

INTRODUCTION

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This special issue of *Reflections* is dedicated to the life and work of Richard Cloward. Paul Abels and I, with the encouragement and support of Frances Fox Piven and Alex Gitterman, have edited a volume of tributes, reflections, essays, a narrative interview with Richard, and an essay written by Cloward and Piven published in the first issue of *Reflections*. We have also included a modified bibliography of Richard's publications and a selective list of his professional awards. And, of course, no tribute to Richard Cloward would be complete without an appeal for a contribution to a social justice fund, which can be found in the back of this issue.

Richard Cloward was a larger-than-life figure for many people, as described by many of the contributors, and certainly a major influence straddling the professions of social work and sociology. He was a scholar, theoretician, influential teacher, eloquent speaker, and always an activist. As he stated in his resume, "My organizing activities can be summed up thusly: to help poorer people gain access to safety-net benefits, and to help them get on the voter registration rolls as a way of defending their rights to these benefits."

Richard was born on Christmas Day in 1926 and died at age 74 on August 20, 2001. He grew up in Rochester, New York. After serving in the Navy during WWII, he completed a B.A. in Sociology at the University of Rochester. Richard entered the Ph.D. program in Sociology at Columbia University but decided that he was not interested in a strictly academic career and "wanted to do something more social," leading him to enroll in the Columbia University School of Social Work,

where he received his M.S.W. After graduating from social work school, he was recalled by the military during the Korean War and ended up working as a medical social worker at a prison in Harrisburg, PA. While in the prison he conducted a study of inmate culture, "...the results of which had a profound influence on my thinking for the rest of my life." This led him to completing his Ph.D. in sociology and collaborating with Robert Merton, resulting in the publication of his seminal article in the *American Sociological Review* in 1959 entitled "Illegitimate Means, Anomie, and Deviant Behavior." He also co-authored a book with Lloyd Ohlin, *Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs*. He was hired as a professor at Columbia University School of Social Work in 1954 where he taught for the rest of his career.

It is not possible to consider Richard Cloward's career separately from that of his wife and professional partner, Frances Fox Piven. They met at Mobilization for Youth in the early 1960's and have co-authored numerous articles and books, including two editions of *Regulating the Poor, The Politics of Turmoil, Poor Peoples Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail, The New Class War: Reagan's Attack on the Welfare State*, and two editions of *Why Americans don't Vote*. Cloward stated that they talk about their work all of the time: "We talk about what we read in the journals, books we've read, what we write, what we would like to write or should write. It is an overwhelming thing in our daily conversations... We don't occasionally come together to collaborate on something, we col-

laborate all the time." Given this enduring partnership, we are privileged to have in this issue a reflective essay by Frances Fox Piven.

This special tribute issue of *Reflections* has contributions ranging from Herman Stein, Dean Emeritus at Case Western Reserve School of Social Work, who recommended Richard for his first teaching job at Columbia University School of Social Work and found that Cloward "started haltingly as a teacher," to Shannon Flynn, who was in the last class that Richard taught and found him to be an "inspired and inspiring teacher." Richard's faculty colleague, Alex Gitterman, describes what it was like to work with Richard, evolving from Richard taking several years to learn his name to a deep and loving friendship. Many former students, such as Ken Grossinger and Marcia Cohen, were profoundly influenced by Richard and went on to become his colleagues as organizers and teachers. Labor organizer Bill Pastreich, like many in this issue, describes the profound influence that Cloward had on his thinking and his work, while Diane Dujon found that Richard "touched my life mostly through the written word." Richard Cloward was an activist scholar, and there are many people – social workers, sociologists, political scientists, politicians, activists, organizers, welfare recipients, journalists, and many others – who had the experience that Cohen describes of Cloward "speaking my language, my truths, speaking to me." Richard also endured what Gitterman has called his "inner demons," which, according to Cohen, he was quite open about, and a number of contributors mention his shyness.

Yet all of Richard's former students describe him as an impassioned, charismatic, brilliant, and "intellectually honest" speaker and lecturer. He was also an illuminating writer. Cloward and his publications garnered many awards (see list in this issue). *Delinquency and Opportunity* won the International Society of Criminology's Dennis Carroll Award while *Regulating the Poor* received the C. Wright Mills Award from the Society for Social Problems. His writings also sparked commentary and controversy, leading to numerous books, articles, and published debates about his and Piven's ideas. Cloward received life-

time achievement awards from the Council on Social Work Education, The National Association of Social Workers, the American Sociological Association, and the Association of Community Organization and Social Administration.

Lastly, I wanted to comment on my relationship with Richard. He was a friend and colleague of my father Irving Miller, who also taught at the Columbia University School of Social Work, and I have known him for most of my life. I was very influenced by his ideas and inspired by his passion and social and political commitments, particularly his readiness to roll up his sleeves and do what he talked about. Like many of the contributors to this special issue, I have many powerful memories of Richard. One that stands out for me is when I was 15 and lived in Yonkers, New York and needed a ride into the city. Richard picked me up in a silver sports car on Tuckahoe Road, and after exchanging hellos, we drove in complete silence to Manhattan. For a sullen teenager, it was a moment of unusual comfort and surprising pleasure, no obligation to make small talk, just two cool guys cruising the Henry Hudson Parkway, watching the city pass by.

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