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# Review of: Seattle in Black and White: the Congress of Racial Equality and the Fight for Equal Opportunity

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*Seattle in Black and White: The Congress of Racial Equality and the Fight for Equal Opportunity.* By Joan Singler, Jean Durning, Bettylou Valentine, and Maid Adams. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2011. xiii + 279 pp. \$24.95 paper)

Joan Singler was one of the founders of the Seattle chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Her co-authors were also active in Seattle CORE during the 1960s. Their book draws upon their memories, the recollections of other surviving activists, and records kept by CORE members. Because its authors are not academic historians, this book does not attempt to engage the voluminous historical literature dealing with the African American freedom struggle. However, it does constitute a significant contribution to the historical literature dealing with Seattle in the post-World War II era and with African Americans in the Pacific Northwest.

Singler, Jean Durning, Bettylou Valentine, and Maid Adams describe the emergence of Seattle CORE and its members' efforts to end discrimination against the city's African American residents. Following CORE's guidelines, which required members to investigate and negotiate before beginning nonviolent demonstrations, the Seattle chapter began investigating employment discrimination in the summer of 1961. Most employers denied discriminatory employment practices and refused to negotiate, but CORE picket lines quickly convinced several grocery chains to abandon their discriminatory practices and to hire African Americans. Negotiations in 1962 convinced J. C. Penney to hire African Americans, and the threat of picket lines led the Bon Marché and Nordstrom to alter their employment practices as well. In 1964 CORE launched its Drive for Equal Employment in Downtown Seattle (DEEDS). Activists picketed downtown businesses throughout the fall of 1964, but CORE members decided to suspend the boycott in January 1965. Although the protests did not achieve all of their goals, a few hundred African Americans were hired by downtown employers.

CORE found it more difficult to reduce discrimination by real estate agents, landlords, and the Seattle Public Schools. Members picketed and sat in at a local real estate agency's offices for two months in 1964. CORE ended these protests before the agency and the Seattle Real Estate Board obtained a restraining order. The Seattle City Council passed a fair housing ordinance after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968, but housing discrimination continued to persist in the city. A campaign to desegregate the schools culminated in a two-day boycott. On March 31 and April 1, 1966, nearly 4,000 students attended freedom

schools instead of their public schools. The boycott prompted school officials to pay for transportation for students who participated in the voluntary desegregation program, but it did not lead to rapid progress toward integrated schools.

The authors do not shy away from difficult topics. The book's final two chapters describe the internal divisions within Seattle CORE, police and FBI surveillance of the organization, and the chapter's demise in 1968. White people were pushed out of the organization, and many African American members turned to new organizations such as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.

This very readable book will appeal to anyone with an interest in the history of Seattle in the twentieth century. It should also be assigned in college and university courses in the history of Washington or the Pacific Northwest.

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KEVIN ALLEN LEONARD

*In Thought and Action: The Enigmatic Life of S. I. Hayakawa.* By Gerald W. Haslam with Janice F. Haslam. (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2011. xiv + 427 pp. \$26.95 paper)

When I came to San Francisco State in 1964 as a young history teacher, the college was a special place. It had students of all ethnicities and ages, many of whom were the first in their families to attend college. Teaching these students was a large cohort of outstanding young faculty dedicated to offering our students not just vocational training but a liberal arts education suitable for society's future leaders. Our faculty model was the most prominent person on campus, the semanticist and professor of English, S. I. Hayakawa. He shared our values of ethnic tolerance, impatience with irrational shibboleths, and love of irreverent wit.

The San Francisco State Strike shattered that liberal Camelot. Some liberals abandoned the integrationist ethic of Martin Luther King and joined the radical strike in favor of Black Power-inspired non-negotiable demands. Some, like Hayakawa, argued for keeping the campus open, granting the more reasonable of the strikers' demands but rejecting the unreasonable ones. Many of us who supported Hayakawa's position, however, watched aghast as Hayakawa escalated his rhetoric against the strikers and then accepted the college presidency from the trustees who had abruptly fired the old president for excessive accommodation. President Hayakawa famously ripped the wires from the truck-mounted loudspeakers