

Vol. 8 Number 1 – Jan. 2026

# MAC Arrow

Unitarian Universalist  
Multiracial Unity Action Council  
(UUMUAC)

**“For the Unity of the  
light and dark skinned  
people of the world.”**

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## **Preamble**

Racism and related forms of prejudice are revealed when someone treats another person differently due to their perceived race or ethnicity. These prejudices affect people around the world. Such disrespectful conduct is especially harmful in religious communities because of their commitment to strong ethical and moral standards.

## **Vision Statement**

We envision our congregations, associations, and communities as being not color blind but color appreciative; as judging and treating people by the content of their character, not the color of their skin, their cultural heritage, or other identity; and as treasuring all forms of diversity in the context of Martin Luther King's Jr's "Beloved Community." We call this vision Multiracial Unity.

## **Mission Statement**

It is the mission of the Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Action Council to foster activities for multiracial unity and to counter racism and neo-racism through worship, education, bearing witness, and other actions, and to find and engage like-minded individuals and groups.

We affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and strive to defend freedom, reason, and tolerance as articulated in the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism adopted in 1985. This includes promoting their use in individual congregations, through congregational autonomy, and in our own actions.

**Note: Articles reflect their author's views. They do not necessarily reflect a position taken by the UUMUAC Board of Directors**

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### **Board Chair's Report**

*On UUMUAC Accomplishments in 2025*

*by Allan Lindrup*

A committee of the UUMUAC Board worked for a couple months to develop a revised Preamble, Vision and Mission for our organization. After input from the membership resulted in a few tweaks to the proposed wording, the membership voted to adopt that new wording.

At the beginning of the year UUMUAC published Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell's book *Neo-Racism: From Jim Crow to White Supremacy Culture*. Since our founder had not been able to get this book ready for publication before his death, Dick Burkhart and Judith Barisonzi served as editors, to get it in good form for publication. This book continues to be available for purchase through Amazon.

We organized and held three convocations in 2025. The first one, in early spring, focused on Neo-Racism, as presented in Rev. Dr. Campbell's book on that subject. We heard the thoughts of the two editors, plus the views of two individuals who had known the author and his thinking on the subject for decades. Our second convocation, in late spring, examined whether class or race was more significant in the inequality that exists in modern America. Our third convocation, held in the fall, allowed for the airing of differing views on DEI. We are now working on lining up speakers for our first convocation of 2026, on race and the Abrahamic Faiths.

The UUMUAC brochure was updated, both in content and to provide it with a more appealing look. The new brochure is available on our web site and was shared with both our membership and UUs on various list serves and some Facebook groups.



We also updated the UUMUAC flyer and used it for advertising our organization this past fall.

UUMUAC continues to produce and distribute its periodic journal, the MAC Arrow, which was done on a quarterly basis in 2025.

We have continued to organize and hold monthly Vesper Services, which are held in the evening of the third Wednesday of each month. A special thanks to Matthew Shear, Jack Reich, and Richard Trudeau for their leadership on this monthly program.

A committee of the our members has identified organizations that work to end racism and inequality through multiracial unity, which we are informing our members and other UUs about through the UUnderWorld, the MAC Arrow, and later our web site.

We have begun to develop, under the leadership of Barbara Jean Walsh, a new form of outreach and communication – podcasts. After a pool of at least six podcasts are ready for sharing we will begin to advertise them. They will be available through multiple large podcast providers.

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### **Giving Multiracial Unity Practical Meaning**

The **UU Multiracial Unity Action Council (UUMUAC)** wants to highlight organizations that work multiracially to accomplish significant objectives and are already multistate or can be duplicated anywhere. We are focusing on organizations our members and other UUs actively support. UUMUAC exists to fight racism by fostering multiracial unity. For this to be productive and authentic, respect, empathy, and energy all need to flow in every direction. We are committed to the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism as the only tools required for this work. Go to <https://www.uumuac.org> for more information about UUMUAC. To tell us about an organization you actively support, contact [UUMUAC@gmail.com](mailto:UUMUAC@gmail.com)

## People's Action

People's Action builds the power of poor and working people in urban, rural, and suburban areas to win change through issue fights and elections. We are a national network of 40 state and local grassroots power-building organizations in 29 states, united in the work of building a bigger "we."

Nine grassroots organizing networks came together in 2016 to form a powerful national organization with more than a million members to fight for our communities and win. Over five decades, we have won material improvements for the lives of millions of people, with victories that include the Community Reinvestment Act, Superfund, the Affordable Care Act, the Dodd-Frank Financial Reform Act and the MAT Act.

People's Action believes that today we face a triple crisis. Authoritarianism threatens democracy. The climate crisis threatens to displace millions from their homes. And there is a decline of civil society resulting from disconnection and despair.

To build a diverse and inclusive democracy that reflects the voices of all, we emphasize community-driven, power-building initiatives. The Organizing Revival, led by the People's Action Institute, is our effort to strengthen the movement for social justice with the best practices of community organizing so we can build a multiracial democracy that works for all of us, combat authoritarian overreach, and find solutions to the crises we face.

The People's Action Institute is adding new training opportunities all year and all around the country, so check its web site frequently to find the opportunity that is right for you, or contact us to see if we can help host a training for your organization.

### **People's Action (and People's Action Institute)**

1130 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago IL 60642

[info@peoplesaction.org](mailto:info@peoplesaction.org) **312) 243-3035** (Mon-Fri. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time)

or [info@peoplesactioninstitute.org](mailto:info@peoplesactioninstitute.org) (same phone)

### **The People's Lobby**

**The People's Lobby** is the Chicago area affiliate of People's Action. It is a membership-driven organization in the Chicago region that works to organize support for progressive legislation and candidates. The organization trains leaders, mobilizes support for policies, and takes direct action to advocate for racial and economic justice issues.



The People's Lobby chooses our fights by determining which issues matter most to our members and conducting strategic analyses to determine the power we need to build to win on those issues.

Some current campaigns:

**Chicago Gig Alliance** is winning for workers! Rideshare drivers are uniting to fight Uber and Lyft's corporate greed and win safety, transparency, and fair wages for 85,000 workers in Chicago.

**Health care is a human right!** The People's Lobby believes that nobody should go broke because they're sick, and nobody should get sick because they can't afford care. We're starting by fighting back against claims denials from wealthy health insurance corporations.

**Justice Reform.** The People's Lobby is an anchor organization in the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice, which organized for more than eight years to pass the Pretrial Fairness Act. This groundbreaking legislation eliminated the use of money bond (cash bail) in Illinois, making us the first state in the nation to truly live by the value that all people are innocent until proven guilty.

The Pretrial Fairness Act was successfully implemented in 2023. Since then, we've continued to defend this legislation from rollbacks while expanding our focus into other areas of restorative justice, such as reforming our parole system and increasing access to health and human services for people awaiting trial.

**Environmental Justice.** As an anchor organization in the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, The People's Lobby played a significant role in passing the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act in 2021. Since then, we've worked to make sure that this new law realizes its full potential in creating equitable jobs across Illinois.

Currently, we're focusing on winning a bright climate future for Illinois by winning the progressive revenue we need to rebuild public transit in our state in a way that protects our environment and gets everybody where we need to go.

**Electoral Power.** We believe that one key step in moving towards our vision of a radically different economy that prioritizes people and the planet is to run grassroots campaigns to elect progressive movement leaders from the communities where we organize. The People's Lobby has played a key role in electing and re-electing progressive leaders who are making a real difference at multiple levels of government, and we have endorsed dozens of candidates who have won their elections.

**The People's Lobby**

**PO Box 15123**

**Chicago, IL 60615**

**312-837-3484**

(Note: The People's Lobby Executive Director grew up at Second Unitarian Church of Chicago)



# REFORMING THE DEI REFORMS

## MEI: Merit, Economics, and Ingenuity as a solution

By Quinn Que

You will by now be familiar with the controversial organizational policy framework known as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion or DEI. After all, Trump spent the first days of his presidency [dismantling it](#) in the [federal government](#). You may (not yet) know of its oppositional counterpart: MEI. I'll talk about both somewhat in this piece, but my focus will mainly be on the latter. In fact, I'll discuss the original MEI proposal and then offer my own update to it. I should say at the outset that, if you're looking for a [long explainer](#) of [what DEI is](#) and [why it's pernicious](#), I'm not doing much on the anti-DEI front today. [Such articles](#) have been done to death already, and I'm confident that [you've read a few](#). I won't reiterate those well trodden points of attack too much here.

Background on the fight: How did we get here?

The DEI framework is ostensibly about taking three closely linked values and institutionalizing them, essentially baking DEI into a given organization, often a school or a workplace, like one might add flavored filling to a pastry. Alas, the filling is rather disagreeable. Let's look at the three prongs of the DEI trident. The diversity piece is about recruiting people of certain identity groups, specifically ones considered minorities or marginalized in society. Equity is about forcing certain results or norms, usually cashed out to be what academics call [substantive equality](#), or more colloquially equality of outcome. This often means, in practice, giving undue advantages to people from the diversity groups, creating a kind of inverted caste system that favors so-called diverse people over non-diverse ones. Inclusion, which is probably the most euphemistically/obscurantistically titled prong of the three, is about changing organizational culture to be more in line with the ideas that DEI practitioners favor. This is presented as making the org culture more welcoming, but in practice it's more-so making members of the org adopt certain political concepts as received wisdom. These ideas may include, but are not limited to cultural relativism, structural racism, the feminist theory of patriarchy, and more. Inclusion also tends to involve adoption of specialized language and speech codes, sometimes with [banned word lists](#). All very Orwellian, but it's easy to miss the insidiousness of it, especially the full extent





DEI was born out of the affirmative action ecosystem, bolstered via government mandates like Barack Obama's [Executive Order 13583](#) of August 18, 2011 on "Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce," and further fueled by Democrat-led political counter-signaling during the first administration of President Donald Trump. Within the last 10 years, DEI became the default rubric by which organizations choose their new additions (employees, students, etc.) and enforced unanimity of action and opinion on certain issues or policies. One can understand that there were good intentions at work here, even if they were also linked, increasingly and inextricably, with highly disagreeable political ideas that started in academia, wormed their way into professional life (especially human resources), and ultimately became overly salient in regular places like [retail](#), hospitality, [healthcare](#), and elsewhere. Given all this, a [backlash](#) was inevitable. What came as a mild surprise, although perhaps it shouldn't have, was the introduction of a competing framework that seeks to replace DEI with, depending on whom you ask, either pure meritocracy or [empty sloganeering](#).

Merit, Excellence, and Intelligence, or MEI, is a loosely defined prescription to treat the illness of DEI. It suggests a focus on quality and qualifications over identity or lofty left-wing sociopolitical goals. Although it's not explicitly conservative or per se ideological in the same way as DEI, the MEI push has an unmistakable reactionary bent. I say all this as someone who's inclined, at least in theory, to support such an initiative. The problem with MEI is that it is fundamentally too simplistic, too self-flattering, and too stilted in its framing and goals. It would also be ill-fitted to slot into the DEI-shaped holes it seeks to fill.

For starters, let's address the obvious: MEI is basically just three similar words slapped together. From the outside looking in, this might make sense, since that's what DEI can seem like too. But DEI is actually a set of three distinct, yet interrelated prongs. Synergistic and holistic, but not necessarily redundant. Diversity is not the same as, nor does it imply, Equity. Inclusion sounds akin to both, but that too is being a bit shortsighted once we think on it for a few minutes. Yet MEI is basically just saying the same thing three times. Merit is about meritocracy, which is inclusive of excellence and intelligence. In fact, the biggest foot-shot of MEI is the needless decision to spell out the last part as one of the pillars. When one says MEI is about "Intelligence," with the presupposition that DEI isn't (or can't be), they create space for an obvious rebuttal to the effect of, "Oh, so you're saying DEI people are dumb? That's racist!" It's such an own goal, as they say in soccer for accidental points scored against oneself.

Then there's the issue that just promoting meritocracy in recruiting could essentially amount, in effect, to either dismantling DEI with nothing to replace it—bad idea, nature abhors a vacuum—or replacing DEI with an ill-defined notion of just...meritocratically finding excellent and smart people. It's hollow, almost cartoonishly so, and it's a waste of the huge opportunity that properly replacing DEI could represent in various fields. Remember, DEI [exploded and became a cottage industry](#) within the last 5 to 7 years. It's heavily informed by, and tied to, [academia](#). It's a prevailing [orthodoxy in human resources](#). All that infrastructure to work with, and the current MEI proponents wanna fill it with "lol, just pick good people, done!" What a lack of vision.



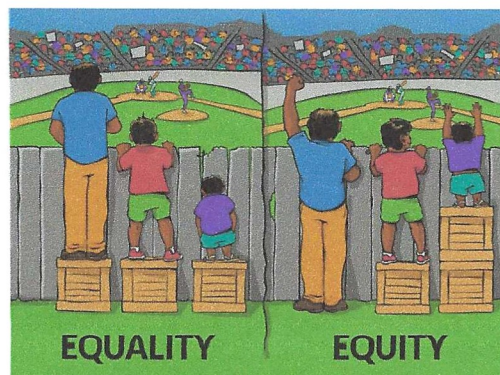
The DEI industry and the ecosystem that spawned around it represents more than just an ideological dragon to be slain. There's knowledge, manpower, and authority to work with. Even if we stopped funding the specific ideology, even if we fired, or stopped contracting with, the self-appointed experts of DEI, we'd still have HR teams and school admissions departments to wrangle. If one wants to replace DEI with something, let it be something good, something fit to the task and the environment DEI has operated in. Don't just settle for less, it'd be such a wasted opportunity. But fear not, friends, I've got a plan.

### An MEI That Works for Everyone

First things first, let's fix that ridiculous list of words. The initials/acronym will work well enough, but like I said before, we shouldn't have vague or intra-synonymous sounding terms in the full, spelled out framework. We'll keep Merit for the M, since we do want an emphasis on meritocracy and quality. For the E, however, I'm thinking Economics, which I'll explain below in a bit. And for the \*,\* how about Ingenuity? It's a good word, not at all superfluous, and makes this whole thing sound truly aspirational, rather than simply like a technocratic wish-list. These three prongs will be our logically flowing, parsimonious, and robust MEI trident. Internally consistent instead of internally redundant. In order to make real use of the DEI ecosystem that we want to replace with MEI, I think we should establish goals for a new framework beyond simply "don't be DEI." These will get us there. Now let's dig in.

### Merit

At the heart and the start of MEI is merit—a principle that individuals should be chosen based on their strengths, skills, intelligence, and overall qualifications. We must ensure that the most competent and qualified people rise to the top, driving excellence and innovation. It posits that we follow a clear, objective measure of success, where effort and talent are rewarded. This is arguably the most important prong of MEI, and fans of the original MEI configuration were right to metaphorically triple down on it. They simply were a bit misguided to think that literally tripling down made sense, especially from the outside looking in.

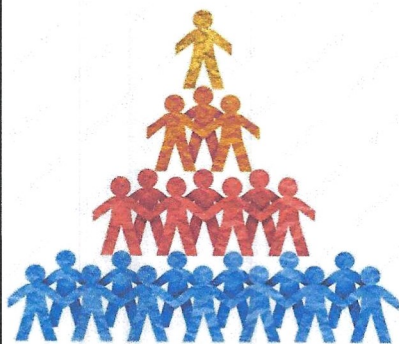




To those who might argue meritocracy doesn't exist, or that it's just a code for business as usual, I say, "open your mind (and your heart)." We can hire the best person for the job, or accept the best application for university, without overlooking deserving people from less successful backgrounds. [Formal equality](#) is literally a form of egalitarianism. There are activists who denounce the very notion of having standards, those who say formal equality is somehow oppression; yet that itself is a soft bigotry born of low expectations. I don't think, as some Cultural Marxists in academia or HR seem to, that lowering/eliminating standards for recruits is analogous to giving apple-boxes to people who were born short (see the graphic above). Why? Because if Equity means lowering standards, the implication of the analogy is that I, and many other "marginalized identities" were born inferior. I don't believe that. Because, amongst other things, I'm not a racist. So they can keep their metaphorical apple-box, thanks.

### **Economics (or Echelon)**

This prong will probably be the most divisive, so I'll say that upfront. Economics, which I'm parenthetically subtitled "Echelon" (as in social class), has as its focus two main sub-goals. One part is to find candidates who will be good investments, ideally by saving money and generating value for the organization. Economics looks at the cost-benefit analysis aspect of recruiting for schools, professions, and so on. Think of it like [Sabermetrics](#) in sports. [Hiring is expensive](#), as you might have heard elsewhere. It's better to keep that in mind and roll it into our criteria for acceptance.



The other big aim of the E here, as implied by Echelon, is to prioritize finding and uplifting prospects of lower class backgrounds. This would be, ironically, like a kind of affirmative action (or a kind of pseudo DEI), only done morally and sans race essentialism. When affirmative action was first being batted around in the 1960s, there were suggestions to do it on the basis of socioeconomic class rather than simple racial preferences. Martin Luther King Jr. himself was in favor of class-based affirmative action (albeit in addition to race-based). The notion of class-based initia-

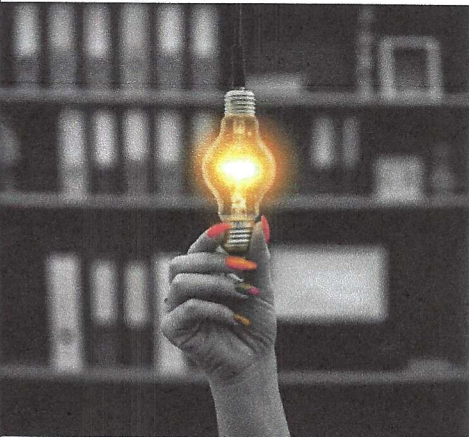
tives, rather than simple racial preferences (along with later gender preferences and so on), obviously didn't win out. Part of the reason why was, understandably and cynically enough, interference from the Black Elite, a middle class of African Americans that Karl Marx might have called a "bourgeois" class. They knew that they themselves and their children wouldn't benefit from class-based affirmative action. Thus the idea was largely scrapped, and so it was that we ended up focused on immutable characteristics, even though the concerns we were ostensibly trying to remediate were material disparities in things like educational achievement, social status, and wealth. Elites keeping their lower-class equivalents down, a tale as old as time itself.



To me, the best part of the Economics/Echelon twin sub-goals is that they're mutually inclusive. Finding the person with the highest ROI (return on investment) potential will often correlate with picking someone from a lower social class. These are smart, capable folks that typically won't demand as much from an organization in terms of amenities, compensation, or overall perks and terms. They just want to learn and work, to make a name for themselves, and to create value for the org that's smart enough to pick them.

## **Ingenuity**

This is the most fun and flexible prong. Ingenuity could best be summed up as "innovate internally, and find innovative people." It's partly about changing the organizational culture, but mainly through an emphasis on finding and empowering unique people in new ways. It is therefore a far less doctrinaire means than the "Inclusion" piece of DEI. That orgs should pursue a sui generis strategy of recruitment might sound obvious, even cliché, but what's particular about Ingenuity is the cultural piece.



Exceptional people don't always love, let alone work well in, unexceptional organizations. So orgs should try to not only find someone who's original, distinctive, clever, and/or creative, they should find what it is about these people or their thinking that's worth implementing. Diversity is great in theory, especially when it's diversity of thought, but only if it's actually valued and maximized. "Think outside the box" is a nice saying, but worthless if you never live up to it.

Ingenuity is ultimately about being unorthodox. Organizations ought not to just tick a box, especially in some essentialist or identitarian sense, but to identify people who are different in truly useful ways, who can help solve specific problems, and yes, sometimes maybe even look less homogeneous than the rest of the org. Yet we must remember that the focus is always on the mind first, the body second.

## **Conclusion**

Though there have been historic injustices, limits on participation or opportunity, and organizational shortcomings, I think it's clear we didn't necessarily need DEI. Or at least we didn't need what it became, not in its current form. Yet we got it, and the ecosystem around it will likely live on in some form. If we are to replace it with something, let that something be substantive and efficacious. I'm open to MEI, especially as I've reimagined here. We need something real and we need it to work. I've laid out my vision of a more solid and reformist MEI, with Merit, Economics, and Ingenuity as the tines of the trident. This framework could save academia and the working world from many of its current DEI headaches. In addition, MEI could actually live up to the promise that all of its predecessors made and ultimately fell short of. I'm excited, and I hope you are too.



## Giving Multiracial Unity Practical Meaning

The **UU Multiracial Unity Action Council (UUMUAC)** wants to highlight organizations that work multiracially to accomplish significant objectives and are already multistate or can be duplicated anywhere. We are focusing on organizations our members and other UUs actively support. UUMUAC exists to fight racism by fostering multiracial unity. For this to be productive and authentic, respect, empathy, and energy all need to flow in every direction. We are committed to the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism as the only tools required for this work. Go to <https://www.uumuac.org> for more information about UUMUAC. To tell us about an organization you actively support, contact [UUMUAC@gmail.com](mailto:UUMUAC@gmail.com)

### Introduction to FAMILY PROMISE

*By Ken Christiansen*

Paul Avary, a member of the UU Church of Gainesville, FL, identified **Family Promise** as an organization that works with all and for all suffering homelessness. The national website is at <https://familypromise.org>. In 2024, **Family Promise** housed 67,000 families and 100,000 children experiencing homelessness for one or more nights. Additionally, homelessness prevention programming was extended to 18,000 families. How was this accomplished?

**Family Promise**, formerly called the **Interfaith Hospitality Network**, has 184 affiliates in cities in 40 of the 50 states. An affiliate may be near you! Website and contact information for all affiliates is posted at <https://familypromise.org/what-we-do/affiliates/affiliates-by-state/>. Originally, **Family Promise** housed homeless families in church facilities. A network of congregations would house homeless families for a week at a time. Church members would supply food and necessities during their congregation's week of hosting. The COVID 19 epidemic motivated major changes in the service delivery model. The website at <https://familypromise.org/what-we-do/programs-services/> describes the range of services now provided as follows:

#### PREVENTION & DIVERSION

"We are there when a family's homelessness is imminent, and we work to avoid the trauma of a family losing their housing. Our Affiliates do this through:

- Case management and community support
- Rental assistance, security deposits
- Utility support
- Landlord mediation
- Housing location
- Transportation – gas cards, bus passes, and car donations

“Keeping families out of shelter is good public policy and good fiscal policy. When families have lost housing and reach out to Family Promise, we provide alternatives to shelter, including:

- Temporary hotel/motel stays
- Payments for rent in arrears, security deposits
- Landlord mediation and housing location

Creative solutions leveraging a family’s strengths”

Local **Family Promise** affiliates appreciate [donations](#) and [volunteers](#). Referring a homeless family, or about-to-be-homeless family, to their services is another valuable way to help.

*UUMUAC encourages your participation with organizations that recruit people from all backgrounds for their volunteer and professional staffs and serve all people in need. Other UUs are involved in these organizations! Go to <https://www.uumuac.org> for more information about UUMUAC. To tell us about an organization you actively support, contact [UUMUAC@gmail.com](mailto:UUMUAC@gmail.com).*

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## **Long Term Damage When Ideology Defeats Ethical Principles**

a review by Dick Burkhardt of

### **Revisiting the Empowerment Controversy:**

### **Black Power and Unitarian Universalism**

By Mark Morrison-Reed (2018)

This insightful work attempts to be a balanced history of how the Black Power movement created enormous controversy within the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in the late 1960s and early 70s. Yet more needs to be said about the lasting damage that reverberates to this day. I can only conclude that the combination of strong black identity, white guilt, and lack of historical perspective can be toxic, even in a religious association devoted to strong principles of ethical behavior. These days UUs even profess to be “(Standing) On the Side of Love”, but mostly toward certain favored groups, and from a liberal Unitarian middle class white perspective, overpowering the more working class and less racially conscious Universalist heritage.

Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed is a long serving and well-regarded UU African American minister, yet the “balance” he seeks in this book is mostly a balance of “causes” – ideologies and

**PAGE 12** interests – not an examination of how the UU principles were honored or abused in



this instance. And I think this is symptomatic of the problems that have been magnified today in US society – that causes outweigh common ethics, basic principles, and historical perspective. As to the latter, it took 5 generations after the Civil War before Jim Crow was finally ended. Obviously MLK's project of "integration" would take at least another couple of generations to fully take hold, even with the best leadership. But Morrison-Reed only cites the generations it has taken the feminist and LGBTQ movements to succeed, not possible obstacles to black empowerment or strategies to overcome likely hurdles.

Yet the Black Power activists, organized as the Black Affairs Council (BAC), were not interested in the hard, long, and frustrating generational work of realizing "equal rights". When their revolutionary vision didn't come to pass within few years, they turned to unsavory tactics and political theater that made a mockery of the treasured UU "democratic process" and respect for "the inherent worth and dignity and of each person". As Morrison-Reed documents in great detail they adopted tactics explicitly designed to violate these principles, even to demonize the more moderate Black and White Action (BWA) group. This group had the backing of the Community Church of New York City, long the most integrated church in the UUA, far less susceptible to white guilt. Full disclosure: I have fond memories of Glover Barnes, the principal African American spokesperson for BWA, and later a fellow congregant and highly esteemed elder in the Rainier Valley UU Congregation in Seattle. I also knew another BWA activist, John Cornethan, an honored black elder at the nearby University Unitarian Church.

But it wasn't just BWA and many traditional UUs leaders who had strong negative reactions to BAC tactics, such as non-negotiable demands, enforced by contrived walkouts and boycotts, instead of respectful dialogue and due process. Even the African American women behind the domineering BAC men tried, but failed, to bring them down to earth. While the BAC narrowly won funding votes at the General Assemblies of 1968 and 1969, thereafter they narrowly lost votes despite the strong justice orientation of most delegates, as the BAC tactics became more uncompromising and their attitudes more self-righteous.

At one point the sympathetic Veatch Fund stepped in to continue the BAC funding, which went to certain worthy black empowerment ventures across the country, but not to several successful black social development projects already underway, causing more divisions within the very small ranks of UU African Americans. By the mid 70s the funding ceased and the BAC fell apart, with many BAC leaders leaving Unitarian Universalism in anger, as the backlash spread. My own UU mother switched to the UCC around this time, seeking a more spiritual home, less political, even though she had been a key lay leader in 1968 in Tacoma, promoting better black / white relations.



Morrison-Reed characterizes the conflict this way: “Walking into the Unitarian Universalist cultural arena, where a multiplicity of marginalized and resentful groups were vying for power, and demanding \$1 million and complete autonomy in its use was like walking into a powder keg and lighting a match” (p 329).

As to ending of the funding, Morrison-Reed explains that by 1973 there was a court case over the bonds, pitching the Black Humanist Fellowship (BHF, more inclusive, derived from BAWA = Black and White Action) against the Black Unitarian Universalist Caucus (BUUC, more radical, derived from the BAC = Black Affairs Council). “Veatch decided the following January [1974] that there would be no further allocations [from their Racial Justice Fund] to those involved in the litigation until it was resolved”, which never happened. But “over the life of the Racial Justice Fund, it would award a total of \$420,000.” (p 302).

This money from the Veatch Fund was in addition to “\$450,000 from the UUA [already given to the BAC before it disaffiliated], and full funding amounting to \$1 million finally guaranteed by the UUA Board” (p 227). Moreover, “Subscription to the BAC bonds would eventually grow to \$840,000”. Morrison concludes that “it is not a stretch to imagine that between 1968 and 1977, \$2.5 could have flowed from the UUA through BAC to the African American community” but that this was only partially realized due to “strategic missteps made by BAC/BUUC” (p 228).

So, yes, even though the cause was good, the damage was deep and long lasting. True, more people of color have appeared in visible UUA positions, such as the Presidency and the Ware Lectures, but the goal, now called diversity instead of integration, is still illusive. Meanwhile the UU leadership continues to lack historical and spiritual depth on these matters, as is painfully obvious to many of us who have lived diversity versus wishing for it.

Instead of “wise elders” who step in to defend the UU principles and guide us toward more constructive outcomes, we’re experiencing a resurgence of racial ideologies, backed by white righteousness and guilt, producing a new black empowerment crisis in the UUA. The damage is already underway, most visibly in the resignation of the Hispanic UUA President, Rev. Peter Morales, in 2017, over a racially charged hiring controversy, and most recently with the censorship of Rev. Todd Eklof for distributing a book, “The Gadfly Papers”, promoting dialogue on some of these very issues.



Morrison-Reed does draw some useful lessons, such as “Hubris fuels tragedy; it does not lead to spiritual health” and “Once an adversarial model was embraced, sharing and willingness to be vulnerable ended”, concerning the BAC, “leaving all sides feeling misunderstood, and battered, victimized, and betrayed” (p. 346). Concerning the white allies, “because they tended to feel angry, impatient, and righteous, they were unsuited to the tasks of persuasion and conciliation that are fundamental to a covenantal faith. Their decisions and actions were ideologically, rather than spiritually grounded. What enlivened them was the feeling that they were on the side of the oppressed” (p. 347).

Yet 50 years later too few in the UUA leadership have learned these lessons, or they have been intimidated by accusations of racism / white supremacy, or they have succumbed to dysfunctional ideologies such as “white supremacy culture” and “white fragility”. And a key enabler hasn’t changed at all – the resurgence of white guilt – now due to Trump’s attacks on minorities and immigrants. Thus many UUs have been distracted by Trump’s scapegoating instead of focusing on the plight of the white working class, which was the group most damaged by the escalating inequality of the last 40 years, many voting for Trump out of desperation. Even the white underclass is not viewed as “oppressed” as most minorities – all those “deaths of despair” (opioids, suicides, etc.) must be their own fault, at least that is what “white fragility” would teach us.

So Morrison-Reed certainly understands what happened, yet he doesn’t adopt some of this more explicit wording, presumably to avoid getting embroiled in today’s black empowerment controversy.

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### **Giving Multiracial Unity Practical Meaning**

The UU **Multiracial Unity Action Council (UUMUAC)** wants to highlight organizations that work multiracially to accomplish significant objectives and are already multistate or can be duplicated anywhere. We are focusing on organizations our members and other UUs actively support. UUMUAC exists to fight racism by fostering multiracial unity. For this to be productive and authentic, respect, empathy, and energy all need to flow in every direction. We are committed to the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism as the only tools required for this work. Go to <https://www.uumuac.org> for more information about UUMUAC. To tell us about an organization you actively support, contact [UUMUAC@gmail.com](mailto:UUMUAC@gmail.com).



## Washington State Community Action Partnership

**Washington State Community Action Partnership (WSCAP)**, is a nonprofit organization created to provide a unified voice for Community Action Agencies in advocacy, policy, programmatic, and legislative issues affecting families and communities in the state of Washington. WSCAP also provides training and technical assistance to each of our 30 agencies, ensuring high quality professional services for those seeking our assistance.\

**Community Action is Washington's safety net.** Community Action Agencies play a key role in helping people get back to work and building a strong foundation for Washington's future by creating and preserving jobs. In addition, Community Action Agencies invest in people to develop their competencies, support their education, and help them find work.

Using flexible [Community Services Block Grant \(CSBG\)](#) funding, Community Action Agencies focus on creating local solutions to local needs. Community Action Agencies are major employers, together spending more than \$200 million each year in Washington cities and counties. About 90% of all funds are used for direct services to help families in need.

Hundreds of thousands of people facing challenges and barriers to prosperity have received help, obtained jobs, established safe homes, received education and are providing for their families because of the support offered by Community Action Agencies. Community Action is designed to respond to local needs that differ from community to community.

**Washington's Poverty Fighting Network: 30 Community Action Agencies equipping low-income individuals and families in all 39 counties to exit poverty.**

**Washington State Community Action Partnership**  
PO Box 7130 Olympia, WA 98507  
[www.wapartnership.org](http://www.wapartnership.org)

### Have you heard about UUnderWorld?

There is a new, free, independent, online UU magazine called UUnderWorld, which is working to become a platform for unfiltered and interesting contributions from liberal spiritual people everywhere, of all shapes and sizes, to discuss and contemplate issues about Unitarianism, Universalism, philosophy and lots of other topics. There are editorials, letters, cartoons, ads, interviews, book reviews, sermons and news. Check out the website **UUnderWorld.com** where you can get all the issues and be added to the email list.

And, if you want to comment or send something in to be included in the next issue, please send it to **UUnderWorld74@gmail.com**. Flexible deadline is the 1st of each month.