatorsall2006.pdf> )

Clearly corporate rule has structured social geography in such a way that the elite live safe and secure lives, while working people live on the edge and poor people suffer social distress of all sorts.

## Part IV

# Cincinnati: One Hundred Years of Corporate Power

Corporations in Cincinnati wield their power in a variety of ways in order to control the investment, development, and politics in the city. The corporations act on their own, for example, when they make investment decisions, open or close new plants and offices, hire or lay off workers. They also act through their mobilization of the many civic organizations that they influence or control and through their policy organizations such as the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), Downtown Cincinnati, Incorporated (DCI) and the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC). Then, too, they act through their influence over political parties and candidates whose organizations they finance and whose campaigns they have paid for. While they do not always win everything they want, their economic and organizational resources are formidable and their political power is significant.

### **Corporations, the City and the Region**

Cincinnati is important for these corporations because they were founded here, because their headquarters are here, and because they have some of their operations here. Cincinnati corporations usually have a significant investment in the city in land, office buildings, and sometimes in plants and facilities. A corporation that has a long history in this city or region will often have significant real estate investments as well as collateral holdings in the area. They have a vested interest in the form of capital sunk into region.

In addition, corporations are concerned that their corporate headquarters and its staff be able to go about their business—that is the corporate business—without being distracted or distressed by what happens in Cincinnati. They must be concerned about the city because corporate directors, officers and other top executives of the company, as well as other high and middle level managers, live in the Cincinnati area. Moreover, in order to recruit and hold personnel, they have to be able to offer life in an attractive and comfortable metropolitan region if not necessarily in the city itself.

### **Corporate Self-Concept: We Know Best**

Since they have become successful, wealthy, and powerful, corporate leaders often sincerely believe that they know what's best not only for their own business, but also for the community, the state and the nation. This is the corporate conceit. Corporate leaders have often first

convinced themselves and then convinced the public that what is good for business will be good for everyone. They will argue that, even when they act in their own interest, they are acting in the public interest. In many cases it does not even occur to most of them that the wealth and power that they have accumulated, control, and wield might harm the community.

## **Ideas and Values**

What are the corporate elite's fundamental ideas and values? In Cincinnati, as throughout the nation over the last thirty years, conservative notions of the natural benevolence of free markets, competition, and individualism have been dominant. Television, schools, and even churches have promoted the idea that capitalism—often a ruthless and heartless version of capitalism—is the only possible form of social organization. The Republican Party in particular, but the Democrats as well, have worked to end government intervention in the economy, to reduce or eliminate programs aimed at social well being, and to break the power of labor organizations. The idea of social solidarity, that we as a people and a government should take care of each other and especially of those least able to take care of themselves, has been attacked, ridiculed and scorned.

Cincinnati corporate owners and executives typically have a notion of *noblesse oblige*, that is, that they believe that they are the society's aristocrats who have the responsibility to take care of the benighted and the unwashed. They often have the paternalistic notion that they must condescend to tell others how to live and to "help" others. From this attitude comes corporate philanthropy and charity, using gifts as a form of control.

While corporations have over the last twenty years or so engaged in discourse of diversity and multiculturalism and have talked about gender equity and respect for sexual preference, at least in Cincinnati, white men still make most of the economic and political decisions. While the power elite of Cincinnati now incorporates into its upper echelons a few African Americans, Asians, Latinos and women, white men retain most of the powerful positions in the corporations. Whether or not they are consciously racist, the collective consciousness of this white elite is imbued with a profound sense of white racial superiority. The white elite often see African Americans as identified with urban decay, poverty, and crime. Latino immigrants too have become stigmatized as "illegals" and criminals.

Cincinnati's corporate world view, then, consists of a conservative ideology, an attitude of *noblesse oblige*, and a sense of white superiority. All of this of course is subordinate to the corporation's primary function which is to make profits for its stockholders. Corporations with huge investments in land and significant investments in plants and machinery seek to enhance those developments through a strategy of development and growth in the metropolitan area. The corporate vision of development does not necessarily, however, mean improvements that benefit local people either as residents or as workers. Rather, development means what enhances the corporate investments and leads to greater profits and assets.

## **How is Policy Made?**

Corporate domination of Cincinnati has meant the hollowing out of democratic institutions and the neutralization of democratic processes. Over many decades, Cincinnati corporations have worked to eliminate or weaken democratic institutions and to replace them with other institutions over which the corporations have more direct control. Policy often comes to be made by elected officials in public meetings, but by small groups of corporate leaders in private meetings. Later their decisions are put into action by the corporations, by corporate coalitions such as CBC, DCI, and 3CDC, as well as by the boards of the various civic organizations involved in education, culture and society, and, finally, by the city council, county board, and other public institutions.

This system of business-political organization is not limited to Cincinnati, rather it reflects the way that corporate power generally works both locally and nationally. Nor is it anything new. Corporations began in the 1910s to develop the methods by which they have, for decades, controlled Cincinnati. Procter and Gamble was from the 1910s forward at the center of these developments. To see how its role developed we have to understand the long history of corporate power in the city's history.

## **Cincinnati City Government: Boss Cox**

During the 1880s Cincinnati was an industrial city faced with chaotic growth, unregulated development, a growing crime wave and labor union strikes. The city's wealthy citizens wanted to get a grip on the city, and found their man in George B. Cox, a local tavern owner and politician. Beginning in the 1880s, with the backing of brewer George Moerlein and other brewers—brewing was then one of the most important industries in Cincinnati—Cox became the leader of the Hamilton County Republican Party. Later, Cox shrewdly broadened his alliance to include the Hilltop reformers and even established partnership with the defeated Democratic Party. Cox's success in creating such a broad coalition eventually led more conservative Republicans such as Charles P. Taft to come around to support him as well. (Miller, 1968)

During the period from the 1890s until about 1910 Cox ran the city of Cincinnati, as head of its Republican Party, through the same sorts of collusion with business and corrupt practices characteristic of Democratic Party machines in other cities. At the same time, urban political machines such as Cox's also had to be responsive to the largely immigrant working class which made up a significant portion of city's residents and to the African Americans who made up about 15 percent of the population. Like the Republican Party everywhere in that period, Cox's party could count on the loyalty of African American voters, about 8,000 then in Cincinnati.

## **Progressive Reform: The Charter Committee**

By 1910 the new power in America was the corporation and corporate executives found boss-style government an obstacle to their control over politics. Corporation owners and executives

loathed the political power of big city machines usually run by the Democratic Party or sometimes by the growing Socialist Party which then controlled government in several Ohio cities and towns. Under pressure from immigrants, workers and labor unions, those political parties sometimes checked the power of the corporations. The corporate elite organized to break the power of the machines under the banner of a movement called "Progressivism" or as it was sometimes called the Goo-Goo or good government movement.

In most of the country the Progressives fought against machines controlled by Democrats and Socialists; but in Cincinnati they confronted Cox's Republican Party machine. Cincinnati corporate leaders and professionals in the so-called Progressive movement began to push for reforms that would increase the power of corporations, executives and professionals and decrease the power of the city's working people, immigrants and African Americans. The Progressives called for taking the politics out of city government, for running the city like a business and putting it in the hands of experts. They, of course, were the experts.

The collapse of the brewing industry made change possible. Cox's old Republican machine had always been backed by the brewers, but they had been virtually wrecked by Ohio's adoption of prohibition in 1917 and the U.S. Congress's passage of national prohibition in 1920. With Moerlein and the other brewers crippled and in many cases utterly ruined, space opened up for other economic and political interests, above all for the powerful Procter & Gamble Corporation.

To take political power from the Cox machine (Cox himself had died), a group of about 75 businessmen and professionals created the Cincinnati Association, whose principal spokesman was Murray Seasongood, a local attorney. The Cincinnati Association then created the Charter Committee to push for reform in local government. Most of the members of the Charter Committee were independent Republicans, that is, men who had broken with Cox's regular Republican organization but remained in the party of big business. To them reform meant putting political power in the hands of businessmen and professionals. Seasongood took the lead role in attacking the machine and defeating its tax levies.

Seasongood worked closely with Cecil Gamble (one of the Gambles of Procter & Gamble) and other businessmen to create a non-partisan group called the Charter Committee whose goal was to change the city charter. City councils in that era were democratic parliaments with members from every neighborhood that thrashed out city policies in public debates. The proposed charter would do away with the 32-member city council based on districts and create a small council of seven members elected at-large on a non-partisan basis and by proportional representation. The charter also reduced the mayor to a figurehead and created the position of city manager. In 1924 the new charter passed by a vote of 92,510 to 41,105.

The 1924 charter, by abolishing the 32-member council elected from local districts, made it more difficult and expensive to campaign city-wide. City council candidates would now require financial backing to run for office, and big business and the corporations would be happy to provide it in return for a loyal political agent on the council. The small seven-member council reduced the democratic give-and-take between council members and their constituents. Local people had less information about what was going on in city government. At the same time,

the seven-member council dependent on financial backing to run for office, made it easier for business to influence city hall.

With the new city charter adopted, the Charter Committee now dedicated itself to fielding candidates for office in the first election under the new system, endorsing mostly independent Republicans but also some Democrats. Seasongood headed the first slate which also included Cecil Gamble. The initial Charter Committee slate listed other businessmen, a woman health worker, and a labor union leader who was a Republican. The slate was pluralist to a point, including Protestants and Catholics and a Jew, but no African Americans. In the November 1925 election, the Charter Committee's candidate won 76,305 votes, to 33,304 for regular Republicans, and 10,021 for independents. Charter candidates won six of nine seats on the council. (Lowrie, 1927) In subsequent elections the Charter Committee dropped the labor representative from the slate and no blacks were nominated. (Goldman, 1930)

Murray Seasongood then undertook the next task, which was to find a suitable candidate for city manager, the man who under the new system would actually run the city. While in Washington, D.C. to present a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, Seasongood conferred with Newton D. Baker, former Mayor of Cleveland and Secretary of War. Baker recommended Col. C. O. Sherrill, then a presidential aide and director of Building and Grounds in D.C. Seasongood also talked with his Harvard classmate Dwight F. Davis, then Secretary of War, and with oil magnate and Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon as well as with Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce. They all agreed on the choice of Sherrill as Cincinnati City Manager. Sherrill was appointed to the post and held the position into the 1930s. (Seasongood, 1938) As Seasongood's interviews with national cabinet members indicate, Cincinnati's future was now clearly linked both to national corporations such as P&G and to the corporate and Republican dominated federal government.

As we can see, between the period of 1910 to 1930 the control of government in Cincinnati had passed from domination by Moerlein and the brewing interests of the old regular Republican organization to control by Procter and Gamble, the Charter Committee and the new independent Republicans. The change in city government corresponded to the change in the American economy from local and regional markets, where local companies like Moerlein competed, to the creation of national and multinational corporations, such as Procter & Gamble. The original Charter Committee represented the key political institution in the transition from control by local companies operating in regional markets control by locally-based companies operating in national and international markets.

## **Proportional Representation in a New Context**

With the coming of the Great Depression of the 1930s and then World War II in the early 1940s, the charter and particularly the city's system of proportional representation took on a new significance. The city's reformed charter and its proportional representation provision had originally been conceived as an anti-democratic measure to take power away from an admittedly corrupt machine and from its working class and African American supporters. During the 1930s

and 40s, however, proportional representation took on an altogether different political meaning in a new social and political context.

Unions began once again to wield some weight in local politics. The 1930s saw the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) which represented workers in the new unions in industries such as steel, auto, glass and rubber. The CIO created a national political action committee, CIO PAC, and determined to play a role in politics at the local, state and national level. The local CIO saw Cincinnati's proportional representation system as offering a more democratic system than that which existed in many cities.

African Americans also became a greater force in city politics. With the U.S. entry into World War II in December of 1941, Cincinnati like many other cities experienced an influx of African Americans coming to seek work in the city's factories. The African American population in the city grew and blacks began to realize that they could potentially have more weight in city politics. Like the CIO's union leaders, African Americans with their expanded population now saw the proportional representation system as offering them democratic opportunities for greater political power.

Just as labor and blacks began to see that proportional representation could work to their advantage, the corporate elite turned against it and began to lobby for its repeal. The Republican Party began its attempt to repeal proportional representation in the midst of the labor upheaval in 1936. The attempt failed and another was made in 1939; this time the Republicans attempted to link proportional representation to Hitler, Mussolini and the Communists. The City Charter Committee and the independent Democrats resisted the red-baiting and the repeal failed again. The next Republican attempt to repeal proportional representation came in 1947 at the opening of the Cold War and once again proportional representation was linked to Communism, but the measure still lost. A similar attempt was made in 1954 that also failed.

Having failed with its anti-Communist tactics, the Republican Party turned in 1957 to another ploy: race baiting. The civil rights movement had just been launched in Montgomery, Alabama in 1956, and 1957 was the year of the events at Little Rock, Arkansas. Race issues were foremost in the American consciousness. Playing upon whites' fears of black political power, the Republicans spread rumors that unless proportional representation was repealed the next mayor would be an African American, namely City Councilman Ted Berry.

The Republicans' appeal to race worked. Whites voted 2 to 1 against proportional representation and blacks 4 to 1 for it. Proportional representation finally went down to defeat. The Republican Party and its corporate backers were victorious. Ted Berry, who had been one of the top vote-getter in 1955, lost his bids for the council in 1957 and 1959. (Kolesar, 1996 and "History of the Charter Committee")

As one scholar wrote about the 1950s in Cincinnati:

The relationship of the city's conservative business leadership and its growing minority population has been one of separation; the two groups co-exist but do not mix. The

Republicans of the late 1950s were responsible for a charter revision that changed the pattern of elections for council members from that of proportional representation to at large elections. This change made it difficult for blacks and neighborhood representatives to get elected. (Levine et al 1981)

This was exactly what the business interests had intended. They wanted to weaken the political power of black, working class, and lower middle class voters, and they largely succeeded.

## **The Citizens School Committee**

During this same period, a similar anti-democratic movement “reformed” Cincinnati’s school system. School boards in Ohio once had 30 to 40 members depending on the size of the city. Like early city councils, they were real democratic bodies. Candidates for school board at that time ran as representatives of small districts the size of local neighborhoods, where they could campaign by walking through the community and talking with their neighbors. Candidates ran as the representatives of political parties on a political platform. Republican, Democratic, Farm-Labor and Socialist candidates in Ohio won election to school board in that period thanks to the votes of their neighbors.

Professionals and corporations, anxious to take the control of education away from local citizens raised the slogan “get politics out of education.” They then fought to change the law to reduce the size of school boards to only seven members and to conduct elections that were non-partisan and at-large. A Cincinnati doctor, John Withrow, who had married into a wealthy business family, was the moving force behind changing the state law. Withrow worked closely with James N. Gamble of Procter & Gamble. The Cincinnati reforms succeeded in 1913 when the old large board was eliminated and the new seven-member board was created. With “politics” supposedly out of education and candidates elected at large, it would take corporate backing and money to get elected.

In Cincinnati in 1921, local professionals and corporations, again led by Withrow and backed by P&G and other corporations, created the Citizens School Committee (CSC). From 1921 to 1961 the CSC controlled nominations and elections to the local school board. During the period of the 1950s the CSC was dominated by Procter & Gamble, Cincinnati Gas and Electric Company, and several other smaller companies.

During the 1950s, Neil McElroy, president of Procter & Gamble, came to be the dominant voice controlling the Citizens School Committee. In those years, McElroy oversaw the creation of another institution, the Greater Cincinnati School Foundation, linked to the CSC and controlling information between the schools and the public. The first president of the Greater Cincinnati School Foundation, Charles Sawyer, had served as Secretary of Commerce in the administration of President Harry S. Truman.

Policy for Cincinnati education during that period was made in small private meetings between business executives. McElroy would call business leaders to meet with him over lunch to decide

educational and city policy. After a decision had been reached, McElroy would point his finger at the different businessmen and tell them how much each one was expected to contribute to the current policy campaign.

Cincinnati's corporate elite, then as now, was linked to national politics. During this same period in the 1950s McElroy served as chairman of the White House Conference on Education. Then in 1957 President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Neil McElroy to the position of Secretary of Defense, a position he held until 1959. (Spring, 1984)

## **CCDC and the Master Plan of 1948**

While the Republican Party fought the Charter Party over proportional representation Cincinnati's power elite moved forward with its plans for the city. Cincinnati corporations and political leaders, such as Fred Lazarus of Federated Department Stores, Neil McElroy of Procter and Gamble, and Cincinnati Mayor Albert Cash, created the Cincinnati Community Development Community (CCDC) in 1948. The CCDC would be the first of a series of corporate policy and planning organizations created after World War II and continuing into the twenty-first century. CCDC, working with the City of Cincinnati, came up with the Master Plan of 1948 which set the post-war direction for the city.

The 1948 city plan called for the development of expressways to link downtown Cincinnati with suburban communities, advocated for slum clearance, and foresaw the construction of low-cost housing in the West End as well as new industrial development. Under the plan the city agreed to pay the cost of infrastructure for new industries, shifting the cost from business to taxpayers. Working class communities and black Cincinnati's neighborhoods fell before the bulldozers and the construction of a new freeway, later named I-75, that rose where their homes had once stood.

The Master Plan of 1948, combined with the post-war trend of suburban sub-developments and shopping centers, and followed by white flight set the pattern for modern Cincinnati. As the suburbs with their shopping centers and later malls grew, the city shrank, the downtown became less attractive, and the inner city declined as slum landlords declined to maintain property. The inner city was abandoned to older residents, African Americans, and the new Appalachian immigrants of the 1950s who could no longer make a living in the coal fields from which they had come.

## **The Riots of 1967**

The growth of the civil rights and black power movements eventually swept over Cincinnati leading to a black urban rebellion in 1967 comparable to those in many other American cities. A second riot broke out in 1968. African Americans in Cincinnati, like those in other cities, rioted to protest years of racism, discrimination, economic exploitation, political oppression, and government neglect.

The long term effect of the riots in Cincinnati, as in other cities, was to accelerate both white flight and the differentiation within the African American community. Some blacks took advantage of expanding opportunities in employment to improve their situation and move out of the inner city to better neighborhoods in the city and in some few cases to relocate to homes in the suburbs. Other African Americans with fewer resources, less education, and without skills were left behind in Over-the-Rhine and other inner city neighborhoods. The white abandonment of inner-city Cincinnati combined with the rapid growth of the suburbs led to conflicts over city planning. The white suburbs did not want to pay for downtown or city development. (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999)

As everywhere in the United States, the developments of the 1960s and 1970s—African American urban rebellions, students protests, the anti-Vietnam War movement, union organizing drives and strikes by teachers and public employees—sometimes disrupted but did not break the grip of Cincinnati's corporate elite on city government. The growth of federal government programs under Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson and Republican Richard Nixon also had some impact on the balance of power in the city. However, while the events of that era sometime shook up the politicians, they hardly disturbed the corporate elite itself.

What caused more problems for the elite was the growing rift between city and county, between the old urban center and the suburbs, between the racially mixed urban core and the lily white commuter suburbs. The corporations believed that a plan was needed to create a unified vision, with corporate power at the center of course. Their huge financial investments in Cincinnati land, office buildings, and plants were at stake. What was needed they agreed was a new organization.

## **Business Moves to Take Control Again: the CBC**

*The Insider's Guide to Cincinnati*, Fourth Edition, writes, "No discussion of government in Cincinnati, of course, would be complete without mentioning the Cincinnati Business Committee. This is a group of top executives from the major public and private companies in the city that takes an active advocacy—and in many cases advisory—role in government affairs. It is the unofficial fourth branch of Cincinnati government, and some might say more than that." (<http://www.insiders.com/cincinnati/main-overviews3.htm>)

In 1977, 25 chief executive officers of Cincinnati's major corporations created the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC) to provide corporate leadership for a regional development plan at the center of which would be the revitalization of downtown. CBC was made up entirely of white men, not admitting its first African American until 1994 and its first woman until 1998. The CBC began what would become a long term process of corporate collaboration with and influence over city government. In 1983, Mayor Arn Bortz invited the CBC to create a commission to evaluate city government and then adopted and implemented 66 of the commission's recommendations. CBC also worked on the infrastructure commission and on the development of a convention center. CBC actually worked to find the private funding for the center in 1987. (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999)

The Cincinnati Business Committee has been able to play a central role in Cincinnati politics and policy for the past three decades. During the 1980s Cincinnati's Public Schools had a deficit of nearly one hundred million dollars. In the early-1990s, led by Clement Buenger, chairman of the board of Fifth Third Bank, the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC) stepped in and virtually took over the Cincinnati Public School system.

The Buenger Commission produced a report in 1991 blaming tensions between the teachers union, the CPS administration and the school board for the schools problems. "To rectify these problems, the report called for consolidation of power in a strong, CEO-type superintendent, whose authority is no longer undermined by a labor contract that limits 'operating flexibility.'" While the CBC advocated a much more authoritarian school system, it did not in fact succeed in imposing its will, though business oversight of the system became institutionalized. (Dennis Carlton, *Leaving Children Behind: Urban Education, Class Politics, and the Machines of Transnational Capitalism*," at: <http://louisville.edu/journal/workplace/issue6p1/carlson.html> )

CBC was also the driving force behind the successful 1996 Sports Stadium Referendum. CBC operated behind the scenes raising corporate funding for a "grassroots" organization known as Citizens for a Major League Future (CMLF). With CBC's support CMLF raised and spent more than \$1.1 million to fight for a sales tax increase.

### **Major Contributors to the Stadium Tax Campaign**

<b>Corporation</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Bengals	\$300,000
P&G	\$ 77,000
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce	\$ 35,000
Cincinnati Area Board of Realtors	\$ 30,000
Kroger	\$ 23,000
Cincinnati Bell	\$ 16,000
Cincinnati Gas & Electric	\$ 13,000

Clyde Brown and David M. Paul, "The Campaign by Cincinnati Business Interests for Strong Mayors and Sports Stadia," *The Social Science Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 161-177.

The Cincinnati Business Committee's other major campaign was to create a strong mayor system of city government. CBC wanted a strong mayor who would lead the city council to back its vision of Cincinnati's future, one dominated by corporations. The CBC initially lost the August 1995 referendum on the strong mayor, but came back in 1999 and won. Elected in 1999, Charlie Luken became the first strong mayor in Cincinnati in 75 years.

## **CBC Creates DCI**

CBC moved in 1993 to create Downtown Cincinnati Incorporated (DCI) with a board involving the largest corporations, lawyers, newspaper, and government officials. Like the CBC, DCI was built upon the idea of a private-public partnership between the corporations and the city. Like other such private-public partnerships, though it took on tasks such as city planning which were previously thought of as public matters, it was not democratically accountable. (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999)

CBC and DCI created a new vision, a new conception of the geographical character of the city, now conceived of as encompassing the entire region, city and suburbs together. Such a vision was important if business leaders were to overcome the city-suburban divide. DCI's stance was pro-development and pro-growth and aimed at making Cincinnati a Midwestern competitor for new investment, offices, and plants. At the center of its conception was the development of downtown.

DCI established the Vision 2020 Task Force which came up with a vision of the future based on "upscale consumption, entertainment, and cultural spectacle." (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999, 250.) The goal would be to attract affluent white suburbanites to a downtown consumption and entertainment center. Clearly, this was a vision that ignored the working class and low income-residents of inner city Cincinnati, most of whom are African American.

DCI promoted a sense of crisis as a way of motivating its constituencies. Cincinnati had to rush to transform itself in order to compete with its rivals. The City of Cincinnati would have to be willing to contribute financially to keep and to attract business in the downtown. (Leibovitz and Salmon, 1999) In line with this crisis driven sense of competition, in the mid-1990s City Manager John Shirey asked and got the city council's permission to offer \$27 million to Lazarus Department Store (of the Federated Department Stores now Macy's). The city would buy the old store for \$12 million, build a new store for \$10 million, and spend \$6 million on infrastructure. The idea was that taxpayers would cover the expenses of Lazarus in order to keep the store downtown.

## **The Stadium**

CBC also worked to transform the city's center, backing the construction of two new stadiums to replace the Riverfront Stadium built in 1970. Mike Brown, owner of the Bengals, and Marge Schott, owner of the Reds, each hinted that they would move their teams out of town if they did not get the new facilities. A poll of Cincinnati residents conducted at that time found that 60% opposed the construction of the stadiums and the taxes it would take to build them.

The CBC preferred to stay in the shadows rather than to directly organize the pro-stadium tax campaign. HMS Partners of Columbus, Ohio was hired to strategize a campaign with Jeff Berding, a Democrat, to manage it. HMS Partners and Berding created a phony "grassroots group" called Citizens for a Major League Future (CMLF). The CMLF set up meetings with

teachers, labor unions, and African Americans to try to win their support or at least neutralize them. In the end, the Cincinnati City Council backed the plan with the deciding vote in favor of the regressive sales tax cast by Mayor Roxanne Qualls. The final tax increase of one-half cent on the sales tax raised \$35 million a year for the stadium and \$15 million to reduce property taxes. (Brown and Paul, 2000)

The corporations hit on city government and tax payers again and again in their attempt to strengthen the downtown. In the 1980s and 1990s the city spent \$36 million to shore up the Nordstrom Department Store. In 2000, Cincinnati gave Delta Air Lines \$3.7 million to keep its reservations center and 1,000 jobs downtown. In 2002, the city council approved \$6.6 million to keep Saks Fifth Avenue downtown. Then in 2003, Kroger threatened to move its headquarters out of downtown Cincinnati unless it was given \$15 million to build a new downtown garage in Over-the-Rhine. (Kevin Osborne, "City May Build a Garage for Kroger," Post, June 19, 2003 and Randy Tucker and Kevin Aldridge, "Kroger: New Garage or We Go," Cincinnati Enquirer, Aug. 30, 2003.)

Altogether the city spent \$500 million between 1982 and 2002, much of it simply given away to major corporations, in order to attempt to save downtown. (Dan Monk and Lucy May, "Road to Nowhere," Business Courier, May 31, 2002, at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/stories/2002/06/03/story1.html> )

## **The Over-the-Rhine Peoples Movement**

From 1973 to today, the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement has organized residents to fight against the gentrification of land and for affordable housing and services for the homeless. While that has been its core struggle, the People's Movement also questions the privatization of the public realm in the form of the state's alignment with corporate capital, the expanding police forces and the prison-industrial complex, and the production of ideological conditions that promote responsibility only to the market. Within the People's Movement there has always been a strong political line for the community's right to self-determination, demanding economic development by and for those who lived there, mostly African Americans and Appalachians. Led from 1973 to 1996 by Buddy Gray, the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the creation of several institutions and local organizations, such as the Drop Inn Center, ReSTOC, the Over-the-Rhine Housing Network, and Peaslee Neighborhood Center, that assisted and organized the city's poorest community in housing, social service, education, arts, and culture. Even after Gray was murdered in 1996, others held the movement and organizations together and though the neighborhood's population has declined from 16,000 in 1980 to about 5,000 today, the movement continues to face down CBC, DCI, 3CDC, and city hall.

## **The Freedom Center**

As the millennium dawned, Cincinnati faced serious problems of police abuse of the African American community. The Cincinnati Black United Front, then led by Rev. Damon Lynch III,

and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit seeking to end police racial profiling. In 2000, the court directed those two organizations and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) to create a “Collaborative Agreement” to improve police policies and procedures.

But in 2001, the killing of Timothy Thomas, the fifteenth African American man killed by police since 1995--a period in which no whites were killed--sparked an urban rebellion. The police killing led to protests, demonstrations and marches. When police attempted to stop the protests and keep them out of downtown, violence ensued. The mayor imposed a curfew, then created a blue ribbon panel, and finally there were promises of more jobs for African American youth, all accompanied by many prayerful meetings and much soul searching. African American leaders such as Damon Lynch III organized repeated non-violent marches to demand an end to the police violence. A new group calling itself “March for Justice” also organized two marches which by Cincinnati standards drew large numbers in June 29001 and April 2002.

African American community leaders and progressive whites, many of whom had worked together on the first March for Justice, then launched a boycott of Cincinnati’s downtown and convention center, attempting to use economic pressure to force the corporate powers-that-be and the politicians to end the racism and economic apartheid in Cincinnati. The gay and lesbian groups of Cincinnati had already launched a similar boycott against the city’s ordinance which forbade them to use civil rights legislation to protect themselves from discrimination in housing, employment, and access to public facilities. The Coalition for a Just Cincinnati (CJC), which began as a coalition of progressive white and African Americans, endorsed the goals of the gay and lesbian groups, in part hoping for an even broader coalition which never truly coalesced, largely because Stonewall, then the leading LGBT organization, rejected association with the goals of the so-called “Black boycott.” While a few black preachers had courageously supported an alliance between the two movements, other African American religious leaders also declined to publicly support the LGBT civil rights boycott. The movement divided and declined.

The African American boycott activities continued for more than two years and then gradually petered out. The Coalition for a Just Cincinnati fractured and some activists from it formed Cincinnati Progressive Action (CPA). Other splinter groups such as “The First Coalition for a Just Cincinnati” dwindled and no longer found media coverage. But at the height of what was, for Cincinnati an unprecedented level of social organization and political activity in response to the police killing and civil unrest, corporate Cincinnati and the politicians could not be moved to make substantial changes in the city’s racial and economic policies.

In 2004 Corporate Cincinnati, led by Procter & Gamble and American Financial Group (Lindner family) opened the \$110 million National Underground Railroad Museum and Freedom Center as a “museum of conscience” and a “beacon of freedom for all people.” Created from above by the corporations working with academics and some community groups, the Freedom Center was criticized by others in the African American community who criticized the new museum. Some black Cincinnatians felt that corporate Cincinnati’s building of the museum was hypocritical: they had created another riverfront development while ignoring poverty in the neighborhoods. Some believed that the corporations interpreted freedom as equality of opportunity in a competitive world without looking at what was really unequal opportunity

producing quite unfair results. Still others felt that the African American experience had been diminished by creating a museum which while dedicated to the Underground Railroad made that only one of various experiences dealt with by the museum. (Lynch and Dutton, 2005)

When the museum opened in August of 2004, the Black United Front, Cincinnati Progressive Action, and others created a one-day “People’s Underground Railroad Museum” on Fountain Square in protest.

### 3CDC

Mayor Charlie Luken, elected in 1999 and reelected in 2001 as the city’s first strong mayor in more than half a century, created a commission which in turn recommended the creation of a new public-private partnership focused on downtown and inner-city development. The Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) was founded in July 2003 with representation from major corporations and city government. The idea was to put the corporations in charge of city development. *The Cincinnati Enquirer’s* reporter wrote,

Many are looking to the corporate leaders who make up 3CDC’s brain trust (3CDC is chaired by Procter & Gamble CEO A.G. Lafley) for solutions that ensure that regional growth also means new business and residential development at the city’s downtown core. (Ken Alltucker, “Groundwork laid, group looks to getting results,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 4, 2004, [http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/07/04/biz\\_3CDC04.html](http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/07/04/biz_3CDC04.html))

The founding of 3CDC coincided with the closing of the City of Cincinnati’s Planning Department and its functions were more or less taken over by the private, corporate development group. (Osborne, 2003) Many viewed the closing of the department as a mistake. Robert E. Manley observed in the Post:

The recommendation to abolish the planning department came from the City’s Economic Development Task Force, chaired by George A. Schaefer, Jr., the chief executive officer of Fifth Third Bank, and City Manager Valerie Lemmie. (Robert E. Manley, “The Death of Urban Planning,” *Cincinnati Post*, Dec. 10, 2002, at: <http://www.cincypost.com/2002/12/10/manley121002.html> )

Fifth Third bank and other corporations were in charge. With the Cincinnati’s Planning Department abolished, citizens had no democratic control over the city’s future development.

Over the past few years 3CDC has taken the lead role in attempting to transform Over-the-Rhine into an area attractive to middle and upper income people, especially members of the “creative class.” In doing so, 3CDC also put itself at odds with a number of community organizations and social service centers in Over-the-Rhine as it moves to develop a community that will serve new residents from the “creative class.” Tom Dutton and Robert Bell in an article titled “Community Practice as Anti-Imperialist Ethic” described the conflict between 3CDC and the local community in these terms:

3-CDC's plan for the Washington Park area abruptly overturns the recommendations of three significant public planning processes that worked judiciously to determine the location of three public schools as well as recommendations of the Over-the-Rhine Comprehensive Plan (June 2002). Worse, the danger is quite real that the Drop Inn Center may soon be in a war over its own land. Ever since the Urban Land Institute came to Over-the-Rhine in the summer of 1996 to conduct its charrette (Dutton 1999) the community has known that "social service agencies in the Washington Park should be moved." This is ill-disguised code for the Drop Inn Center.

So far members of the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement see 3-CDC as a domestic imperialist operation that restricts the neighborhood's right to self-determination by controlling its territory, by chauvinistically assuming that the neighborhood can't govern itself, and by concentrating decision-making power in entities outside of the community. (At: <http://www.claimingpublicspace.net/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4>)

## **The Jail Tax**

During the early 2000s, Cincinnati's dominant corporations, politicians, government officials, and the police created a climate of fear of African Americans and other poor people in the inner city and a sense of crisis that would lead the citizenry to give up its democratic control over planning and turn the initiative over to others. The very real problems of drugs and violence in Over-the-Rhine were hyped up by the news media while the Cincinnati City Council and the Police Department created Operation Vortex, the use of both Cincinnati Police and Hamilton County Sheriff's office to carry out intensive policing in that community. Police and sheriffs' deputies increased patrols and arrests. Many African Americans and others in the community complained that the Giuliani-style police repression was intended to drive them out of the neighborhood.

At about the same time, the Republican-dominated Hamilton County Board of Commissioners proposed to expand the Hamilton County Jail by 800 beds, an expansion to be paid for by a regressive sales tax combined with a decrease in property tax. The issue was opposed by Cincinnati Progressive Action which created the No Jail Tax PAC to defeat the referendum in November 2006. The Lindner family backed the jail tax proposal with hundreds of thousands of dollars for publicity, but still it went down to defeat.

The following year, Democrats David Pepper and Todd Portune, now in control of the county board, came back with another proposal for a jail expansion of 800 beds, albeit accompanied by some proposals for social programs. Once again, Cincinnati Progressive Action and No Jail Tax PAC opposed the plan, joined by the NAACP, the Green Party, and an anti-tax group first called We Demand a Vote and later We Demand a Better Plan. Lindner once again contributed to the pro-jail tax movement as did Pepper, but once again it went down to defeat, this time by the coalition of social justice and anti-tax forces. ([www.nojailtax.org](http://www.nojailtax.org))

The defeat of the jail tax proposals represented a significant victory for Cincinnati's independent voters. A majority of African American and white citizens had voted against the campaign of

fear and the politics of criminal justice over social justice. They had shown that ordinary citizens could stand up to corporate money and power and win.

## **Corporate Strategies**

When we look back over this hundred year history of corporate domination of policies in Cincinnati, we see that the elite have repeatedly returned to tried-and-true strategies. First, corporations always put their position forward as if it were in the public interest. Second, they work to weaken democratic institutions, always moving away from genuine popular control. Third, where possible, they simply by-pass public institutions and create their own alliances or create private-public partnerships that function as quasi-private institutions.

The corporations always work to foist off onto the public the cost of building infrastructure, of renovating their buildings, or building new structures. Where such projects require large sums of money, they shift the tax burden from the multimillion dollar corporations and the corporate millionaires onto the backs of workers, consumers, and local residents. They prefer regressive sales taxes to taxes on property, or to taxes on business transactions, property, or wealth, and their intent is always to get the project of the rich paid for by the poor.

The history of 100 years of corporate domination, at the center of which has been the Procter and Gamble Corporation, has meant the dismantling of democracy, the deterioration of neighborhoods, and the decline of the city. Cincinnatians need to discuss this history and to plan for a different future.

# Discussion

If the information presented in this study opens up a discussion about Cincinnati and its future, it will have done its job. Clearly people with different experiences, values and ideas can come to different conclusions about what this information means. I present below one point of view, the conclusions that I draw from this study, as a contribution to what I hope will form part of such broad discussion.

Corporate power dominates Cincinnati's economy, society, culture and political life. A handful of corporations wield power, controlling virtually every institution of significance in the city and the region. The corporations control the political parties whether Republicans, Democrats or Charter. Whether one looks at the workplace, the community, the art museum, the university, or the city council, one finds the same relations of money and power. Everywhere corporations rule. Within such a system, democracy and democratic institutions play an ever smaller role.

The corporate alliances—the CBC, DCI, and 3CDC—have taken over many of what were once public powers. The corporate alliances—not the city, nor the county, nor the people—plan for a future, and it is a future dominated by corporations. While neighborhoods have been starved of economic resources, the corporations, their alliances, and their friends in government have directed hundreds of millions of dollars into downtown and riverfront projects intended to secure corporate investments and to generate profits. They envision an inner-city of the creative class, that is, young professional consumers, without workers, without Appalachians or African Americans, the middle-aged or elderly, and without the poor who now live there.

How have they been selling their vision of the city and its future? These corporations have used the media to promote an ideology of economic conservatism, social irresponsibility, and political reaction. Dominated by the corporations and this conservative ideology, most political leaders of the Republicans, Democrats and Charter parties have argued for economic development for business while neglecting the neighborhoods. Business, the politicians and the media have used fear of crime (often a code word for fear and loathing of African Americans) to motivate their constituencies to support these corporate programs.

## **Difficult but not Hopeless**

The power of corporations is enormous, and yet the situation is not hopeless. When citizens mobilize and use democratic institutions, and when they vote, they can challenge corporate power and the corporate-controlled city hall.

- When Cincinnati's citizens voted against David Pepper, the son of a Procter & Gamble CEO, and for Mark Mallory in the last mayoral election, many were voting against corporate control and for a larger voice for the people. Though others no doubt cast their vote against the long history of white domination over what is now a half-black city.

- It was also a victory for democracy and a vote against corporate control when Cincinnati's citizens in both 2006 and 2007 voted against the corporate-backed sales tax to build a new and unnecessary larger jail.
- Similarly it was a step forward when Amos, an alliance of local religious congregations, the NAACP, and the AFL-CIO pressured the powers-that-be to expand the Banks Working Group—until then made up entirely of white businessmen—to include African Americans, union representatives, and ordinary citizens. ( Kevin Osbore, “Secret Plans for the Banks,” CityBeat, Jan. 9, 2008, at: <http://citybeat.com/2007-04-11/news.shtml>)

## **Building an Independent Movement**

Today Cincinnati has many independent-minded voters who oppose corporate control of our city. For example, there are African American voters who feel leery of the corporations, the politicians and the white establishment, and who often vote for independent black candidates. There are the gay and lesbian voters and their allies who organized to overturn the city legislation that denied them the right to invoke civil rights protections against discrimination. There are the progressive or “left-of-liberal” voters who for reasons of social justice twice organized to defeat the imposition of a tax for an unnecessary and expanded county jail.

While the labor movement remains a captive of the corporate-controlled Democratic Party, many working class voters have their own ideas and would welcome an independent and progressive political alternative to the Democrats. Studies have shown women to be perhaps the most independent-minded group in American society and they probably would support independent politics with a kind of working class feminism that speaks to the needs of working women and their families.

Unfortunately Cincinnati's independent voters remained divided into separate sectors, each going its own way without coordination or collaboration. How do we unite?

## **A Working Peoples' Movement**

What do we have in common? Most Cincinnatians, though we may call ourselves middle class, are working people, whether we work in offices, factories, or on construction sites. Most of us have modest incomes that allow us to support our families, but many of us live only a paycheck or two away from economic disaster. If someone in our family is laid off, has an accident, or becomes seriously ill, we could lose everything we have. We want, above all, greater economic security in our lives.

For most of us, our greatest concerns are our jobs, our health care, paying for the education of our children, and our retirement years. We would like to live in a city free of crime, racism, discrimination, exclusion and economic apartheid that have characterized Cincinnati. We want the war in Iraq ended and no future oil wars with Iran or Venezuela. Black and white, men and

women, gay and straight, blue collar and white collar we should be able to come together around a program that speaks to our common concerns as working people and the desire for peace and social justice.

## **What are the constituents of such a local movement?**

**The African American Organizations** – Under the leadership of Christopher Smitherman, the NAACP has become a dynamic force in the fight for racial justice in Cincinnati. The NAACP has launched an important campaign to defend the victims of racism and discrimination in the criminal justice system. The NAACP also formed the most important part of the alliance to defeat the jail tax. The Black United Front also continues to be active and some of its members also opposed the jail tax. Black churches are very important organizations in the black community and their congregations could play an important role in opposing corporate power.

**Progressive Churches, Temples and Mosques** – Progressive religious organizations of many faiths have an important role to play in a fight against corporate power in Cincinnati. The Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center (IJPC) has for more than twenty years provided leadership in struggles for social justice. The Amos Project has more than 40 congregations that have developed a social agenda that deals with issues such as housing, transportation, health, and education. Amos has joined with other organizations such as the NAACP and the AFL-CIO to pressure for citizen involvement in the Banks Project.

**Community-Based Organizations** – The Over-the-Rhine Peoples Movement, a group of local institutions that came out of fights against gentrification in the 1970s and 1980s, remains important in resisting corporate development plans that would remove and replace community residents. Throughout Cincinnati local community councils and neighborhood groups become involved in small-scale struggles over myriad issues that often result from corporate abuse and government neglect. These groups too could become part of an important part of an anti-corporate movement.

**The Unions** – Unions should be leading the fight against corporate power and for the empowerment of ordinary people in this city. But by and large, locally and nationally, the labor unions have been content to be very junior partners in the Democratic Party. While the great corporations and the wealthy dominate the Democratic Party's leadership councils, labor unions contribute huge amounts of money and often provide most of the campaign workers, phone banks and canvassers to get out the vote. Once elected, the Democrats largely ignore unions and the workers. Locally the Democratic Party of Hamilton County is hardly more democratic or progressive than the Republicans as demonstrated by the Democratic-Republican deal to control the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners. (Kevin Osborne, "We Don't Need No Stinking Election," *CityBeat*, Jan. 10, 2008 at: <http://citybeat.com/2008-01-09/porkopolis.shtml>)

There are, however, possibilities for change. Cincinnati's labor movement has seen some new life. The new leadership in the Cincinnati Federation of Labor has a more democratic and open style. The SEIU Justice for Janitors Campaign won an important victory with its new contract

for janitors. The UFCW mobilized thousands of its members to win a better contract from Kroger in 2007. UNITE-HERE is active in organizing campaigns in the region. Nationally and locally, the Steelworkers and the Sierra Club have formed an alliance to jointly fight for jobs and the environment: the Blue-Green Alliance. All of these developments represent important developments for local labor, but still only a token of the kind of movement that is needed. Many AFL-CIO unions, including those in the Building Trades, joined in a coalition for immigrant rights and took a progressive position for comprehensive immigration reform including the legalization of undocumented immigrants who living, working and raising families in the United States. The Cincinnati Teachers Union has leadership committed to excellence in education and other local teachers unions are concerned with reforming schools.

**Immigrants** - Cincinnati's Latino immigrants have begun to organization in the Coalition for the Rights and Dignity of Immigrants (CODEDI), a relatively new organization that works to give voice immigrants to the region's 60,000 immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and other Latin American nations. LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens, has also recently become active in the area in defense of Latinos' and immigrants' rights. (See: Dan La Botz, "The Emerging Latino Immigrant Community of Cincinnati, Southwest Ohio, and Northern Kentucky" at:

[www.ijpc-cincinnati.org/current\\_events\\_actions/emerging\\_immigration\\_labotz.pdf](http://www.ijpc-cincinnati.org/current_events_actions/emerging_immigration_labotz.pdf))

Immigrant organizations also exist among the area's 20,000 or so African immigrants, usually organized on the basis of nationality: the Mauritians, Senegalese, and Malians. Middle Eastern immigrant organizations also exist. We can expect more immigrant organization in the future. Cincinnati's immigrant communities are new and many immigrants are young. These immigrant communities represent the future of social movements and politics in this city.

## **Constructing a Working Peoples Movement**

The construction of a movement of working people in this city first requires more interaction and more discussion between the various groups involved. The fact that most of us are working people will not automatically overcome our differences. The long history of white racism toward African Americans in particular will require us to really examine our collective experience. How can we start to bring about greater cooperation and unity among working people?

- First, we need to create opportunities for African American, white, and the new immigrant community activists to meet and talk about organizing a movement for social change. Working together we get to know each other and overcome stereotypes. Through mutually respectful discussions white, African American, and immigrants groups can locate some of our common problems and common goals. When we find those common issues, we should hold public forums with speakers from the various communities talking together with the public about them.
- Second, we need to find opportunities for common struggle around common issues of concern. Nothing does more good in overcoming differences than joining together in a

common movement. When people walk together in a march, on a picketline, or go to jail together to protest some injustice, they become welded together by that common experience.

- Third, we need to look for opportunities to put forward common candidates of the local social movements, and backed by the movements, independent political campaigns for local office. We have to think about how we can create the appropriate political vehicle. Perhaps it is an independent candidate endorsed by the black community. Maybe it's an independent labor candidate. Or it could be a Green Party candidate. Or a Green-Black-Labor candidate. Most important is that we should run independent candidates not controlled by the corporations, candidates who stand for a fight against corporate control.

If working together we can build a movement, then, in the future, we can consider running slates of independent candidates for various city and county offices such as the city council, the county commission, the school board, and judges. Such candidates would be activists who come out of the movement and accountable to it, genuine representatives of our communities, workplaces, and organizations.

## **A Program for Challenging Corporate Power**

If we will challenge corporate power, then we must create a platform that speaks to working people and the poor in our city. Every project we envision should be one that simultaneously improves working people's lives and strengthens the possibility of building social organization while it regulates taxes and begins to dismantle the power of corporations over our economy and our lives. We can't develop such a program in this short paper. A progressive program for Cincinnati's working people will have to come from those people themselves. We can, however, give some examples that speak to the kind of processes and thinking that could develop a program that could unite working people into an anti-corporate movement.

**Mass Transportation.** We should contemplate publicly-owned projects that will improve our communities and create jobs. For example, a publicly-owned institution such as a mass transportation system of railroads, light rail, buses, trolleys and streetcars would provide years of work for construction workers and later for the men and women who would run the system. A mass transportation system should be financed by raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy. Corporations should also be taxed to run it so that it would bring their employees to work at a low fare and offer free or reduced fares to students, senior citizens, and the unemployed. Unions and workers should have a responsible role in running such a transportation system, as should the consumers who use it. Such an initiative could be undertaken in collaboration with the county and state governments by building an alliance with progressive forces in cities and towns throughout the states.

**Health Care for All.** We should join with organizations such as Ohio's Single-Payer Action Network (SPAN) to push for a single-payer health system throughout the state. We have tens of millions of uninsured people in the United States today and tens of thousands in our city and

county. Our citizens should not have to live without access to health care. We should push for a public health care system, eliminating the profit motive from an area of human life too important to be based on the bottom line. Without private, profit-driven health corporations and insurance companies, health care would be less bureaucratic, and less expensive. Once again, doctors, nurses, and other health care workers should have a large role in running such a system together with the families and the patients who use it.

**Improving Education.** Schools are still a key site in the struggle for civil rights. Cincinnati parents have to join teachers in fighting to reform both the funding and the processes of schooling to end the unequal distribution of resources, knowledge, and opportunities that reinforce oppression and privilege. We need to demand that the Ohio Legislature distribute funds fairly to state schools as ordered by the Supreme Court, and back teachers in supporting the passage of school levies, reduction of class sizes. We also need to eliminate the unfunded No Child Left Behind legislation. Teachers need to be able to return to the task of teaching our children rather than being mere facilitators of tests that serve the testing industry more than public education.

**End Racism and Discrimination.** We need to be part of a national movement to fight against racism and discrimination of all kinds, whether against African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Arabs, or Jews, or against women, the elderly, or gays and lesbians. If we are to unite our communities, one of our first interests will be in understanding that we all have common interests as working people and as local community members that are far greater than differences of sex, race, color, language or religion.

**End the War – Peace.** We need to make any movement in our city part of a broader movement for peace and social justice in our community, our country and the world. Cincinnatians should be proud participants in a national movement to end the U.S. war in Iraq and to prevent other such wars in the future. We could unite Cincinnatians around not only end the war in Iraq, but also withdrawing all troops and closing all military bases in the region.

We should be under no illusions about what it will take to begin to open some space in Cincinnati for independent social and political movements. As Frederick Douglass, the great black abolitionist, once said, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” Our first task is to educate our fellow Cincinnatians about the corporate monopoly of power in our city and to begin to organize the forces who can challenge that power.

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## Internet Links

### Local NGO Links

The Amos Project

[http://www.bellarminechapel.org/the\\_amos\\_project.htm](http://www.bellarminechapel.org/the_amos_project.htm)

Cincinnati AFL-CIO Labor Council

<http://www.cincinnatiaflcio.org/>

Coalition for the Rights and Dignity of Immigrants

<http://codedi.org/english/>

Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)

<http://www.floc.com/>

Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center (IJPC)

<http://www.ijpc-cincinnati.org/>

Miami University Center for Community Engagement

<http://www.fna.muohio.edu/cce/engagements.html>

NAACP Cincinnati Chapter

<http://www.naacpcincinnati.org/>

No Jail Tax Political Action Committee

<http://www.NoJailTax.org>

A Small Group: Restoring & Reconciling Cincinnati

<http://www.asmallgroup.net/>

SEIU Local 3 Cincinnati

<http://www.seiu3.org/>

## **National Links**

Multinational Monitor

<http://multinationalmonitor.org/>

Who Rules America?

<http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/>

Who Rules? An Internet Guide to Power Structure Research

<http://www.uoregon.edu/~vburriss/whorules/>

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# About the Author

Dan La Botz is a teacher, writer and activist who has lived in Cincinnati for twenty years. As a Fulbright Scholar he earned a Ph.D. in U.S. History from the University of Cincinnati in 1998. During the last decade he taught U.S. and Latin American history at Northern Kentucky University, the University of Cincinnati, and at Miami University.

La Botz is the author of several books on labor unions and politics in the United States, Mexico and Indonesia. In 2005 Pearson Longman published his biography *César Chávez and La Causa*. He is the editor of Mexican Labor News and Analysis (MLNA), a monthly electronic report on workers and unions in Mexico. (<http://www.ueinternational.org/>) His articles appear in *Against the Current*, *Counterpunch*, *Labor Notes*, *Multinational Monitor*, *New Labor Forum*, *New Politics* and other publications.

La Botz participated in the Coalition for a Humane Economy (CHE) in 2001 and was one of the organizers of the March for Justice to protest the police killing of Timothy Thomas that same year. He was a founder of Cincinnati Progressive Action (CPA) and of the No Jail Tax PAC. He has also worked with the Coalition for the Rights and Dignity of Immigrants (CODEDI). He lives in the Clifton neighborhood of Cincinnati where he and his wife Sherry Baron have raised two sons, Traven and Reed. Traven is now off at Cooper Union studying art. Another son, Jake La Botz lives in California where he is a blues musician and actor.

